

Inspection of Academy 4 Kids

209 Friern Barnet Lane, Whetstone, London N20 0NG

Inspection date: 14 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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's health and well-being are compromised. Staff do not implement suitable hygiene practices. For instance, they do not teach children how to wash and dry their hands correctly, using soap, to help them learn appropriate self-care skills. This also increases the risk of germs spreading and cross-infection. Additionally, some staff do not know the safeguarding procedures to follow, particularly with regard to how to report a concern they may have. This means that children's safety cannot be assured.

The quality of teaching is poor. Staff too often take a supervisory role during children's play, particularly while children play outdoors. They do not consistently engage or support children in their play in order to extend their learning. Children have few opportunities to develop their skills further. Furthermore, staff do not help children to develop positive attitudes to learning, such as to be curious and concentrate. Children are often disengaged.

Staff do not support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Although leaders and staff seek advice from external professionals to help them support children with SEND, they do not use the information they gather well to ensure that all children's learning needs are met. For instance, they do not use the aids and resources they have put in place to support the understanding and communication of children with SEND. In addition, staff do not interact with children frequently enough to help children meet their developmental goals.

Staff form suitable relationships with children. Children show that they feel at ease in the nursery. Younger children settle quickly on arrival. Children are generally friendly towards their peers.

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

- The nominated individual (NI), who is also the acting manager, does not ensure that they comply with all safeguarding and welfare requirements to help keep children safe. For instance, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) does not have the knowledge needed to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. In addition, following the recent changes in the leadership team, staff are unclear about who to report any safeguarding concerns to.
- Staff do not always follow hygiene procedures fully or consistently to ensure they support children's good health, well-being and understanding of how to be healthy. For instance, they sometimes fail to wash their hands in between dealing with children's personal care. This puts children at risk of cross-infection.

In addition, leaders do not ensure that the premises are in a suitably hygienic state. For example, the nappy changing and toileting areas are not clean or sanitary.

- Risk assessment procedures are not effective at helping leaders and staff to recognise and remove hazards to help keep children safe. For instance, the flooring in the outdoor playhouse is broken and is a trip hazard. Furthermore, staff do not consider how their actions create hazards for children. For example, staff empty water from children's cups onto plastic steps in the garden at the end of snack. This creates a slip hazard. Children mimic pouring water onto the floor and copy behaviours which put them at risk.
- Some staff do not fully understand all procedures to follow to maintain children's good health and care. For instance, some staff do not know what to do when a child is ill to ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent any spread of infection between children.
- Staff do not do enough to build on children's vocabulary. Although some staff interact and communicate with children, this is not consistent enough to build on what they already know. Additionally, some staff do not demonstrate to children how to interact with others. For instance, staff stand over children when talking to them rather than showing them how to make eye contact when communicating. Children do not learn some key aspects of how to be social with others and how to develop good communication skills.
- Leaders recognise some strengths and areas that can be improved in the setting. However, overall, they do not use procedures to monitor staff's practice effectively in order to identify all weaknesses and ensure action is taken to make improvements. For instance, leaders have failed to recognise the weaknesses in the quality of teaching, care practices and the support given to children with SEND.
- Staff provide some appropriate opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Older children enjoy the time they spend outdoors, climbing and balancing on large wooden blocks. Younger children develop some independence skills, such as being able to put their own socks on.
- Parents comment that they find out about what their children are doing and their areas of strength through the nursery's online application. Parents also comment that they like the outdoor space and the woodland area.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The NI has failed to recognise that staff have insufficient knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Although staff understand what may alert them to a child being at risk of harm, they are not clear on the reporting procedures should they have concerns. Staff do not understand the steps to take should the DSL not take effective action to pass on their concerns about children in their care. They are also not clear on their responsibility in recording any safeguarding concerns. This compromises children's safety and welfare. Risk assessments are not effective, and hazards in the environment are not removed. The managers do not ensure that

staff follow and promote good hygiene practices to comply with health and safety legislation.

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 gain a secure understanding of the safeguarding procedures and practices so they can act swiftly and respond to safeguarding concerns appropriately	28/08/2023
ensure that the DSL attends appropriate training for their role	15/09/2023
implement robust hygiene practices and ensure that staff follow these to promote children's good health and learning about how to keep themselves healthy	28/08/2023
ensure that the premises are safe, clean and fit for the purpose of childcare, with particular regard to ensuring that hygiene requirements are met	28/08/2023
improve risk assessment procedures to identify and remove all possible hazards to maintain children's safety	28/08/2023
ensure that staff understand and follow the procedures for responding to children who are ill or infectious so that necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection	28/08/2023
provide effective supervision, training and support to staff to help them improve the quality of their teaching and the care they provide children so it is consistently at a good standard	15/09/2023

develop staff's understanding of how to support children with SEND to ensure that they are receiving the individual support they require to make good levels of progress in their development.	15/09/2023
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Setting details

Unique reference number	EY260044
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10304760
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	104
Name of registered person	AB Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903539
Telephone number	020 8446 9988
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2020

Information about this early years setting

Academy 4 Kids registered in 2003. The nursery is situated in Whetstone, in the London Borough of Barnet. It is open each weekday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The provider employs 16 members of staff, of whom 14 hold relevant early years qualifications from level 2 to level 4.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Tina Twynham
Anne-Marie Giffts

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and have 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.
- Members of the management team completed a tour of the premises with the inspectors and discussed the intent of their early years curriculum.
- The management team completed joint observations with inspectors to evaluate the quality of staff's teaching.
- Inspectors spoke with the NI, who is also the acting manager, and the deputy manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- Inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Staff, parents and children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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