

Characters Day Nursery

Richmond House, 49 Alma Road, Plymouth, Devon PL3 4HE



Inspection date	9 August 2018
Previous inspection date	21 August 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Babies do not consistently settle well. Rapid changes in key persons do not help all children to feel emotionally secure.
- Management does not consistently identify weaknesses in staff teaching, to help children achieve their next steps in learning.
- Casual staff and apprentices do not receive consistent information on how to support children in their development, to help them achieve their outcomes.
- Older children's literacy skills are not consistently challenged enough, particularly during story times, to help them understand the way stories are structured.

It has the following strengths

- Positive relationships with parents help support children's individual needs. For example, 'daily diaries', 'homework' sheets and recipes for 'healthy lollipops' help provide consistency in children's learning at home.
- The manager monitors children's progress closely. She has identified gaps in learning and has provided additional resources to enhance this. For example, boys enjoy problem-solving activities to help them sustain their concentration.
- Children have good links within the local community. They visit the local care home, singing songs for the elderly, and learn how to hatch and raise chickens.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure children have a consistent key person to help them feel safe and secure	30/09/2018
provide staff with effective supervisory sessions to ensure they provide high-quality interactions for children, to help them meet the next stages of their learning	30/09/2018
help casual staff understand children's current skills and abilities, to provide them with the effective support they need to build on what they already know and can do.	30/09/2018

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

- provide older children with effective challenges, particularly during story times, to help them understand the ways stories are structured, and to talk about events and characters, to extend their literacy skills further.

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager
- The inspector observed staff teaching and how they support children's learning and development.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers to gain their views of the provision.
- The inspector held an interview with the manager and provider to discuss matters relating to leadership and management.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, such as safeguarding procedures, staff recruitment and induction processes, children's assessment records and staff suitability checks.

Inspector

Joanne Steward

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

Management provides staff with frequent supervisory sessions to help assess their practice. However, these are not fully effective. Although management understands the statutory requirements, it has missed weaknesses in staff teaching. For example, staff miss opportunities to help children make the next steps in their learning. This means children do not make the good progress of which they are capable. Management has a sound understanding of what needs to be improved. For example, it recognises the need to retain staff, to help provide consistency for children. Staff attend appropriate training and use their new knowledge to benefit children. For instance, photographs brought in from home help children recognise their own similarities and differences. Safeguarding is effective. Management ensures the premises are secure, such as using a fingerprint entry system. All staff are clear of the procedures to take should they have a concern about a child's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Employed staff sometimes miss opportunities to help children reach their next stage of learning during free-play activities. Casual staff are unaware of how to help children move forward in their development. For example, they do not receive consistent information about how to support children, to build on what they already know and can do. Older children do not consistently receive enough challenge during story times, to help extend their literacy skills further. Nonetheless, children make sound progress. For instance, younger children enjoy mixing coloured paint. Older children learn about different creatures in the garden. Staff make frequent observations of children to help form the assessment process, and share these with parents. This provides a continuous two-way flow of information.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

The number of staff leaving the nursery is high. Consequently, children's key persons change frequently and some children, particularly babies, are upset when they initially enter the nursery. However, there is no significant impact on their emotional well-being, and newly employed staff are skilled at helping children settle quickly. Children are developing an understanding of a healthy lifestyle. An on-site chef freshly prepares nutritious meals, to support their physical well-being. Children behave well. They play cooperatively and learn how to take turns.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Children are beginning to develop the key skills needed for school. Younger children learn simple body parts, such as eyes and nose. Older children learn about the different seasons. However, weaknesses in teaching and management mean that some children do not reach their full potential or feel consistently secure.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY332113
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10057791
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	28
Name of registered person	Treble P&A Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP905742
Date of previous inspection	21 August 2015
Telephone number	01752 662 886

Characters Day Nursery registered in 2006. It operates from the Stoke area of Plymouth. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs seven members of staff. Of these, three hold early years qualifications at level 3, one holds a qualification at level 2 and two are unqualified.

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