

Benson Children and Families Services

Royal Air Force, Benson, WALLINGFORD, Oxfordshire, OX10 6AA

Inspection date	25/10/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The safeguarding of children is not assured as the arrangements for reporting significant incidents are not effective. Therefore, children are put at risk from unsuitable persons.
- Staff are not vigilant enough to ensure that children are kept safe and their health and welfare are promoted. Children's safety is compromised as arrangements to identify significant hazards fail to keep children safe.
- Hygiene standards in the baby kitchen present a health risk and the spread of infection to young children. The storage of children's individual items is poorly managed and areas between the rooms are improperly used by adults.
- Observation and assessment systems do not accurately reflect the stages of some children's learning and development.
- The monitoring of the effectiveness of the setting is weak and does not identify and address key weaknesses to bring about improvements for children and the quality of teaching.

It has the following strengths

- Children have easy access to a range of activities in the outside area, where free flow opportunities enable children of all ages to spend time promoting their independence.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities throughout the nursery in both indoor and outdoor spaces and undertook a safety check of the premises.
- The inspector spoke with the nursery owners, the manager and staff at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussion and from written comments.
- The inspector spoke to children and interacted with them, at their request, during the course of the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, learning and development information, and a selection of policies and procedures.

Inspector

Deborah Sanders

Full Report

Information about the setting

Benson Children and Families Services is one of 46 provisions run by 4 Children. It registered in 2013. It operates from purpose-built premises at RAF Benson, Oxfordshire. The accommodation provides five base rooms and related facilities. There is a fully enclosed area on both sides of the nursery, which is available for outdoor play. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 101 children on roll between the ages of birth and eight years. The provision operates on weekdays from 7am until 6pm all year, with the exception of bank holidays and a week at Christmas. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The provision employs 21 staff; of whom 14 hold relevant early years qualifications. The manager holds a degree in nursery management and the deputy is qualified at level 5 in early years studies.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take the following enforcement action:

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

ensure that arrangements for safeguarding children are secure by following clear policies and procedures that are known and understood by all staff and implemented consistently, in order that statutory agencies are informed without delay of any allegations against staff.

ensure that the premises, in particular the areas used by babies, are fit for purpose, clean and safe and that staff comply with requirements of health and safety legislation

ensure staff implement the policy and procedures for assessing any risks to children's safety, identifying all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, including when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how these risks will be removed or minimised.

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve staff's knowledge of the learning and development requirements in order to consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development for each child and use this information to identify their next steps and plan a more challenging experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development

- foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement by introducing a rigorous process of self-evaluation to effectively acknowledge strengths and identify weaknesses in the provision and develop a clear plan for improvement.

Inspection judgements**How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Learning and development for some children is not effective because staff are not fully knowledgeable with the new systems of recording children's progress. This also results in the level of support and teaching being inconsistent throughout the nursery. Insufficient consideration is given to meeting all children's needs, particularly when staff work solely with a group of children. There are very few interventions from adults, but when these do happen they lack challenge for the more able children. Children's level of progress is not clearly reflected in the development records and staff cannot always identify what has contributed to improvement. Therefore it is not possible to establish if all children are making sufficient progress from their starting points. Children moving up the nursery are not being sufficiently challenged with more structured adult-led activities. This results in some children losing concentration and wandering from one activity to another with little

purpose. For example, while some children are involved in face painting, other children have no direction from adults therefore their behaviour becomes disruptive.

Children of all ages have free flow opportunities so the doors to the outside are open most of the day. Children were observed using the mud kitchen, riding their bikes through large puddles and using a range of drawing materials to make marks outside. The outside areas are well resourced and children are given full rain proof suits and footwear to enable them to play out in all weathers. Those children playing outside ride their bikes through puddles and watch the ripples in the water. They jump in the puddles and see who can do the biggest splashes, and throw tennis balls and sponges at the wall to make patterns.

Younger children and babies are provided with a range of stimulating activities and staff use a range of gestures, facial expressions and repetition to encourage their language skills. Babies use colourful blocks to build towers and the staff are quick to praise them for their efforts. However, educational programmes do not adequately cover all seven areas of learning. In addition, activities that engage some of the children do not provide adequate challenge, resulting in some children lacking enthusiasm for learning. Furthermore, planning is not effective in matching activities to all children's needs and practitioners often miss opportunities to extend and develop the children's learning.

Parents speak about being informed of their children's progress through their child's learning journals and the 'to and fro' books, and through contact with their key person. There are new links with the primary school which has enabled staff to make contact before children move on to school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children's safety and welfare are compromised in the setting. The arrangements to ensure that the environment is safe are not effective. Risk assessments are carried out to minimise hazards generally, but staff have not been vigilant enough to ensure that children's safety is a priority. This puts children's safety at risk. The uncovered floor sockets in the baby room pose a real risk to young children who are just starting to crawl and walk. The health and well-being of young babies is also compromised as the kitchen used for baby food preparation is not fit for purpose and poses a health risk. Children's good health is put at risk as staff fail to ensure that rigorous cleaning procedures and routines are maintained.

The premises are generally well kept and the care rooms are well resourced and children have opportunities to choose toys and activities for themselves from a range of low-level storage. However, the toilet areas between the rooms are not purpose made for children. Therefore, children are unable to reach the sinks without the use of a step and the toilets are too large for very young children learning the independence of toilet training. The nursery is in the process of reducing the height of the sinks. The toilet/changing area between the baby rooms is being inappropriately used for a variety of adult storage items. There is poor storage of babies individual items which could compromise babies care

needs. Some routines, such as children's hand washing and baby changing, are not fully effective in reducing the risk of contamination, as paper towel storage units were empty and had not been replaced. Furthermore, staff were using the nappy changing tables to complete their paperwork.

Children use their physical skills as they spend a good part of the day outside. The doors to the outside areas are open whenever possible to allow free flow play. Staff encourage children to go out in all weathers and provide wet play suits to encourage this. Younger children have access to an artificial grassed area all year round, which also has large awnings to protect them from the sun. Meals provided for children are cooked on site and the menus are varied and nutritious. Children eat well and older children have access to a self-service 'caf', where they help themselves to fruit and drink throughout the day.

Children are encouraged to behave positively and are supported in learning to share and take turns. However, when some children are not engaged in activities their behaviour can become disruptive and this reduces their ability to learn and puts themselves and others at risk. Children are able to seek out adult support when they are upset or unsure of themselves. They usually go to their key person but they also have secure relationships with other staff in the rooms. Staff are very aware that children may be come upset easily as the nature of working with families on an RAF base means parents are often away for periods of time. Staff understand this can effect children's emotional well-being and that this impacts on their development of secure attachment. Therefore, the staff support children well and children are beginning to feel a sense of belonging to this setting. Pre-school children are able to visit the reception class and meet their new teacher, which has helped them prepare for the next step in their education.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of arrangements for safeguarding, including safe recruitment practices are not being met. Therefore, this has an impact on the safety and well-being of children. The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of a significant incident in a timely manner and therefore has placed children at risk of harm. Ofsted will not take any action in relation in the failure to notify of significant events; however this breach in regulations may be taken into account, should the provider fail to notify Ofsted of significant events, in the future. In addition, management and accountability arrangements in the setting are not clear and the management team failed to consistently follow their own safeguarding policy. Despite this, the nursery has ensured all staff have been trained in safeguarding procedures and several have had enhanced training. Staff undergo the required checks to assess their suitability to work with children and the provider has their own human resources department that deals with suitability checks for permanent staff. However this has not been a secure process when employing agency staff. This means the nursery has failed to protect children from unsuitable persons at all times, compromising children's safety, welfare and well-being.

Staff appraisals and underperformance is the responsibility of the new manager, who has started to complete one-to-one sessions with each of the staff. Self-evaluation is not yet effective in instilling a cohesive approach to improving practice and provision. Although staff are willing to implement improvements, the provider has not yet identified that several requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are not being met. In addition, the nursery is not meeting the associated requirements of the Childcare Register. This demonstrates a weak capacity to maintain continuous improvement. Furthermore, the weak monitoring of children's progress means that some children are not achieving as well as they should, hindering the effective preparation for their future learning.

Minor accidents and injuries are managed effectively by staff who hold appropriate first aid qualifications. Parents are informed and sign records as acknowledgment. Parents generally speak well about the setting, relating to how their children are happy coming to nursery. However, they are concerned with the amount of staff moving on, particularly when their child's key person changes, but show understanding as they are used to moving from one setting to another as part of forces life.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that all children receiving childcare are kept safe from harm (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that a written statement of procedures is known to all staff and consistently followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard all the children being cared for from abuse and neglect (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment: to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that all children receiving childcare are kept safe from harm (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that a written statement of procedures is known to all staff and consistently followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard all the children being cared for from abuse and neglect. (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment: to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (compulsory part of

the Childcare Register)

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY461584
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	935809
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	104
Number of children on roll	101
Name of provider	4 Children
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01132709006

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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