

Inspection of Ridgemount Cottage Nursery School

73 Ermin Street, Gloucester GL3 4EH

Inspection date:

19 May 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 at the nursery happily and are ready to start their day in the busy and vibrant environment. Older children settle quickly and form secure relationships with staff and their peers. They confidently engage in activities, concentrate well and talk freely to staff about their play. However, younger babies struggle to settle. At times, they get upset, and staff do not know who their key children are due to recent changes in staffing, meaning staff do not provide the comfort and reassurance that babies need to help them feel secure.

Leaders have a clear idea of what the curriculum should entail for children. They verbalise their intent for developing children's communication and language skills and emphasise a focus on children's emotional well-being and personal care needs. However, this is not yet fully demonstrated in practice among all staff.

Staff promote activities to help children learn about different feelings and emotions. However, some staff do not always follow their behaviour management strategies to address inappropriate behaviour consistently or effectively. This does not help children to learn what is expected of them and the consequences of their actions.

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

- Babies initiate interactions with staff. However, staff do not always respond or introduce language. This limits babies' opportunities to explore and gain new words. Staff do not always use their knowledge to successfully distract and engage babies in learning, especially when they become upset. They spend a lot of their time trying to manage the organisation of the routine, and babies are often passed between staff rather than being with their key person, which means their learning needs are not consistently or effectively met.
- Staff promote children's independence and self-care, and they are taught the importance of handwashing and making healthy choices. Children are encouraged and praised for using the toilet. At mealtimes, older children scrape their own plates when finished, and some children help set the table with cutlery. However, some staff do not consistently follow good hygiene procedures. For example, staff do not always wash dummies after they have fallen onto the floor, allowing babies to still use them, and they do not ensure that individual drink bottles are not accessed by other children.
- Toddlers and pre-school children confidently move between the inside and outside areas. The outside area provides them with a variety of different spaces and resources. Staff support children's interests, follow their lead and extend their learning. For instance, toddlers happily make cakes in the sandpit. Staff ask them how much it would be to buy a cake and talk to the children about money, introducing number and value. Children are supported to solve problems.

- Children of all ages enjoy a wide range of activities. Babies explore food play, while toddlers enjoy making marks and play dough. During outdoor play, staff encourage children to try new activities. For example, older children try to use walking balance stilts. Staff support and praise them for their efforts.
- Staff support older children's communication and language well. On these occasions, staff engage in a narrative during children's play to excite and provide curiosity for them. For example, children learn about what insects live in the garden, talking about where they live and what they eat. They also experiment with colours and pipettes, filling different-sized containers and showing staff what 'mix' they have created. Staff explain these were introduced to promote children's finger strength, in preparation for early writing skills.
- Pre-school children are quick to listen to staff instructions and respond well. When staff ask questions, children are keen to answer. Children freely and confidently lead their own play. However, at times, when younger children are not following the routine or they display unwanted behaviours, not all staff follow effective behaviour management techniques. As a result, some staff do not always promote positive behaviour and self-regulation for all children. This leads to children receiving mixed messages regarding expected levels of behaviour.
- Parent partnerships are effective. Parents feel welcomed in the nursery and well supported. They appreciate the daily updates they are given on their children's progress and comment on the secure relationships their children have with staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities when working with children and know the signs and symptoms of abuse. Managers regularly check staff's knowledge in this area so that staff know which professionals they need to refer to if they are worried about a child. Managers ensure that safe staff recruitment is in place. They carry out ongoing suitability checks to make sure that staff continue to be suitable to work with children. This helps to keep children safe from harm. Staff know what to do if an allegation is made against a staff member as part of the whistle-blowing process.

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
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ensure staff know about their key children so they can meet their individual needs and share information with parents	23/06/2023
ensure staff follow the setting's behaviour management policy to provide consistent messages for children to help them understand expectations.	23/06/2023

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

- implement an ambitious curriculum that supports babies' communication and language
- promote positive hygiene routines consistently across the nursery to further support children's understanding of healthy practices.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY545310
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10291788
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 5
Total number of places	120
Number of children on roll	189
Name of registered person	Ridgemount Cottage Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP545309
Telephone number	01452 864107
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Ridgemount Cottage Nursery School re-registered in 2017 and is located in Brockworth, Gloucestershire. The setting operates all year round from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. There are 36 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold early years professional status and six hold qualified teacher status. A further 15 hold appropriate childcare qualifications between levels 2 and 4. The nursery receives funding for free early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Marie Swindells

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- This inspection was carried out as a result of a risk assessment, following information received about the provider.
- 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 managers about the leadership and management of the setting.
- 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 in the setting.

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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