

Inspection of Unicorn Nursery

Day Care Centre, Leeds Road, CASTLEFORD, West Yorkshire WF10 5HA

Inspection date: 9 August 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The provider has not made the necessary improvements since the last inspection. As a result, the quality of education is poor and safeguarding is ineffective. Some staff do not promote children's positive emotional well-being and use inappropriate strategies to manage their behaviour. On occasion, toddlers become upset and staff fail to offer comfort to them. The manager acts swiftly to address this and speaks to staff during the inspection. The weaknesses in safeguarding practice mean staff are unable to identify, record and report concerns about children. This does not promote children's welfare or safety.

Despite this, children arrive at the nursery happily and are pleased to see their peers and the staff team. Older children access resources independently and begin to enjoy using paints, brushes and water to make marks. Some staff use effective praise and play games with children, such as 'What time is it Mr Wolf?' Staff who work with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have high expectations for them. In addition, staff who work with babies provide secure foundations for their learning. Overall, staff promote children's good physical health. They enjoy freshly cooked meals and follow good hygiene routines.

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

- Some staff do not understand how to manage children's behaviour appropriately. For example, some staff lack the skills to help toddlers and do not speak positively to them during activities. At times, older children use inappropriate language during play outdoors. Staff use threats such as taking outdoor play away, to try and resolve the behaviour. This is ineffective and does not support children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Although the provider has a written safeguarding policy, procedures for recording concerns about children are not implemented by the manager. For instance, she does not keep written records of concerns about children or monitor these appropriately. This means she is unable to identify any emerging patterns of concern. In addition, some staff's knowledge of child protection issues, including potential signs of abuse, is limited.
- The manager and new management team have started to create plans for improvement. For example, changes have been made to the pre-school environment, which enables children to access mark-making resources independently. This helps to promote their early literacy skills. Staff have started to consider the skills older children need to learn before they start school. They have also developed partnerships with teachers to support children's transition.
- However, the management team have not focused on observing staff practice. As such, staff have not completed training to help them to develop their skills. As a result, the quality of education for some children continues to be poor,

particularly for children aged two years and over. This is a repeated breach of the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.

- Staff do not benefit from regular, effective supervisions with the manager. For example, current arrangements focus heavily on issues such as sickness. Supervisions, therefore, do not consistently provide opportunities for reflection on how staff can improve their skills and meet the needs of the children. Despite this, some staff are keen and enthusiastic to make changes and improvements.
- The quality of teaching is poor, particularly for toddlers and also those who prefer to learn outdoors. Staff have unreasonable expectations for toddlers and do not help them to make progress in the prime areas of learning. For example, toddlers are expected to sit down at tables for extended lengths of time, including during a dough disco activity. Staff do not provide a full curriculum outdoors and children wander around with little interaction. This has a negative impact on their behaviour.
- In contrast to this, children with SEND are effectively supported. For example, staff spend time with children one to one to work on their support plan. Children engage well and enjoy finding the right picture cards. Staff use Makaton signs to help children communicate clearly. Parents are very happy with the support they have received from the manager and how swiftly their children's needs have been identified.
- The baby room provision is a strength in the nursery. Staff know children well and know what they need to learn. Babies enjoy sensory activities outdoors and enjoy sprinkling the oats in the tray. Staff support them to say new words and hold their hands as they practise walking. Babies are very settled and their care needs are met effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The manager does not ensure that staff access training to develop and maintain a thorough knowledge of the potential signs of abuse. For instance, some staff have not accessed any professional development in relation to child protection and are not aware of issues such as county lines, female genital mutilation or the 'Prevent' duty guidance. Other staff fail to recognise the potential signs of sexual abuse and do not know who to report concerns to outside of the nursery, such as the local authority designated officer. In addition, procedures for recording concerns about children's welfare are not followed. However, the provider ensures safer recruitment procedures are followed for new staff and checks ongoing suitability through annual declarations.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
improve staff's understanding of how to manage children's behaviour appropriately, taking into account children's individual stages of development	15/09/2023
ensure the safeguarding policy is implemented consistently, with particular regard to making accurate records of concerns about children including existing injuries, and ensure all concerns are dealt with effectively	15/09/2023
provide all staff with child protection training which will help them to understand and identify signs of potential abuse, in order for staff to report these swiftly and keep children safe from harm	15/09/2023
improve opportunities for staff to access appropriate training to raise the quality of their teaching	15/09/2023
ensure staff receive regular, effective supervision meetings which provide them with support and coaching to help them meet the needs of children.	15/09/2023

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
improve staff's understanding of how to plan enjoyable and purposeful experiences which meet children's individual needs and help them to make good progress.	15/10/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY537722
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10304658
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	Ladybird Daycare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP526352
Telephone number	
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2022

Information about this early years setting

Unicorn Nursery registered in 2016 and is situated in Castleford, Wakefield. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including the manager. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Lorains

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Two joint observations were completed by the manager and inspector, indoors during a planned group activity and a one-to-one session.
- The inspector held a discussion with the manager in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery. She looked at relevant documentation such as evidence of recruitment, staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children. She discussed children's learning and development with the staff team and nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents and obtained feedback for the inspection.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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