

Inspection of Mohair Centre Holiday Playscheme, After School Club & Nursery

Brickfield Farm, Whitesmith, LEWES, East Sussex BN8 6JG

Inspection date: 29 August 2023

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's welfare is compromised due to breaches of safeguarding requirements. Leaders and managers do not have a robust oversight and risk assessment process in place. As a result, some staff have not had all checks back to assure their suitability and have been left on their own with children. Furthermore, staff lack knowledge of child protection issues and reporting processes in line with local procedures. This does not safeguard children.

Staff that care for very young children do not understand how to plan and implement a suitable curriculum. They prioritise activities first, before thinking about what they would like children to learn. As a result, some children experience generic activities that do not precisely meet their individual needs. The indoor learning environments are not well organised or maintained throughout the day. They are overrun with extensive amounts of toys covering the floor space. Consequently, children who choose not to be involved in the main activities, struggle to sustain concentration or engage in meaningful play as they flit between resources. Despite this, pre-school children have a very well-organised curriculum with staff that teach effectively. This builds on what children already know and can do. Consequently, these children progress well in their learning.

Despite the weaknesses, children are happy, settled and generally have good relationships with their friends. They enjoy spending extensive time in the outdoor spaces. This includes forest-school sessions and growing their own vegetables in the allotment. Children show confidence using small tools, such as scissors and knives. For example, they make stick swords to extend creative play ideas and to cut open courgettes they have picked. This supports children learning about the natural world. Children benefit from unique experiences to contribute towards looking after the animals onsite, including goats, pigs and peacocks. Children confidently enter the guinea pig enclosure and carefully handle the animals while feeding and grooming them. This supports children to develop care and empathy for living things.

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

- Leaders and managers are clear about what they want to achieve to ensure that children have positive experiences. They self-evaluate and recognise that there are weaknesses in staff knowledge and the implementation of the curriculum for the youngest age groups. They have made a start at addressing this through training, but this is not currently having an impact on the the qualify of teaching. As a result, not all children at different ages and stages of development receive a well-sequenced curriculum.
- All children have a key person assigned to them at the nursery. However,

arrangements are ineffective for key persons who are absent. This is because cover staff are not clear about children's next steps and what they are meant to be delivering to continue children's learning. As such, they have not checked children's next steps or received a handover to use this information to provide what children need. Staff fail to recognise that learning is continuous, which disrupts continuity for children.

- In general, children know how to behave well. Staff teach children social skills by encouraging them to share, take turns and talk about what they know with their friends. However, due to the weaknesses in the curriculum, there are times when children become unsettled. Staff have to intervene to manage and support altercations between children in regard to sharing resources.
- The manager, who is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), ensures that children who need extra help have robust support in place. This includes making good use of inclusion funding to provide additional staffing. The SENCo works effectively with parents, staff and other relevant professionals to ensure that children have support plans with individual targets and goals to help them catch up.
- Children receive support from staff to help extend and develop their vocabulary. This is achieved in a variety of ways. This includes sharing a wide range of books, singing songs and rhymes and introducing new language linked to their experiences. For example, staff use words, including root, petal and nectar, when talking to children about plants growing and minibeasts.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. Parents comment positively about the nursery. They explain how well the staff know their children and establish good relationships. Communication with parents is strong as staff share the progress that their children are making.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders and managers are not up to date with the progress of vetting checks to assure staff are suitable to work with children. They do not ensure that risk assessments are implemented and understood by the staff team. For example, staff who are yet to receive suitability checks back, are observed to have access to children on their own. This does not effectively safeguard children. Staff receive child protection training and ongoing support through policy updates and staff meetings. However, staff are confused about who to report concerns to beyond the designated safeguarding lead and have a weak understanding of some safeguarding issues, such as county lines and the 'Prevent' duty.

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
improve staff's knowledge of child protection issues and reporting processes, including knowing who to report welfare concerns to in line with local safeguarding procedures	30/09/2023
implement effective arrangements to ensure that staff's suitability has been fully assessed so that all adults looking after children are suitable	30/09/2023
ensure that the risk assessment of unvetted staff is effectively communicated with all staff so that individuals who have yet to have their suitability assured are not left alone with children	30/09/2023
put in place effective key-person arrangements so that staff are clear about what they need to provide and deliver in order to meet the individual needs of children	31/10/2023
implement a well-planned, age-appropriate curriculum for the youngest age groups that precisely meets the needs of children.	30/09/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	156379
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10307034
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	1 to 8
Total number of places	97
Number of children on roll	94
Name of registered person	Webb, Jacqueline
Registered person unique reference number	RP511850
Telephone number	1825872457
Date of previous inspection	31 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Mohair Centre Holiday Playscheme, After School Club and Nursery registered in 1996. It operates from a number of small buildings situated on a farm in Chiddingly, East Sussex. The nursery opens five days a week throughout the year, from 8am to 6pm. The holiday playscheme operates every school holiday from 8.30am to 6pm. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 30 members of staff, 24 of whom have relevant childcare qualifications between level 2 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sherrie Nyss

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector went on a learning walk with the manager to establish the priorities for the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and daily routines to assess the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at suitable times during the inspection.
- A joint observation was completed and discussed with the manager.
- The inspector tracked children to establish what it is like for a child at the nursery.
- The inspector held a discussion with the owner and the manager in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of suitability and vetting checks, first-aid certificates and staff personnel files.

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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