

Inspection of Birchwood Private Day Nursery

Wellington Road, Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 4BH

Inspection date:

2 July 2025

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Staff greet children warmly as they arrive at the nursery. Children separate from their parents with ease. Staff create a nurturing and welcoming environment, where children are given lots of praise and encouragement to support their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, children are happy and settled. However, weaknesses in the quality of teaching and planning for children's learning mean that children do not receive good enough learning experiences. Planning is not tailored effectively enough to ensure that there is a challenging and ambitious curriculum for all children.

The children have positive bonds with their key person and other staff and show they feel safe and secure. Children generally are well behaved, have positive attitudes towards learning and understand the routine of the nursery well. They enjoy participating in a range of activities both indoors and outdoors. For instance, pre-school children show interest in celebrating birthdays. They make pretend cakes, design birthday cards and invitations and enjoy finding the numbers to represent ages around the room. These experiences support their learning and imagination well. The youngest children also have fun joining in with action songs, recalling the rhythm and the words and copying actions as they smile and giggle together.

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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have worked hard to implement some positive changes to benefit children. A new curriculum has been developed. However, this is at an early stage of implementation, and at times, learning is disjointed and lacks focus. This impacts on the quality of education overall for children.
- The curriculum does not focus enough on helping children build on their existing skills and knowledge. For instance, staff teach children how to form and write numbers without the children knowing what the digits represent. Teaching is incidental rather than planned to close gaps in learning. Consequently, children do not always make the best possible progress.
- Leaders provide support and guidance to staff through supervision sessions and regular observations of practice. They have started to identify professional development opportunities for staff. This has led to improvements in teaching, but it is still inconsistent across the setting. Although staff sit close to children and talk to them, they do not consistently engage children in meaningful conversations and successfully extend children's learning as they play. Children do not hear enough new vocabulary or words to secure their understanding of new concepts. Furthermore, staff do not consistently offer explanations or ask effective questions to support children's thinking skills and their own ideas.
- Staff recognise the need to develop children's independence and self-care skills.

Staff provide opportunities in the daily routine for children to practise these. For example, toddlers confidently feed themselves, and older children serve themselves at lunchtime. This helps children to secure their independence.

- Staff are caring towards the children and treat them respectfully. Staff have begun to implement positive behaviour strategies, and children generally behave well and engage positively with the activities on offer. Staff regularly remind children to follow the golden rules. However, they do not explain to children how to follow the rules, why some behaviours are unacceptable or provide them with ways to manage their behaviour in the future.
- Staff make timely referrals and form positive relationships with other professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff incorporate other agencies' recommendations and advice into their plans to help children who require extra support make progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff promote children's understanding of healthy lifestyles well. Children benefit from nutritious snacks and healthy meals. They also access the outdoor area throughout the day. This supports their physical development, as they have opportunities to climb and throw balls. This promotes children's good health and well-being.
- Partnerships with parents are a strength of this nursery. Staff take time to get to know the needs of each child and family. Staff keep parents well informed about their children's progress and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is 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
implement and monitor a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all children	30/09/2025
consistently help children to understand how to and why we follow rules	30/09/2025

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

- support staff to extend children's learning, giving them time to think and respond to open-ended questions and challenges
- raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY345515
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10381502
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 11
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	79
Name of registered person	Marchese, Amanda Jane
Registered person unique reference number	RP514929
Telephone number	01782782008
Date of previous inspection	10 December 2024

Information about this early years setting

Birchwood Private Day Nursery registered in 2007 and is located in Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm, and the nursery also provides before- and after-school care. There are currently 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alexandra Beardmore

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this is having on the children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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