

Inspection of Lindens Early Years

The Lindens, Lower Street, Stroud GL5 2HT

Inspection date:

27 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

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

The manager/lead teacher does not ensure suitability checks are complete for new staff before she leaves them unsupervised to care for children. While children are happy in the care of staff, this compromises their safety.

Initially, the day begins positively with calm and purposeful routines. Older children settle confidently into painting activities, delicately using water colours to mix and explore. Younger children meet staff in the garden. They play freely and make birds' nests following on from discussions about spring. However, staff do not maintain the calm sense of purpose throughout the day. The curriculum does not focus as well as it could to sufficiently challenge, motivate and maintain all children's interest. On occasion, some children lose interest in learning, which impacts negatively on their behaviour. For example, some children talk loudly over staff as they tell stories and sing to the wider group. Staff do not consider the impact of this on other children and allow it to continue.

The manager and her staff want to develop children's independence but do not always provide opportunities for this. For instance, when preparing the kindergarten room for snack, staff only encourage two or three children to help. Staff focus on setting the table rather than being available to challenge and extend the learning of other children in the room.

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

- Despite the manager knowing background checks for new staff are incomplete, she continues to allow them to work alone with the children. She does not consider the impact of potential unknown safeguarding information.
- Staff do not have consistently high expectations for managing children's behaviour. For instance, at tidy-up time in the kindergarten room, staff do not make it clear to children what they should, or should not do. Children use this lack of challenge and direction to push the boundaries in their behaviour. Instead of tidying, some choose to stand on furniture or place pillowcases over their head.
- Staff build their curriculum through a repetitive daily 'rhythm' and routine, making clear what activities children will do each day of the week. This enables children to settle quickly when they arrive, and feel emotionally secure within the setting. Younger children particularly benefit from this as they build language skills and social relationships with each other. However, staff do not always promote and extend new learning for all children within these routine activities. For example, when older children go outside, some try scratching bark off a tree or throw spoons across the play area. Rather than engaging with children, some staff continue gardening from a distance, simply reminding

children to be kind to nature. They leave children to run off and miss opportunities to develop their knowledge about the world around them.

- Younger kindergarten children experience positive interactions during their morning. At snack time, this leads to several engaging learning moments. Children talk enthusiastically to each other and count their fingers to reflect the number on each other's front doors. Staff support for this learning is sensitive and engages children through careful questioning. As a result, children develop good vocabulary and language skills during their interactions with others.
- When children in the older kindergarten room enjoy snack, many of them chat animatedly across the table or to others nearby. Despite being aware that some children are a little shy, staff do not provide support to them as they sit silently at the table. This reduces the opportunity for children to develop their confidence and to talk or contribute to conversations with others.
- Staff miss opportunities to promote children's personal independence. For example, they prioritise getting children ready for home rather than using this time as a learning opportunity to teach children to do things for themselves. At the end of the morning, they rush to get children's shoes on one at a time while others sit waiting or become restless. At other times, they wipe children's noses for them, rather than encouraging children to do this independently.
- The manager and her staff work well with parents to support a smooth transition for children as they begin their time at the setting. They hold regular meetings with parents to discuss children as individuals and to provide feedback or ways to support children at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Weaknesses to staff recruitment and deployment places children at risk of harm. Safeguarding knowledge in other areas is secure. All staff can identify the signs of abuse to be alert to. They know who to contact in the event of a child protection concern or an allegation against a member of staff. The manager and her staff encourage parents of older children to work considerably with the setting to help manage risks. They take their children to wash their hands as they arrive as part of allergy management and good hygiene.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
improve processes to ensure that unvetted staff are not left unsupervised with children	28/03/2023

develop the curriculum, so that it is ambitious in its expectations for all children, engaging them to sustain interest and build on what they already know or can do	28/04/2023
improve staff's management of children's behaviour, so that children learn to follow rules, are able to work as part of a group, and understand that some behaviour is unacceptable	28/04/2023
provide appropriate opportunity and challenge for children to develop self-care and independence in everyday routines.	28/04/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	2609702
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10264460
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 6
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	The Lindens Early Years CIC
Registered person unique reference number	2609700
Telephone number	01453762526
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Lindens Early Years registered in December 2020. It is based in Stroud. The setting offers care from 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday, term time only. The kindergarten has five staff, with the lead teacher holding qualified teacher status. All other staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications at levels 3 and 4. The kindergarten follows the Steiner curriculum.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rosie Pritchard

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.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the provision and discussed the aims and rationale for their curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their knowledge and experience within the setting.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working with children.

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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