Inspection of Bright Star Nursery

Gainford House, Picktree Lane, CHESTER LE STREET, County Durham DH3 3SR

Inspection date:	8 May 2024

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The nursery has recently undergone a period of multiple changes to managers and staff. The current management team is committed, well qualified and experienced. However, although the new manager is able to describe a broad, well-sequenced curriculum intended to promote children's learning, this is not yet delivered consistently by the whole staff team. Most teaching across the nursery is consistently good. Leaders are aware that the weaknesses in some staff's knowledge and interactions mean the quality of education is no longer at an outstanding level. They have clear ambitions to make improvements.

The enthusiastic staff know children very well and support their emotional well-being effectively. Children and babies form strong bonds with their key persons. Staff complete on-entry assessments with parents and ensure that they stick to children's individual routines consistently, right from the start. Staff know children's likes and dislikes. Children clearly feel safe, secure and happy.

Staff are positive role models and manage children's behaviour very well. Children learn to follow simple instructions and treat their environment and toys with respect. Children's behaviour in all rooms is very good. They share, take turns and play harmoniously together. For example, toddlers take turns looking at a favourite book, and older children are happy to share hoops and balls. Children get on well and laugh together. They eagerly share in their achievements, such as when they work together to roll a large tyre into one of the outside dens to create a seat.

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

- Staff help children, especially the younger ones, to be familiar with the well-established routines and to know what is expected of them. They give children many opportunities to develop their independence throughout the day. For example, children persevere as they use cutlery and tweezers to practise their fine motor control. Staff praise children when they notice which friends have the same letters in their name. This helps to boost children's self-confidence.
- Staff place a high value on promoting children's communication skills. They listen well and encourage children to talk, sing songs and learn rhymes throughout the day. Staff use a variety of books, including those with props, to keep younger children engaged during story times. Older children confidently engage visitors in conversations about their home lives. They describe the pictures they have drawn and where they are going on holiday.
- Staff plan activities to help children to build the skills they need to be ready for school. Staff thoughtfully resource activities to stimulate and engage children through their interests. For example, children invent and act out stories with toys and utensils in the mud kitchen. They describe the ingredients they need as they

pretend to read from recipes. Children make marks using leaves in paint and stomp about pretending to be dinosaurs and superheroes. Children are confident to express their own ideas. Staff listen to children with interest and support their plans, for instance to recreate an assault course where they run with purpose, jump in and out of tyres and balance on planks.

- Staff ensure that children have daily opportunities to run around in the fresh air, which promotes good physical health. A group of children had great fun with a visiting football coach, being active and building their skills and confidence. Most staff teach children about personal hygiene and encourage them to independently wash their hands and go to the toilet. However, some staff do not consistently have discussions with children about healthy food and drink choices, to consistently support children's understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- Managers and staff work very well with outside professionals to arrange support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff work very effectively to try out recommended strategies, which helps children to make good progress. Parents of children with SEND say they are overwhelmed by the progress their children are making. Managers identify the most effective ways to support children who are in receipt of additional funding. For example, they have created more gross motor opportunities for children to build on their core strength and physical skills.
- The new manager and returning area manager have high expectations. They have reviewed every aspect of the provision and have put together a strong action plan to raise standards. This has already started to have an impact on children's learning. For example, staff have created interesting and well-organised play areas for children to explore and learn. Staff say children are more focused, concentrate for longer and are more motivated learners.
- Overall, parents state how pleased they are with the care their children receive. Parents comment that 'staff are lovely and kind, always friendly and very helpful' and that their children love coming to the nursery. They are very positive about the new app with access to children's daily details and more information to help them support their children's learning at home. Nevertheless, a few parents spoken to at the inspection were unhappy with leaders' communication about historic and recent changes to nursery management and some activities and also the pause of feedback opportunities for parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- continue to embed the new curriculum and support all staff to consistently consider the order in which children learn new skills to ensure that their learning is sequenced effectively
- strengthen staff's skills to help increase their knowledge of how to help all children to understand the importance of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- continue to strengthen communication with all parents and seek their views regularly to help evaluate practice and make further improvements.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY441200
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10350796
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 11
Total number of places	89
Number of children on roll	122
Name of registered person	Gainford Care Homes Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP909644
Telephone number	0191 3895817
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Bright Star Nursery registered in 2012 and is located in County Durham. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, two staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 5, and 15 staff hold relevant qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jan Harvey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with two members of the senior management team about the leadership and management of the setting. The inspector 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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