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Elm Lane Day Nursery
24 / 26 Church Street
DAGENHAM
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Our Reference EY363213

Dear Mrs Grace Funke Akinnugba

Outcome of monitoring visit for provision judged as inadequate

An Ofsted inspector, Cheryl Langley, carried out a monitoring visit of your provision on 30/09/2013. This visit follows on from your inspection where the provision was judged to be inadequate.

Outcome of the visit

As a result of our inspection on 15/05/2013, we sent you a welfare requirements notice.

This notice required you to ensure staff understand and adhere to the nursery's safeguarding policies and procedures, including being alert and taking appropriate action in relation to any accident, incidents or injuries that occur when children are not in the nursery, to fully protect children, Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement, Child Protection 3.4; develop effective methods of risk assessment in order to minimise the risks of children accessing inappropriate areas of the nursery, Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement, Risk Assessment 3.63 and ensure that all staff make every child feel safe and secure and their individual needs are met, Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement Staff: child ratios, 3.27. These actions were to be met by 15 July 2013.

You were also issued with a Notice to Improve which required you to ensure staff are able to ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and are able to build their capacity to learn and form relationships, Learning and Development 1.4; make sure staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm positive interaction, Learning and Development 1.9 and ensure each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activity with particular reference to the organisation of resources, Learning and Development 1.9. These actions are to be met by 31 July 2013.

At the monitoring visits conducted on 17 and 18 July 2013 we found that some action had been taken. Staff have been updated on the safeguarding policies and procedures which include taking immediate action if any concerns are identified in relation to accidents, injuries or marks children sustain outside of the nursery. There was also documentary evidence to show that staff have followed up concerns with the local authority safeguarding team about children that have been in their care to make sure relevant information is recorded to protect them in the future.

Action was taken to address the risks identified at the inspection, which included making sure cots were safe for use and that a door can be closed sufficiently to make a room inaccessible if required. However, potential risks that arose at the monitoring visit were not addressed until the regulatory inspector pointed them out. This included assessing the potential risk to children when using a large paddling pool and the risk of injury to a child sleeping on the floor when other children were running around in the same area. Appropriate action was taken which included making sure there was sufficient supervision in the outside and inside area when the paddling pool was in use, that any slip hazards were dealt with as soon as possible and toys and equipment were moved out of the way from the paddling pool and surrounding area. The sleeping child was taken into another room with a member of staff. This is an area of weakness and will be monitored at the next visit. To improve the provision for unsettled children a record of settling in and transition has been developed for children changing rooms. Action plans are drawn up each day which include what the child likes to make them feel more secure and engaged.

Staff training in different aspects of learning and development have begun, which include open ended questioning to challenge children and extend their play and thinking. Managers plan to monitor staff interaction with the children to assess for effectiveness. New planning has been implemented which include seven adult led activities and choices for the children have been improved to keep them engaged with play and purposeful activities. A member of staff has attended 'Letters and Sounds' training and other areas of development have been planned for. However at the monitoring visit there was little evidence of improvement during the observation of staff interaction with the children. Resources in the main play room have been rearranged to try to encourage choice and more space in the different areas of play. A further monitoring visit was arranged.

At the monitoring visit on 5 August 2013 there was little evidence from observation that the actions requiring compliance by 31 July 2013 had been met. Lunch time was chaotic and disorganised. There was little observed to develop children's social skills, to enhance their understanding of appropriate behaviour in groups and to promote confidence in their abilities. This was because tasks were completed by adults while children sat at tables asking for what they wanted. When a child did attempt to demonstrate some independence and physical ability the water jug they wanted to

pour from was too heavy for them and the task had to be completed by an adult. Children argued about utensils which were poorly organised. Most of the children did not want to eat the food provided and no alternative was offered. As a consequence some children only had three or four mouthfuls of plain rice for their lunch. There was no indication during this routine activity that staff had updated their knowledge and skills to engage children in a positive and purposeful way.

Staff deployment was compromised by low staffing levels, particularly during the lunch period. This is exacerbated by new members of staff attending who have yet to be vetted and are not monitored and cannot be left unsupervised with the children. As a result on some occasions one member of staff is left standing between rooms or between the inside and outside area to observe children in the different areas. This is not conducive to efficient staffing arrangements to make sure children are safe and makes it difficult for their individual needs to be met.

The systems developed to support transition and help reassure unsettled children is undermined by the high turnover of staff in a very short period of time. As a result compliance with the welfare requirement notice is not being sustained to ensure that all staff make every child feel safe and secure and their individual needs are met.

The notice to improve due for compliance by 31 July 2013 has not been met. In addition a further welfare requirement notice with a timescale for completion of 16 August 2013 was served as follows:

- make sure staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensures their safety, with particular reference to newly appointed un-checked staff
- implement a clear and well-understood policy, and procedures, for assessing any risks to children's safety
- make sure children are provided with healthy, balanced and nutritious meals which keep them satiated
- provide effective supervision to support, coach and train staff to promote the interests of children
- ensure children are healthy, safe and secure, their individual needs met and that they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them

At the monitoring visit on the 19 August 2013 steps had been taken by staff to meet the actions in the Welfare Requirement Notice to be met by 16 August 2013. Staff were deployed to make sure there were a minimum of two checked staff in one area at any one time. This made sure that any unchecked staff were not left unsupervised

as they moved around the building.

All activities were risk assessed prior to use. To minimise potential hazards and make sure staff were able to supervise children at all times, only small numbers of children were going to use a small paddling pool at one time. All children used suitable bedding for sleeping and were supervised to keep them safe while they were sleeping.

Children were offered alternative food at meal times and not just those from the menu to make sure they had sufficient food throughout the day to keep them healthy and comfortable.

Staff are being supported through a regular monitoring and supervision system. Their views are sought and action taken to meet any training needs. Children were allocated a key person and each key person is supported by additional staff.

There was some improvement to the resources and activities available to the children. They had fun digging soil in the outside area, talking about how plants grow from seed and observing the size of their recently planted cress. Children were encouraged to pick out their name labels and link sounds to letters. They were keen to show their work on display to visitors. Staff encouraged politeness and asked open questions at times to make them think and extend their play.

Having considered all the evidence, the inspector is of the opinion that at this time the setting is making satisfactory improvement overall.

Overall effectiveness of the improvement and outcomes for children

At the monitoring visit on 30 September 2013 there was marked improvement in the management of the nursery. The actions that were outstanding and raised as a result of the visit on 5 August 2013 continue to be met and staff are working toward improvement.

High ratios of suitably qualified staff are in place. Effective systems are implemented to make sure only those adults checked and deemed suitable to work with children are left unsupervised. New and existing staff have undergone an induction and are well supported with supervision, appraisal and relevant training opportunities. The manager continues to work with the staff to improve the quality of teaching.

Planning for individual children covers the seven areas of learning. Interesting and challenging experiences are provided which meets the needs of the children. Some staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children. Parents are now encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning and development.

There were concerns about the ability of the staff to maintain this and meet the Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements and improve their practice. For this reason we continued to monitor Elm Lane Day Nursery.

Next steps

Having considered all the evidence the inspector is of the opinion that at this time:

- The setting has made satisfactory progress in addressing the points for improvement. The next visit will be a further monitoring visit.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your setting. If you have any further queries please contact us on the number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Susan Gregory HMI
National Director, Inspection Delivery