

Inspection of Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd

Kingfisher Drive, Walderslade, Kent ME5 7NX

Inspection date:

26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children arrive happy and are greeted warmly by friendly staff. They settle quickly, eager to play with their friends. Children are encouraged to be independent. They go to the toilet independently and share with staff that they have washed their hands. Babies explore what is put out on the carpet for them and older children choose toys themselves. Children know the routines of the setting well, such as getting ready when it is lunchtime. Children mostly play well together. However, there are times when children have to wait unnecessarily, for example when getting ready to go outside. This impacts on their behaviour. Staff do not always recognise this and children lose interest and focus.

Children enjoy exploring outside, squealing with excitement when playing hide and seek with a parachute. They enjoy planting seeds and digging for treasure in the mud. Staff know children well and understand what their next steps are. However, they are not confident to explain how the activities they have set up match what children need to learn next. This impacts on the progress children can make. In addition, staff's interactions with children are inconsistent. Staff are inexperienced in supporting the youngest children. This impacts on these children's interactions and engagements with adults. Nonetheless, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported.

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

- Parents talk highly of the support they receive for their children with SEND. They like receiving regular photo updates about their children. They find staff kind and caring. They say their children have made progress in their social skills and speech.
- Leaders and managers work closely with the local authority to support children with SEND. They attend networking events and liaise with other local groups. They talk proudly of their local community and families.
- Staff, in the main, say they enjoy working at the setting. They say that leaders and managers are approachable and supportive. They say they have received some training to support them in their roles. However, training in meeting the needs of babies is not fully in place. This impacts on staff's ability to meet young children's needs most appropriately and ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Leaders and managers are passionate and hands-on. They are reflective and have plans for the future to ensure improvements in practice and provision, including recruitment of new staff. They have correctly identified that support and training for less-experienced staff is required. However, this is not yet embedded and consistent.
- Staff plan a varied curriculum and children enjoy taking part in a range of

experiences. Children are excited to go and find different utensils to plant seeds with when they play outside. However, at times, they do not benefit from high-quality interactions with staff and staff do not always notice when they become upset. This impacts on children's enjoyment and engagement in the curriculum staff provide.

- Babies are keen to explore, crawling around the baby room. They are keen to interact with adults. However, staff do not always recognise how best to support them. Staff are often engaged in domestic tasks, which impacts on the quality of engagements babies have with adults. This has an impact on the progress they make.
- Staff sing rhymes with children and share stories with them. They recognise that since the COVID-19 pandemic, communication and language are a priority. They encourage parents to take books home to share with their children. However, staff do not consistently challenge or extend children's thinking and learning. This leads to times when children lose focus and interest in activities. This impacts on children's learning and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The premises are secure and safe. Leaders and managers have made positive changes to procedures, for example for the recording and reporting of accidents. Leaders and managers have undertaken safer recruitment training. They understand their roles and responsibilities. They have secure processes in place for recruitment and checking the ongoing suitability of staff. Staff are able to explain the signs and symptoms of abuse. They have knowledge of more recent safeguarding issues. They know where to go for advice and support. They are able to explain the steps they would take if they had concerns about a colleague.

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 staff receive appropriate training and support to understand and meet the needs of the younger children, so that all children receive good-quality learning and development experiences.	30/06/2023

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

- support staff to match activities more precisely to what children need to learn next to help them make consistently good progress
- improve staff's skills in engaging and interacting with children during activities and daily routines, so staff offer children appropriate challenges, extend their understanding and keep them interested and focused on learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY331809
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10287332
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 10
Total number of places	80
Number of children on roll	112
Name of registered person	Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP905440
Telephone number	01634 863 332
Date of previous inspection	11 April 2019

Information about this early years setting

Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd registered in 2005. It operates from a building in the grounds of Kingfisher Primary School in Walderslade, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs 15 members of staff, 10 of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Salisbury

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual/registered individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector 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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