

Inspection of Duchess Nursery Wallingford

Wallingford School, St Georges Road, Wallingford OX10 8HH

Inspection date: 26 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Leaders and managers do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities. As a result, there are significant breaches to statutory requirements which compromise children's learning, development and safety. For instance, leaders and managers do not ensure that staff are always deployed well enough. This means that children's needs are not met, in particular those of babies. Staff do not know the children well and some spend too much time on 'routine' chores rather than attending to children's needs. Children do not get the care and attention they need to support their well-being. Despite this, some children make good friendships at nursery. For example, they giggle and laugh as they play peekaboo together.

Children are at potential risk of harm as staff fail to carry out thorough risk assessments of the environment. The leaders and managers fail to recognise that risk assessments are not fully effective. Staff do not remove obvious hazards that could pose a risk to children. For instance, babies crawl on mopped floors that are still wet and staff fail to remove trailing wires from electrical appliances.

The key-person systems are ineffective. Children wander around the room in isolation without support from staff to engage them. For example, staff do not recognise children who have had no interaction for long periods of time. This means that children do not learn beyond what they already know and can do. They do not develop to their full potential. Despite this, older children have positive attitudes to play. For example, they smile with joy, as they make play dough with staff.

Children behave well and respond quickly when staff ask them to do something. For instance, when staff remind children to take turns with the doll's house, they kindly offer their friends a doll to join in. Consequently, children are beginning to learn how their behaviour impacts others.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Managers and leaders do not evaluate the quality of the provision effectively. Weaknesses within the curriculum and teaching are not addressed. In addition, they fail to identify any breaches of welfare requirements that can compromise children's safety. Managers and leaders have made some changes around the induction and monitoring of staff, but not enough to have a positive impact on practice. This compromises the safety and quality of education for children.
- Managers, leaders and staff do not complete effective risk assessments to promote children's safety. They fail to ensure risk assessments are effective. For instance, babies sit on chairs that are too high and that they can topple off of. In addition, there are broken, sharp skirting boards throughout the nursery that

could cause harm to children. Children are not safe and secure in their environment.

- Staff do not know how to supervise children adequately. For instance, staff do not adequately check on babies while they are going to sleep. As a result, staff fail to notice babies lying in vomit. In addition, staff do not supervise children at some mealtimes, and this poses a risk of choking for children.
- Staff receive some feedback from managers through one to one meetings. However, the manager fails to use these processes to tackle the weaknesses in staff performance. As a result, teaching is weak and poor practice goes unidentified. For example, staff sit for long periods of time without interacting with children. Leaders and managers notice this but do little to address the poor practice. As a result, children do not receive high-quality interactions that support their learning. While plans for improvement are in place, they are still in their infancy and are not yet having the desired impact.
- There are not enough experienced staff available to meet the needs of children. As a result, the key-person systems are ineffective. For example, some children receive support from cover staff who do not know them or their needs. This means that children, particularly the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive the consistency they need to support their routines. Consequently, children do not learn and develop to the best of their abilities.
- Some staff discuss how they support children's learning. However, younger children do not benefit from an environment that supports them to have high levels of engagement in play. The curriculum is not well implemented or adapted to meet children's individual learning needs. For instance, staff fail to prioritise supporting babies' communication and language skills. This is evident when some staff do not offer effective words or comments as babies play. This means children do not access a language-rich environment, and they do not learn the early language skills they need for future success.
- Staff and leaders build positive parent partnerships. Parents appreciate the regular updates they receive in the online application about their children's learning and development. Parents explain how staff have recently supported them and their child to get ready for a new baby. They adore hearing about their children's 'golden moments' and say this helps them to celebrate their children's achievements at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Due to significant breaches in risk assessments and requirements, safeguarding is poor at the nursery. Despite this, staff and leaders have sufficient safeguarding knowledge. They know where to report concerns about a child who may be at risk of harm. For example, they know how to spot signs if a child may be at risk of neglect. Leaders and managers understand their role in reporting to other professionals if they receive an allegation about a member of staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that nominated individual and leaders know and understand the statutory requirements and monitor practice to ensure they are met at all times	17/02/2023
ensure that robust risk assessments are implemented and staff take swift action to minimise or remove risks to keep children safe	17/02/2023
ensure all staff are deployed effectively to provide adequate care and supervision to all children, especially around sleep and mealtimes	17/02/2023
implement effective supervision system to improve staff's practice, and provide them with an effective support and coaching	17/02/2023
establish an effective key-person system to fully meet all children's individual needs	17/02/2023
plan and implement sequenced curriculum that meets children's needs and helps them to make good progress in their development.	17/02/2023

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- ensure that leaders and managers have better oversight of the provision and implement appropriate strategies to improve the quality of education and care for all children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2614915
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10265311
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	64
Name of registered person	Swinbrook House Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2551542
Telephone number	01491 829729
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Duchess Nursery Wallingford registered in December 2020. It is situated in Wallingford, Oxfordshire. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Mandy Cooper

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager carried out joint observations of group activities with the inspector.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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