

Inspection of Cedartree Preschool

Jubilee Hall, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4BX

Inspection date: 5 September 2024

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Met

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

There are numerous breaches to the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' (EYFS). The provider does not take appropriate action to safeguard children. This compromises children's safety and welfare. Staff, although trained in safeguarding, do not have a robust understanding of what to do should they suspect a child is at risk of harm. This includes what to do if they have a concern about a colleague's behaviour or practice. Furthermore, they do not adhere to the safeguarding policy regarding the safe use of mobile phones within the setting.

The quality of teaching is poor and the curriculum is not planned effectively and understood by all staff. Staff members are present with children during activities, yet they do not interact effectively to enrich the children's knowledge and skills. Children tend to play with what they know and can do, and move quickly between the activities on offer. They do not show sustained levels of concentration at activities that interest them. Furthermore, children's next steps in learning are not accurately identified by their key person. They do not focus precisely enough on what they need next in their learning and development. As a result, children are not making the levels of progress that they are capable of.

Despite these poor practices, children are generally happy to attend and appear to enjoy their time at the pre-school. They have developed secure friendships with their peers and staff. Children comply with staff requests regarding behaviour, such as refraining from running indoors and putting on their shoes. They are kind and caring to other children. For example, children take toys over to those who are attending settling-in sessions, and introduce themselves with smiles.

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

- Safeguarding is not effective. The provider, who is also the nominated individual, does not have a firm understanding of the EYFS requirements. There are insufficient qualified staff members working with children consistently. The staff lack a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding requirements, and the necessary actions to take in the event of concerns about children or other staff within the setting. Furthermore, the provider does not ensure that all necessary records are completed and available for inspection. For example, they do not ensure that suitable references are obtained prior to staff starting employment. The weaknesses in the staff's safeguarding knowledge and statutory requirements negatively impact on children's safety and welfare.
- Staff members do not receive the relevant support to fulfil all of their roles and responsibilities. They have not received effective and constructive one-to-one meetings since their employment began to swiftly identify weaknesses.

Consequently, staff's knowledge and practice is weak. This has a detrimental impact on the quality of teaching and support children are offered. Furthermore, the provider has not ensured that there is a staff member with the appropriate skills to deputise in the manager's absence, as required.

- The lack of support from the provider impacts the quality of teaching that staff provide. Staff do not precisely identify what they want children to learn next. Furthermore, staff are not always sure about what they intend for children to learn through the activities they provide. For example, during a shape and colour identifying activity children quickly lose interest. In addition, the provider does not ensure that staff have the skills necessary to adapt the activity. This means that teaching is not yet focused enough to support children to make at least good levels of progress in their learning.
- The quality of interactions is variable. For instance, there is a lack of quality back-and-forth conversations between children and staff. Furthermore, the provider does not monitor practice to ensure that children benefit from enough interaction and support from staff. For example, staff prioritise completing administrative duties at the expense of direct interactions with children. However, children enjoy the times when staff do engage with them, such as when sharing stories and singing during morning circle time.
- Staff support children to learn about healthy lifestyles. They ensure children wash their hands before eating, and provide them with healthy snacks and plenty of opportunities to be outdoors. For example, children take daily walks in the local community to visit shops, parks, and the library. Children behave well when out of the setting and listen and respond to instructions from the staff to keep themselves safe.
- Parents are kept well informed about what their children are learning through daily conversations and observations added to online journals. Settling-in visits are effective in supporting children to gain confidence in the pre-school environment, and establish a relationship with their key person before they start. This helps to support children's emotional well-being.

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, the provider must:

	Due date
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take action to ensure that all staff understand the safeguarding policies and procedures, including the role of the local authority designated officer, and the safe use of mobile phones	19/09/2024
take action to complete all the necessary checks on staff, such as references to ensure suitability	19/09/2024
ensure that staff have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out their roles, including ensuring that there is a member of staff with the skills and knowledge to deputise in the absence of the manager	19/09/2024
ensure all staff receive training, coaching and support that enables them to understand how to plan and develop a well-sequenced curriculum that meets the individual needs of all children	19/09/2024
ensure required documents are readily available for inspection	19/09/2024
devise and implement an ambitious curriculum that supports every child's learning and development.	17/10/2024

Setting details

Unique reference number	2597839
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10357866
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 3
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	3
Name of registered person	Tetita Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP537222
Telephone number	07724 664724
Date of previous inspection	19 October 2022

Information about this early years setting

Cedartree Preschool registered in 2020 and is located in Sittingbourne, Kent. The pre-school employs three staff, one of whom holds a level 3 qualification. The pre-school operates Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm during term time only. The pre-school receives funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kelly Southern

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 pre-school.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their 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 that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager carried out joint observations of a group activity with the inspector.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, who is also the provider, 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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