

Inspection of Pen Green Centre for Children And Families

Pen Green Lane, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1BJ

Inspection date:

27 September 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 are not kept safe as staff do not consider all risks. Children walk and run with objects in their mouths such as food and a pen. Staff do not notice or act swiftly enough when children adopt unsafe play. Children do not understand what is expected of them in relation to their behaviour. They put objects such as soil and a pom-pom in their mouths. Staff do not offer explanations or clear guidance, resulting in some children being upset and confused.

Children lead their own play as they independently use jugs to tip and pour water. Staff recognise that the activity allows children to practise skills but does not help them build on existing learning. Some children do not have good quality learning experiences as staff who come to provide temporary cover in the childcare rooms are not given enough information about the children to provide appropriate learning opportunities. At times, children lack engagement and move between activities very quickly.

Staff sing nursery rhymes with the youngest children. They make sure that children can see their facial movements and sing the rhymes at a lovely pace. This introduces the youngest children to new words and patterns of rhythm. However, teaching is inconsistent across the nursery which results in children receiving a different quality of education depending on which staff are caring for them. Some children do not get the support they need to help them develop their communication and language skills. For instance, children are asked what food is on a plate, however, before they have time to respond, staff tell them the answer. There is limited communication and social interaction at mealtimes between staff and children.

Children across the nursery have secure relationships with staff. Staff provide reassurance when children are nervous of visitors. Children approach staff for comfort and are given hugs by staff when needed.

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

- Staff do not take prompt action to minimise risks to children. They are not quick enough to respond when children are witnessed walking and running around the rooms while eating. Visitors have to alert staff that this is happening so that staff can take action to manage children's safety. Children's welfare is not assured as they put items in their mouth or crawl on the floor near a pen lid. Staff are not always swift enough to identify and remove these choking hazards.
- Staff do not provide children with the guidance they need to help them to manage their own behaviour and understand their emotions. Staff are not consistent in what they expect from children which results in children purposely

tipping up boxes of resources so that they fall on the floor. Staff respond by saying, 'crash', rather than explaining to children how to respect resources. Staff do not help children to distinguish between their different emotions. When children are a little unsettled, staff ask children if they are cross rather than trying to help children understand and name their feelings.

- Staff provide a running commentary to children which exposes them to age-appropriate language. However, some staff do not understand how children develop their communication and language skills. Staff ask children questions as they play, but some staff do not recognise that children need time to consider the question and give their response. For example, staff ask children what they want to play with next and in quick succession provide two options. The children do not have time to consider what it is they want to do, and, as a result, do neither.
- Staff meet weekly to consider what it is that children need to learn next and they use this information to provide an environment which supports this. Staff follow children's lead during play, however, they fail to notice the things that interest children. For example, staff fail to recognise that children are interested in pens and do not show children how to use pens appropriately. This results in children taking inappropriate risks as they climb up steps and go down slides holding onto pens.
- Leaders prioritise independence in their curriculum, however, children are not being consistently supported to develop key skills in self-care. For example, on occasions, staff are too quick to intervene when children are asked to get a cup or wipe their nose. Staff do this without giving the children the chance to act on the instruction.
- Key persons have a good understanding of the children in their care. However, leaders have not ensured that staff who provide cover know what the children in their care need to learn next. This means that learning does not always support children to progress towards their next steps.
- Leaders have devised a sequenced curriculum, however, some staff fail to understand and implement the curriculum. Staff do not support children well enough for them to remain engaged in learning for any length of time. Staff fail to notice that children lack engagement and are wandering around the room. For example, children walk around and play with musical instruments, cars and books in quick succession and without purpose. Staff do not intervene to provide timely interaction to support children to focus for longer periods.
- Leaders are aware of some of the improvements which need to be made to the provision that is being offered, however, action has not been taken swiftly enough to bring about improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Children are not kept safe as staff fail to identify practice that puts children at risk of choking. Leaders do not ensure that staff assess risks in the environment to make sure it is safe for children of all ages. However, leaders and staff recognise

the signs that might indicate that a child is at risk of harm while not in their care. Staff know how to refer their concerns to the appropriate agencies. Staff know and understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about the behaviour of those working with children.

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
take all reasonable steps to identify and minimise risks to children	14/11/2023
ensure that staff provide children with clear and consistent expectations regarding behaviour	14/11/2023
ensure that all practitioners undertake appropriate training and access professional development opportunities so that they can provide a quality learning experience for all children	14/11/2023
implement the chosen curriculum and improve the consistency of good quality teaching	14/11/2023
prioritise children's communication and language development through improving staff teaching skills	14/11/2023
improve the oversight of leaders to ensure that they take swift steps to improve poor practice.	14/11/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY356011
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10285536
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 2
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	56
Name of registered person	Pen Green Centre for Children and Families Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP904746
Telephone number	01536 400068
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

Pen Green Centre For Children And Families registered in 2008. The centre employs 10 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The centre opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The centre provides funded early education for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Christy Dave
Lora Teague

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.
- The inspectors viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The two heads of centre, the assistant centre manager and inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors observed the interactions between staff and children.
- One inspector carried out joint observations of a group activity with the head of centre.
- One inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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