

Inspection of Bow Nursery

95 Bromley High Street, LONDON E3 3EN

Inspection date: 5 August 2025

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Leaders do not have effective oversight of this nursery. This has a significant impact on the quality of care and education that children receive. There are weaknesses in the induction procedures for new staff, and in staff training arrangements. This results in significant gaps in staff's safeguarding knowledge. Further weaknesses in the supervision arrangements of staff mean that leaders are not aware of these gaps. Therefore, they have taken insufficient action to improve. In addition, staff show a poor awareness of risks in the environment. The safety and welfare of children are compromised under these arrangements.

The curriculum lacks ambition for children and is poorly organised. For example, leaders have a limited awareness of the skills children need to be ready for school. Staff use children's interests to plan some engaging activities, such as decorating masks using ribbon and glitter. However, staff demonstrate a limited understanding of the purpose of these activities. This limits the progress children make.

Staff know their key children well and they build warm and supportive relationships. For example, younger children are reassured with cuddles from their familiar adults. This helps children to feel secure and enables them to access the activities on offer. However, staff do not know how to adapt activities to ensure that all children can experience success. This has an impact on developing children's confidence in their own abilities.

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

- Leaders ensure that staff complete training, including as part of induction procedures. However, training is often online and leaders fail to check that staff have understood and can implement their training. For example, staff demonstrate poor knowledge of the 'Prevent' duty, despite recent training. This means that training is ineffective.
- Leaders have lost oversight of staff's knowledge and practice. For example, after observing activities they are unable to provide meaningful feedback to support professional development. Supervision arrangements are not effective as leaders fail to identify gaps in staff's knowledge. Therefore, sufficient action is not taken to improve the nursery.
- Staff that work directly with children have significant gaps in their safeguarding knowledge. They do not recognise potential signs of abuse and are not clear about how to respond to these concerns. Senior leaders have introduced robust new reporting systems, but staff lack confidence with when and how to use these. It is not assured that staff can recognise concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children from harm.
- Staff do not adhere to risk assessments or show enough awareness of risks in

the environment. For example, trampolines are placed against brick walls during outdoor play. In the baby room, staff use uncooked pasta as a play resource, and children wander around with play dough in their hands. Without adequate supervision, these resources pose a choking risk to very young children.

- Staff working directly with babies lack knowledge about safer sleep guidance. In addition, staff deployment is not carefully considered during sleep times. This does not ensure that sleeping babies are monitored effectively.
- Staff build secure relationships with children. Their interactions are generally warm and supportive. Staff listen to children and respond to what they say. As such, children are confident to approach visitors in the nursery and freely share information about themselves.
- Staff model language to children throughout the day. For example, they sing 'Old Macdonald had a Farm' to very young children, using a picture book of animals to provide visual support. Older children take turns to bring books in from home and enjoy sharing stories together on the carpet. This helps to promote an early love of reading.
- Leaders do not demonstrate a strong understanding of the curriculum and how this is sequenced over time. This impacts on how staff implement the curriculum. Staff provide activities that interest and engage children. However, staff are not clear on the learning intent behind activities. This means that children's learning is often incidental, and children are not being actively supported to reach their next steps of development.
- Leaders and staff organise exciting family trips, such as to the seaside. They also arrange interesting activities, such as animal-handling workshops. This provides children with experiences that they may not otherwise get, and enhances their understanding of the world around them.
- Staff celebrate the diversity within the nursery. They explore a wide range of cultural and religious events, inviting families to join these celebrations. This supports children to learn about families from other backgrounds, and promotes an inclusive environment in which all children are represented.
- Staff provide parents and carers with feedback at the end of each day about their child's care routines. They use an online app to share observations of the activities on offer. Parents state that they would like more feedback about their child's development.
- Senior leaders within the organisation have some awareness of the weaknesses in the nursery. They have developed an action plan to drive improvement. For example, leaders have scheduled training for staff around risk assessments. This provides reassurance that there is capacity for rapid improvement.

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 and
Childcare Register the provider must:**

	Due date
improve induction and training procedures to improve the quality of care and education that children receive	19/08/2025
improve supervision arrangements to ensure that leaders have effective oversight of staff's knowledge and practice	19/08/2025
ensure that all staff understand safeguarding procedures and have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues	19/08/2025
improve risk assessments to ensure that the environment is free of safety risks to children, and ensure risk assessments inform staff practice consistently	19/08/2025
ensure that staff working directly with babies understand how to keep babies safe, including an understanding of safer sleep	19/08/2025
make sure that all staff improve their understanding of the curriculum, enabling them to offer quality learning experiences that support children to meet their next steps of development.	19/08/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY431361
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10411188
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 4
Total number of places	90
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	Barnardo's
Registered person unique reference number	RP518879
Telephone number	0203 988 0443
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2022

Information about this early years setting

Bow Nursery registered in 2011. It is run by Barnardo's and located in Bromley by Bow, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The nursery is open every weekday, from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery provides government funded childcare. It employs ten members of staff, eight of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nicola Baker

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector and the deputy manager carried out a joint observation of a physical development activity.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- 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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