

Inspection of Cambridge Day Nursery

67a Milton Road, CAMBRIDGE CB4 1XA

Inspection date: 10 October 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 safety cannot be assured. There are significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the nursery. Recruitment and induction processes are weak. They are not followed robustly to assure the suitability of all adults working in the nursery. The premises are not sufficiently secure, and staff supervision of children is not effective.

Children's good health is not promoted. Staff do not notice when children drink water from the outdoor water tray. The cleanliness of the nursery is poor. Potties are not emptied, and toilets are not flushed after use. Staff do not supervise children to check that they wash their hands after using the toilet. Children placed their faces on and licked dirty windows. They ate from each other's plates and fed each other from shared spoons.

Children do not receive the quality of education they deserve. Although the provider has established a curriculum, this is not shared effectively with staff. The nursery is chaotic. Children often wander aimlessly or engage in games of chase because there is no purposeful or meaningful activity to inspire or motivate their learning. Staff did not notice when children resorted to playing in the bathroom on the floor, 'cleaning' the pipes under the sink with a wet paper towel. When staff talk to children, their choice of language is not ambitious to help children build a wide vocabulary. Communication with parents is weak, in part due to an ineffective key-person system. Some parents do not receive meaningful or accurate information about their child's day.

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

- The leadership and management of the nursery is significantly weak. Poor oversight of practice has led to complacency throughout the nursery and a lack of ambition for children. There are repeated breaches of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. This is with particular regard to checking the suitability of adults working in the nursery, effective supervision of children to keep them safe and healthy, risk assessments, and hygiene. This raises significant concerns about the provider's capacity to improve and sustain good-quality care and education for children.
- Children are not supervised well. Staff tend to work with one or two children but do not demonstrate awareness of what else is happening around them and with other children. Brushes and mops are left in reach of children, and a cupboard in the playroom containing knives and forks was accessible to them. Children can access the stairs without adult supervision. The lack of vigilance by staff heightens the risks to children.
- Poor supervision of children renders the arrangements for parents to collect

children at the end of the day unsafe. Staff leave the internal gate open, which gives children unsupervised access to the kitchen and to the front door, creating a security risk for children. On the day of inspection, an unvetted maintenance person was not escorted as they completed their work. This means they had unsupervised access to children. Leaders and managers had little information about this individual, other than their first name. This compromises children's safety and demonstrates exceedingly poor safeguarding practice.

- Staff do not notice hazards to children's safety. A portable ladder that was in place for children to climb onto wooden apparatus was not securely fastened. A young child fell, pulling the ladder on top of themselves. Although the child was not injured, this raises significant concerns about children's safety. Children play and climb on tyres that hold standing water in the rims and are covered with bird droppings. Despite being raised as a concern at a recent visit, the nursery is dirty and poorly maintained. This places children's health at risk.
- Staff do not receive appropriate training and coaching to help them develop their practice and to understand and implement the curriculum. Some staff do not receive regular supervision meetings. Other staff have not received any form of supervision or coaching from leaders. The quality of teaching is not accurately assessed by leaders. Planned activities for children seek to reflect their interests. However, they are not planned to help children build on what they know and can do. Too little attention is paid to help children develop good communication and language skills, which is crucial for their current and future learning and development.
- The arrangements for children and babies who require a nap during the day are poor. Although clean bedding is provided for children, this was seen to be piled in a heap on the floor near to where children were eating lunch before being placed on sleep mats. Staff do not demonstrate consideration for the needs of sleeping children. The environment is not calm. Sleeping children were seen to be startled in their sleep when there was a clattering noise nearby. Sometimes, staff hold distressed babies as they try to reassure and comfort them. However, they do this while sitting next to sleeping children. This is not good practice to help children benefit from restful sleep and does not meet their needs. At other times, distressed children wander around and are ignored by staff.
- Parents receive some information about their child's day. However, staff do not inform parents of the next steps in their child's learning, to help their child make progress, or how they can help at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The weak leadership and management of the nursery has enabled a poor culture of safeguarding to exist. This puts children at risk of harm. Leaders are not able to provide evidence that vetting processes have been conducted and references taken for all persons working in the nursery. Despite recent serious concerns about a former staff member's suitability, leaders do not rigorously check the ongoing suitability of all adults working in the nursery. This haphazard approach to checking

the suitability of adults working in the nursery places children at risk of harm. Staff's safeguarding knowledge is not sufficiently embedded to ensure they take the required action to protect children from harm. Staff place too much reliance on senior staff to make decisions. They do not demonstrate professional curiosity or conviction to challenge decisions to advocate for children.

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 recruitment processes to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children, are suitable	07/11/2023
improve the arrangements to check the ongoing suitability of practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children	07/11/2023
ensure that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check is obtained for any person aged 16 and over who works on the premises where childcare is provided	07/11/2023
ensure records about the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed are robustly maintained for all persons working on the premises where childcare is provided	07/11/2023
improve the arrangements for induction so that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities	07/11/2023
ensure that all staff receive training about safeguarding so that they are able to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and respond in a timely and appropriate way	07/11/2023

improve the security of the premises to reduce the risk of children being able to leave the premises unsupervised	07/11/2023
improve the staffing arrangements to ensure staff are appropriately deployed so that all children are adequately supervised, that their needs are met and that they are safe	07/11/2023
ensure that all staff receive effective supervision that provides them with support, coaching and training and promotes the interests of children	07/11/2023
improve the risk assessment procedures and take action to minimise or remove hazards so that children are not exposed to any unnecessary risks	07/11/2023
improve hygiene practices to ensure the premises are fit for purpose and children's good health is promoted	07/11/2023
improve the arrangements for sleeping children so that the sleeping environment meets their needs and promotes restful sleep	07/11/2023
ensure that all children have a named key person who liaises with parents to ensure every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs	07/11/2023
train staff to understand and implement the nursery curriculum so that children benefit from meaningful learning experiences and good-quality interaction with staff that inspires, motivates and helps them build on what they already know and can do	07/11/2023
improve information sharing with parents so that parents understand what children are learning next and how to support ongoing learning at home.	07/11/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY308230
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10313127
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 4
Total number of places	90
Number of children on roll	84
Name of registered person	Cambridge Associates In Management Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP524790
Telephone number	01223 566323
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2021

Information about this early years setting

Cambridge Day Nursery registered in 2005. The nursery employs 24 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Gail Warnes

Julie Meredith-Jenkins

Inspection activities

- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and have taken that into account in their evaluation of 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 inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the deputy manager.
- Parents spoke to the inspectors, who took account of their views.
- The inspectors 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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