

Inspection of Building Blocks

Grayson, 67 Prenton Road West, Prenton, Cheshire CH42 9PZ

Inspection date: 26 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
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Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
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Personal development	Inadequate
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Leadership and management	Inadequate
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's well-being and safety are compromised due to ineffective safeguarding policies and procedures. Additionally, staff do not have a secure understanding of safe sleeping guidance. These weaknesses have a significant impact on the safety and well-being of children.

The curriculum is narrow and does not support children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn effectively. Staff do not have a suitable understanding of child development. For example, they expect children to sit still for extended periods of time and tell children to listen quietly when they become restless. The provider does not support staff to improve the quality of their teaching. As a result, children do not make progress in some aspects of their learning.

There are some strengths in the nursery. Staff provide children with opportunities to develop their independence. Children are encouraged to complete personal care tasks, such as wiping their own noses and washing their hands. After lunch, children clear away their plates with the support of staff. As a result, children develop the independence skills they need for school. Children form strong bonds with their key person, which helps them to feel happy and settled.

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

- The provider is aware that the quality of practice has declined significantly since the previous inspection. They are committed to making changes to improve this shortfall. For example, the provider has recently employed an experienced special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). However, it is too early to see the impact of this support.
- The curriculum is poorly designed and implemented. For example, children spend an extended amount of time being taught how to clap the number of syllables in their names. The curriculum does not give children the rich experiences they need to learn about the world around them. As a result, children do not benefit from meaningful learning, which hinders their progress.
- The provider does not obtain an enhanced criminal records check for all apprentices who have unsupervised access to children. This does not ensure that all adults on site are suitable to work with children. Furthermore, the provider has not referred an allegation about staff to the appropriate agencies. Consequently, the allegation has not been thoroughly investigated. This compromises children's safety.
- The support for children with SEND is not good enough. The provider does not work effectively with other agencies or follow their expert advice. At times, children with SEND are not fully included in all activities. As a result, they do not

benefit from meaningful activities that engage them. Furthermore, staff do not always recognise when children have delays in their development. Consequently, their needs go unnoticed. The newly appointed SENCo has made detailed plans to improve practice in this area. However, these are not yet implemented.

- Children's key workers build positive relationships with parents and give them daily feedback about their children's care. However, staff do not consistently share information with parents about their children's learning and development. When parents share concerns about their child's development, these are not always acted upon. This does not provide continuity in children's learning.
- Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. As a result, children are beginning to follow the rules and understand why these are in place. However, staff do not support children to understand their feelings. For example, staff tell children to 'sit out' until they can behave, without finding the root cause of the behaviour. As a result, children do not learn effective strategies to manage their emotions.
- Staff do not use assessment effectively to build on what children know and can do. Most activities are planned without clear learning intentions that support children's next steps in learning. For example, staff ask young children lots of closed questions and encourage them to repeat words. This does not entice children to think for themselves, and they become disengaged.
- Staff do not always provide suitable bedding to ensure children's safety as they sleep. For example, young children are settled to sleep under thick fleece blankets. This does not reflect safe sleeping guidance and poses a risk to children's safety.
- The provider does not always recognise gaps in practice. As a result, some weaknesses have not been addressed. Furthermore, the provider has not provided effective support and training to staff, to help them improve their practice. This means children have not been fully supported in their early education.

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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ensure all leaders and staff understand and follow the setting's safeguarding policies and procedures	04/01/2025
obtain enhanced criminal records checks for every person over the age of 16 who works on the premises when children are present	04/01/2025
ensure there are arrangements in place to support the needs of children with SEND	04/01/2025
ensure staff understand and follow all safe sleeping guidance	04/01/2025
provide staff with support, coaching and training to help improve the quality of provision for children.	04/01/2025

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

- design a curriculum that is sharply focused on the knowledge and skills that children need in all areas, to help them succeed
- ensure the curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely throughout the setting
- use effective assessment to plan learning experiences that meet children's needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	306356
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10346945
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	40
Number of children on roll	64
Name of registered person	Building Blocks (Wirral) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP906092
Telephone number	0151 609 1049
Date of previous inspection	22 August 2018

Information about this early years setting

Building Blocks opened in 1997 and is situated in Prenton, Birkenhead. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine staff hold qualifications at level 3, and one member of staff holds early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Natalie Myatt

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during circle time.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.

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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