

Inspection of The Beeches Pre-school

136 St. Andrews Avenue, Colchester, Essex CO4 3AQ

Inspection date: 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
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Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
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Personal development	Inadequate
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Leadership and management	Inadequate
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's welfare and safety are not assured due to weaknesses in leadership. The provider does not ensure that all staff have a thorough knowledge of safeguarding. Risk assessments are not effective and hazards in the environment are not removed.

Although all children have an allocated key person, the key-person system is not fully effective. Staff do not plan efficiently to meet children's individual learning needs. They do not offer activities that build on what children need to learn next or incorporate their interests. This means children do not benefit from a broad, well-planned curriculum. In addition, staff are unable to build strong relationships with families because they have little contact with parents.

Children are generally happy and confident in the setting. They separate from their parents with ease and hang up their bags and coats before settling to play. Children are learning to be independent. For example, they pour their own drinks at snack time and put on their coats and shoes when going outside. Children enjoy listening to stories and taking part in action rhymes.

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

- Risk assessments are not effective. Staff complete daily checklists to show that the areas where children play have been checked and are safe. Nevertheless, they fail to identify hazards to children's safety. For example, in the garden, they do not notice a low-hanging wire and stagnant water in various pots and play equipment. This does not help children play safely in their surroundings.
- Staff interactions are basic and do not stimulate curiosity, interest or excitement. They spend time with the children, but their interactions do not extend on what children already know and can do. Staff do not encourage children to engage in conversation or solve problems. They fail to offer suitable challenge to move children to their next stage of learning. This poor quality of teaching means that children's individual development needs are not met.
- Children do not always have the space they need to engage in the activities on offer. This is because most areas of the setting are cluttered and disorganised. For example, when children try to play in the role-play area, there is little space for them to use the available resources. In addition, children are prevented from moving resources from one area to another. This limits the learning opportunities for children and does not help them engage in deep, meaningful play.
- The provider does not consistently ensure that the spaces where children play are clean and well maintained. For example, children sit on dirty floors and use unclean toilet facilities. There is a procedure in place to ensure that children

wash their hands before mealtimes, but this is not always followed. This increases the risk of cross-infection and does not promote children's good health.

- The provider fails to implement adequate arrangements for the supervision of staff. Staff do not receive support, coaching or training that promotes the interests of children and leads to continuous improvement. Consequently, staff do not know what they need to do to improve their professional skills and knowledge. This has a negative impact on children's progress.
- The provider does not have robust recruitment procedures in place. They do not ensure that appropriate suitability checks have been completed promptly. This means that staff whose suitability has not been checked have access to children. This does not keep children safe from adults whose suitability has not been cleared.
- The provider does not document all complaints and their outcomes, as required. As a result, records do not show that all concerns have been considered and the required action has been taken, including notifying statutory agencies if needed.
- The provider has failed to ensure that Ofsted is informed of any significant event that may affect their suitability. This is a breach of the legal requirements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Some staff do not know signs and symptoms that may indicate that children are at risk of harm and abuse. This includes signs that a child may be at risk from extreme views or female genital mutilation. Some staff do not understand the steps to take should the provider not take effective action to pass on their concerns about children in their care. Staff do not know the procedures to respond to allegations against staff. The provider has failed to recognise that staff have insufficient knowledge about safeguarding procedures. This compromises children's safety and welfare.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure that all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty guidance	19/04/2023

ensure risk assessments are effective in identifying potential risks and hazards to children, and take steps to remove and minimise these	19/04/2023
ensure an effective key-person system is in place where staff have opportunities to build relationships with families	19/04/2023
ensure the environment is organised in a way that meets the needs of children	19/04/2023
ensure that children's good health is promoted at all times, this includes teaching children to follow effective hygiene procedures and providing them with access to a clean and well-maintained environment	19/04/2023
provide effective supervision, training and support to help improve the quality of teaching and support children in their learning	19/04/2023
improve recruitment processes so vetting checks are conducted in a timely way	19/04/2023
maintain a written record of complaints, including how complaints have been fully investigated	19/04/2023
take action to improve knowledge of the notification requirements, ensuring that Ofsted is informed of any significant events that may affect the suitability of the early years provider.	19/04/2023

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

	Due date
plan a challenging curriculum that focuses on what children need to learn next based on their emerging interests and needs	01/05/2023

improve the quality of staff interactions to enable children to make good progress.	01/05/2023
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Setting details

Unique reference number	203708
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10282977
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	14
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	Beecham, Elaine Joy
Registered person unique reference number	RP513310
Telephone number	01206 866615
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Beeches Pre-school registered in 1990. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. All members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 1 or above, including one who holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, for 42 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 9.15am until midday and from 1pm until 3.30pm, with a lunch club from midday to 1pm. The pre-school also provides care from 8am until 5.30pm as required. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Lyndsey Barwick
Lynn Hughes

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 provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspectors viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspectors about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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