

Inspection of Pencil Pots Day Nursery

321 The Drive, ILFORD, Essex IG1 3PW

Inspection date: 13 August 2024

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Inadequate
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Leadership and management	Inadequate
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety cannot be assured at this nursery. The provider has not consistently carried out background checks to ensure that agency staff are suitable to work with children. Therefore, she cannot be certain that agency staff do not pose a risk to children. The provider has not ensured that in her judgement the deputy is capable and qualified to take charge in her absence. This has resulted in poor decisions being made, putting children's safety and well-being at risk. The provider demonstrates a poor understanding of her responsibility to notify Ofsted of significant events, which may affect her suitability to work with children.

Despite the identified weaknesses, children are happy and engaged. The curriculum is accomplished and supports every child to progress in their learning. Staff show a genuine interest in babies and help them to thrive, and they provide consistent, warm and responsive care. Toddlers are supported well to use some words, gestures and facial expressions to communicate their needs. Staff encourage older children to share and take turns. For example, during painting activities, children develop their fine motor skills as they make marks with paintbrushes. Children behave well, and they are interested and motivated to take part in the activities.

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

- Leaders do not consistently ensure that agency staff are thoroughly vetted, including checking the right to work checks before they start working with children. For example, the provider has not put suitable procedures in place for when they are absent to ensure that suitability checks are followed for agency staff. There is a lack in oversight within the leadership team, which puts children's safety at risk.
- The provider does not ensure that leaders understand all the requirements for the early years foundation stage, in particular, the requirement for notification to Ofsted of significant events. For example, the provider has failed to inform Ofsted of a visit to the nursery by other agencies, which could affect her suitability to remain registered.
- Staff support children's learning and development well, overall. They offer an interesting and exciting curriculum. They build on what children know and can do. However, at times, staff interrupt child-led play, which stops the flow of children's interactions with each other, and they miss some opportunities for further learning.
- Parents speak highly of staff. Information is shared daily with parents on the online app. Staff share children's achievements and photos of children during play. Staff organise regular meetings with parents to discuss children's progress and next steps in learning.

- Staff support children's communication and language skills well. Staff read frequently to children and teach them action nursery rhymes. Staff support children who speak English as an additional language to communicate. For example, staff learn a few key words in the child's home language.
- Staff encourage babies' independence well. For example, they offer a range of opportunities for children to move by themselves, making their own decisions about how long it takes to move and how fast it takes.
- Staff support children to manage their own needs. For instance, children feed themselves, clear their plate and wash and dry their hands during daily routines.
- Children enjoy playing outside in the large, well-resourced garden. Staff support children to ride wheeled toys, run, jump, skip and control their movements on different surfaces outside.
- Children enjoy role-play activities. They take on different roles. For example, children act out scanning goods bought at the local supermarket. They use their imagination and creativity to bring these roles to life. They use mathematical language as they discuss how much each item costs and negotiate how much to spend.
- Staff encourage positive interactions between children from different backgrounds. For example, they learn about different festivals and traditions.
- Leaders encourage staff to develop their professional development. Staff are offered opportunities to undertake training provided by the local authority. Leaders carry out regular supervision meetings with staff and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

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 people looking after children are suitable; they must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles	14/08/2024
ensure that any additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) are made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad	14/08/2024

ensure that staff responsible for recruitment are trained to understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure that suitability checks are followed for agency staff.	14/08/2024
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- further support staff to be observant when children are engaged in child-led play and wait until children invite staff to join in to support learning and development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY454335
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10361414
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	34
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Pencil Pots Day Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP532024
Telephone number	02085540033
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Pencil Pots Day Nursery registered in 2012. It is located in Ilford, in the London Borough of Redbridge. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Opening times are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, six members of staff hold a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Caroline Preston

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The provider joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the provider.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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