

Inspection of Duchess Nursery Steventon

The Hay Barn, By The Meadow Farm, The Green, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6RP

Inspection date: 2 February 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The provider does not have an adequate understanding of her responsibilities to ensure that all requirements are met. She does not ensure the safeguarding policies and procedures follow the guidance shown in the local safeguarding partnership procedures. Not all staff have a sufficient awareness of the correct procedures to follow, should they have concerns about another member of staff. Furthermore, the manager does not have a good enough understanding of the lines of reporting, should an allegation be made. This comprises children's safety and well-being.

The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the nursery. Children in the baby room do not benefit from a curriculum that is tailored to their individual needs. Staff in this room do not have a sufficient understanding of how to plan and build on children's learning as they engage in activities. Consequently, children do not benefit from targeted teaching and purposeful interactions with staff. This has a significant impact on their ongoing development.

Children in the pre-school room show a growing understanding of managing their personal care needs. They independently blow their noses, put tissues in the bin and know to wash their hands. Toddlers enjoy role-play activities and build on their independence as they change into different shoes, for example.

Older children understand the expectations for their behaviour. They show good imagination and take on different characters, such as pirates during role-play activities. All children are kind to one another and learn how to share resources.

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

- The provider's oversight is poor. The manager does not effectively monitor staff practice to identify gaps in their knowledge. Weaknesses in teaching have not been identified. Therefore, not all staff are provided with the targeted coaching and training they need to improve their skills and the quality of education they provide for children. This has a significant impact on the progress children make.
- Staff in the baby room do not plan activities based on children's specific next steps in learning. They do not consider how to organise activities to enable all children to participate. For example, not all children are able to take part in painting activities, as there is not enough room at the table. Consequently, they become frustrated. Furthermore, those children that do not engage in the activities provided are not encouraged to join in, and have little interaction from staff. At times, they pass books to staff and are confused when they put them down with no explanation.
- Children of all ages receive a warm welcome from their key person. However,

not all staff in the baby room swiftly seek the guidance they need to help them confidently plan for children's next steps in learning. At times, babies new to the setting are passed around staff. Although these staff are familiar to them, they do not always benefit from the cuddles and reassurance they need from their key person.

- Staff in the toddler room provide activities that engage children and motivate them to learn. For example, children show good imagination as they use some words to describe what they are doing and pretend to cook meals for others. Staff repeat phrases and talk to children as they play. However, they do not use information they obtain through assessment of all children's speaking skills, to plan precisely and support their communication and language skills to the highest level.
- Staff in the pre-school room develop children's literacy skills well. For example, they foster children's love of books and actively engage them in stories of interest. Children independently select resources, such as clip boards and pens and write shopping lists during pretend play. They are learning the skills they need in preparation for school.
- Parents say that they are happy with the nursery. They appreciate the daily feedback from staff and the information shared through digital media, such as their children's 'golden moments'. This means they can share and discuss these with their children at home.
- All children enjoy opportunities for fresh air and exercise and learn about healthy lifestyles. Older children practise their balancing skills as they walk across beams. They learn about oral hygiene and discuss the importance of cleaning their teeth. Babies show confidence in feeding themselves and enjoy the nutritious meals that are cooked on site.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Although recent training has been undertaken, staff are not aware of the action to take should they have a concern about another member of staff. The manager, who is the designated safeguarding lead, does not have a secure knowledge of the procedures to follow should an allegation be made. This compromises children's welfare. Staff maintain ratios and the premises are kept secure. There are appropriate recruitment procedures in place for new staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

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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implement a safeguarding policy and procedure that is in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures	02/03/2023
ensure all staff, including those that have designated safeguarding roles, have a clear knowledge of all safeguarding policies and procedures, including knowing how to report allegations raised against staff and understanding the role of the local authority designated officer	02/03/2023
ensure leaders know the procedures to follow, should an allegation be made against a member of staff, including notifying Ofsted, within prescribed timescales	02/03/2023
implement effective oversight and monitoring of the provision to continually review and swiftly address any areas for improvement	02/03/2023
improve the arrangements for monitoring of staff practice, to identify weakness in the quality of teaching and education and to ensure all staff have the support they need to fulfil their roles	02/03/2023
provide training and coaching for staff, particularly in reference to the baby room, to improve weaker aspects of staff knowledge and to ensure they offer quality teaching and learning experiences for every child.	02/03/2023

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

- strengthen the key-person system, particularly in the baby room, to ensure children consistently receive the reassurance they need to help them settle
- develop further support for children to develop their language and communication skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2614921
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10265312
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 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	62
Name of registered person	Swinbrook House Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2551542
Telephone number	01235 835108
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Duchess Nursery Stevenson registered in 2020. The nursery is located in Stevenson, Abingdon. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 13 staff, of whom 6 hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jane Franks

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 setting.
- A meeting was held between the inspector, the manager and area manager.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documentation and checked the suitability of staff working with the children.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together. They observed staff's teaching practice during activities.

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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