

Inspection of Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd

Balcarres, Southfleet Avenue, LONGFIELD, Kent DA3 7JG

Inspection date:

14 July 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

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children and their families are welcomed in by friendly staff. Children come in happily and settle to play with their friends and familiar staff. Older children enjoy solving clues to find bugs outside, exploring the newly built bug hotel. Staff encourage children to think about the clues and give them time to respond. Overall, children play well together and develop their social skills. However, on occasion, when children need support for their behaviour, they do not always benefit from consistent guidance from staff.

Children are encouraged to make choices. They enjoy choosing different rhymes to sing after a story, joining in with the actions. Staff promote a love of reading. All children join in, listening intently to stories read outside. Staff know their key children well and identify what they need to learn next. However, although children enjoy activities based on their interests, these are not always targeted as well as possible to reflect their individual learning needs. This has an impact on the progress that all children make. Children know the routines of the setting. For example, they quickly line up when it is lunchtime and wait their turn to wash their hands. This helps to prepare them for future learning experiences.

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

- The owner and manager work well together. They are passionate about making improvements to the provision and practice. The owner and manager are reflective and recognise the journey they are on. They have recently accessed local authority support, and this is beginning to have a positive impact in driving improvements. For example, developments are beginning to be made to the learn environments, such as the baby room and outdoor space. However, weaknesses remain in the arrangements to consistently promote children's positive behaviour. Staff are prompt to intervene, when needed, offering praise and encouragement. However, they do not consistently explain to children how their behaviour impacts on others. This does not fully support children's understanding of behavioural expectations.
- Parents report that their children have made progress in their confidence, communication, counting and social skills. They talk highly of the new manager. Parents say communication is now much improved. They appreciate the opportunities they have to meet other parents. Individual parents talk highly of the personal support they have received.
- Staff say that they like working at the setting. They talk highly of the recent improvements. For example, they appreciate the regular staff meetings and opportunities to share ideas with other colleagues. Staff talk positively of the recent training they have had and how this has helped to develop their knowledge and skills, such as understanding risk assessments.

- The owner and manager have recently reviewed all areas of the provision and have plans for the future to ensure continued improvements. These include investing further in the outdoor area and developing other areas of the indoor environment. They have begun to draw on the skills and knowledge of colleagues at their other setting to support staff to develop their practice. For example, experienced staff from the other setting help and support newer staff by providing ideas for activities. However, this is not fully embedded.
- Overall, teaching has improved. Staff accurately identify what children need to learn next and plan activities based on children's individual interests. However, staff are still developing confidence in linking activities to individual children's learning needs when planning and implementing activities. This is not fully targeted to precisely reflect their individual learning and development needs. This means that staff can not always recognise how to help children learn what they need to know next or how to challenge the youngest children in their play. Children enjoy building models. They chat excitedly to staff about the different bug models they create. Children say that they enjoy attending and that they like the toys on offer.
- Staff are not consistent in implementing their aim to promote children's independence. They support children to develop some useful personal care skills, such as using tissues to blow their noses. Staff have put mirrors up to help children to manage this for themselves. However, staff do not give enough consideration to encouraging children to confidently complete tasks that are within their capabilities. This does not fully support children as they prepare to move on to the next stage of their education.
- The owner and manager focus well on promoting the continuous professional development of staff. They have correctly identified staff who need additional support and training, and they have put plans in place for this. For example, they have begun to draw on the skills and knowledge of colleagues at their other setting to support staff to develop their practice. However, this is not yet fully embedded. The owner and manager ensure that they attend regular collaboration meetings with local settings to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge. They are proactive in seeking support from other external agencies and organisations. They are committed to supporting staff to undertake additional qualifications and training. For example, staff are working to gain leadership qualifications to support their practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The owner and manager have made positive changes to safeguarding practices and procedures. For example, they now ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out throughout the day. They fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Leaders have undertaken safer recruitment training and have robust processes in place for the recruitment, vetting and ongoing suitability of staff. They ensure that staff have effective knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff know what they would do if they were concerned about a child.

Staff are able to confidently talk about what processes they would follow if they had concerns about a colleague or if an allegation was made.

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 consistently manage children's behaviour appropriately.	16/08/2023

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

- support all staff to develop their understanding of children's individual needs and next steps, to enable them to fully support children's learning when planning activities and while children are engaged in their play
- encourage staff to identify and maximise opportunities for children to be fully independent.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY309106
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10281410
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP905440
Telephone number	01474 702190
Date of previous inspection	10 February 2023

Information about this early years setting

Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd registered in 2005. It is located in Longfield, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, all year around. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs seven members of staff, four of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Salisbury

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued 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.
- The owner, 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.
- Staff talked to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection, and the inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Several parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection, and the inspector 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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