

Inspection of Abacus Day Nursery

Silverstone Crescent, Stoke-On-Trent ST6 6XP

Inspection date:

7 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

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 are not properly safeguarded. Leaders and managers do not understand the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, which leaves children at potential risk of harm.

Children arrive at the setting eager to learn. However, the quality of education that they receive is variable because the arrangements for the supervision of staff have not yet been effective in providing them with the support they need to improve their teaching skills. In addition, some key persons do not know their children well enough to consistently plan experiences that build on children's prior knowledge. Nevertheless, staff are keen for children to enjoy their day, and provide some activities for them to engage with. For example, babies practise saying new words, such as 'splash' as they explore moving pretend fish through water. Older children demonstrate their counting skills as they count the number of boxes used to build towers. However, staff do not always recognise when children have finished playing with the resources available to provide something new. As a result, children lose focus in their learning and begin to wander around the environment looking for things to do, or resort to lying alone in quieter spaces. This does not support all children to make consistently good progress.

Most children show confidence in the nursery. Although some children arrive upset, they benefit from cuddles with the caring staff, which helps them to settle in quickly. Children are welcoming and happily approach new people to play with, demonstrating their sense of security.

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

- Leaders and managers accept that there has been a decrease in the quality of provision since the last inspection. They recognise that, on occasions, some requirements, including those relating to staff deployment, have been breached. Staff report that, on occasions, the maximum staff-to-child ratios have been exceeded. Managers are using self-evaluation to identify what improvements need to be made and have taken action to address some concerns identified. However, as a result of a recent change in management, weaknesses have not been tackled swiftly enough to ensure children are safeguarded and receive at least a good quality of education.
- The lead practitioner for safeguarding does not fully understand their role and responsibilities. They do not recognise when an allegation may be made against a member of staff. Furthermore, they do not know the procedures to follow to report this to the correct agencies in a timely way. This means that children are not properly safeguarded.
- Although there have been some recent changes in staffing, all children have a

named key person. Babies are supported well by their key person to settle into the setting. However, although staff provide some activities for children, they do not always identify clearly enough what children need to learn next, and are not consistently responsive to children's emerging interests. For example, when children show interest in filling containers with water, they are told to stop and this skill is not extended. Some activities provided do not challenge children enough, meaning at times they become bored and disinterested.

- Some parents are happy with the service the nursery provides. However, others report that they experience communication issues. Staff do not consistently share information with parents about their child's learning in order to support parents to build on this further at home. Some messages from parents about children's care needs have not been communicated between staff and managers so that children's needs are consistently met. This impacts on the continuity of children's care and learning.
- The manager has clear expectations for the learning of older children. However, the curriculum for babies is too narrow. Staff provide older children with frequent opportunities to practise their early mathematical skills as they count objects and match these to numerals. However, learning for younger children is not yet well enough thought out or planned for to sequence their learning.
- The arrangements for the supervision of staff are not yet embedded. Managers recognise that there are weaknesses in staff's teaching and practice. However, due to changes in management, this has not been monitored closely enough to provide staff with the support they need. Some staff comment that they do not feel well enough supported by managers because they are less visible. Consequently, partnership working between managers and staff is hindering the rate of improvement being made.
- Children's health is well-supported. They learn how to manage their own hygiene through regular handwashing. Children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals and snacks, such as fruit salad and quiche with potato and salad.
- Children generally behave well in the setting. They follow staff's instructions and understand routines. Staff try to support children to resolve their own conflict with their peers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders and managers lack understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Training completed by the lead practitioner for safeguarding has not given them the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their role. They are unclear about their role and the action to take in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. This includes their duty to report to the relevant local safeguarding partners. That said, staff know how to identify signs which could indicate a child is at risk of abuse or harm. They understand how to report any safeguarding concerns they may have to other professionals. Information is obtained from parents about children's medical needs and dietary requirements. Appropriate systems are now in place to ensure this is shared with staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
ensure that the lead practitioner for safeguarding fully understands their role and responsibilities, including the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff	29/09/2023
put appropriate arrangements in place for the monitoring, support and supervision of all staff to help them to fully understand their role and responsibilities and improve the quality of their teaching	29/09/2023
ensure that there is effective communication in place to exchange information about children's care and learning with parents and between all staff	29/09/2023
ensure that key persons identify suitable next steps for children's learning, and plan activities and experiences that take account of these, to help every child engage in their learning and make consistently good progress	31/10/2023
implement an ambitious curriculum that provides children with a breadth of experiences in readiness for the next stage in their learning.	31/10/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY554326
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10309342
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	0 to 3
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	66
Name of registered person	Purley Red Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP554325
Telephone number	01782822800
Date of previous inspection	1 July 2021

Information about this early years setting

Abacus Day Nursery registered in 2017. It is located in Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am to 6pm. There are 11 members of childcare staff employed. One of these holds qualified teacher status and 10 hold qualifications at level 3. The nursery provides early education funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Bennett

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued 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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk to gather information about how the provision and curriculum are organised.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with the provider, operations manager and manager about the leadership and management of the setting.

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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