

Inspection of West Hill Life Ltd

Holy Trinity Church, High Street, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DE

Inspection date: 7 June 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

Some staff fail to demonstrate an understanding of their role and responsibility to identify risks to keep children safe. Leaders, including the designated safeguarding leads, do not have a secure understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against staff. They do not alert the appropriate authorities within the required timescales about children they have concerns about. This does not ensure that children are kept safe.

Children do not consistently engage in purposeful learning. The poorly designed curriculum does not meet the needs of all children. Children are not provided with experiences or activities that successfully build on what they already know and can do. Planned activities are too ambitious for the youngest children and do not focus enough on what is expected at each age and stage of development. Nonetheless, children enjoy the activities and resources provided. They remain focused for long periods of time and enjoy staff praise for their efforts. Children are well behaved and respond positively to the staff. They seek out an adult when they need reassurance or help. Staff are positive role models for children and offer calm and engaging interactions. Children's emotional development is well supported.

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

- Staff have completed safeguarding training and can demonstrate their knowledge of the correct procedures to follow in the event of a concern. However, leaders do not implement these procedures effectively enough. Communication between staff is weak, and information is not shared effectively to ensure that action is taken in the event of a safeguarding matter. As a result, children's well-being and safety are compromised.
- Leaders implement activities for children that focus on school 'readiness'. At times, these are pitched too high, and children are expected to learn concepts beyond their current level of development. Children are not supported well enough to have freedom to practise and embed their skills. For example, due to the toilets being on a different level of the building, children who are more than capable of using a toilet use potties for convenience. Staff do not encourage their ongoing progress in practising independent self-care.
- Staff do not plan activities tailored to help children move forward in their development. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), as well as those who speak English as an additional language. The special educational needs coordinator understands the referral process and works with other agencies to support children in their learning. However, due to a lack of effective tracking for children, the identification of children at risk of delay is not swift enough. Therefore, these children do not make the continued progress of which they are capable.

- Children enjoy activities that encourage them to learn about the wider world. For example, they visit the local town, including the parks, shops and library. Children engage with the public and develop their social skills as they learn about the celebration of events, such as St George's Day.
- Children benefit from a daily physical exercise lesson. For example, staff teach soccer skills, and children take part in dance and movement sessions. Pre-school children practise getting dressed during planned activities, so they are ready for dressing for their physical education lessons when they start school.
- Parents express that they are happy with the service they receive. They comment that they receive information from staff about their child's care, either face to face or over the phone. However, arrangements for sharing information about children's learning are not in place. Staff do not share their children's progress frequently enough or share how parents can support their child's ongoing learning at home.
- Staff talk positively about their well-being and feel supported by leaders. They receive regular supervision to discuss important aspects of their practice. Staff benefit from access to ongoing training, to further their professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

On the whole, staff understand how to recognise potential concerns for children's safety. However, some staff, including those designated to take the lead in safeguarding, do not have a secure enough knowledge of when to implement the local child protection procedures they must follow. This includes when they have a concern about a child's safety or when an allegation is made against staff. Staff have a good understanding of deployment. They make the necessary risk assessments, to ensure that possible risks posed to children are reduced. Recruitment procedures are robust. This includes the background checks that are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the setting.

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
ensure that all staff know how to recognise concerns about a child's welfare and when to make timely referrals to statutory safeguarding authorities, including if an allegation is made against a member of staff	12/06/2023

improve the procedures to support children with SEND and children who speak English as an additional language, to help them make good progress in their learning	12/06/2023
ensure that the curriculum clearly identifies what it is that all children need to learn at each stage of their learning and how this reflects their individual needs.	12/06/2023

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

- improve arrangements to ensure parental partnership is effective so that all parents receive up-to-date details regarding the progress their children are making, next steps for learning and how they can support their children at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY561707
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10291785
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	West Hill Life Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902482
Telephone number	01322278677
Date of previous inspection	29 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

West Hill Life Ltd registered in 2018. It operates from a church building in Dartford, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, all year around. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs nine members of staff, all of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Williams

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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises with the area manager.
- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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