

Acorn at Kents Hill

Wadhurst Lane, Kents Hill, MILTON KEYNES, MK7 6JF

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

24/10/2012

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children make good progress because they enjoy rich learning experiences that target their individual learning needs.
- Children enjoy lots of outdoor learning. They are able to explore the natural world in the nursery garden and on exciting visits to forest areas.
- The management team have a robust understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. They are able to implement targeted plans for improvement.
- Children are independent and confident learners. Staff encourage them to be independent and try things first before they ask for help.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children who learn English as an additional language do not always have opportunities to share favourite songs and stories in their home language.
- At mealtimes staff do not always promote children's conversational skills as they dominate the conversation.

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
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as 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 for inspection 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
- 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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children in all areas of the nursery to assess their learning and development
- The inspector spoke to staff in the nursery about their practice, she spoke to them about safeguarding, planning and behaviour management
- The inspector spoke to parents to seek their views on the nursery
- The inspector looked at documents including policies and procedures and children's records
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager to observe staff practice

Inspector

Naomi Brown

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorn at Kents Hill re-registered in 2012. Acorn Childcare manages the nursery. They are a not-for-profit organisation that operates nurseries and out-of-school provisions in Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire. The nursery is situated in purpose built premises in the residential area of Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The premises are

comprised of six interlinking rooms for children's use, an atrium, kitchen, toilet and washing facilities, an office, a staff room, sleep area and outdoor play space. This nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. Nine staff work directly with the children and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are currently 35 children on roll. The nursery receive educational funding for two, three and four year olds. The nursery opens weekdays from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- help children to develop their speaking and listening skills by encouraging conversations with others and demonstrating appropriate conversations
- help children who learn English as an additional language to become more settled by asking parents to share favourite stories and songs from their home languages.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress within the typical range of development expected for their age and starting points. Staff are knowledgeable of how children learn and develop. They use effective observations to plan activities to progress children in their care. Children enjoy developing their physical skills as they play in the well stocked garden, climbing up frames, jumping over blocks and pushing around wheelbarrows. They enjoy transporting sand from the sand pit to other areas of the garden in the wheelbarrow and several children become involved in this game. Children are clearly aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. They discuss being 'out of breath' and needing 'a little sit down' after they have been learning football skills with a visiting teacher. Children have lots of exciting opportunities to explore the natural outdoor environment. They explore leaves, conkers and plants in the large garden. They go on regular outings to local wooded areas. Here, they learn to manage their own boundaries with clear instructions and supervision from staff. Children have rich opportunities to learn about the natural world around them as they study trees, plants and mini-beasts in large open areas.

Children have a good understanding of how to protect their own health. They fetch their coats and shoes before they go outside and they wash their hands with gentle support from staff. Staff encourage children to be independent and to try things for themselves.

They help older children to use tools to carve pumpkins and demonstrate how to use equipment safely. Older children enjoy role playing and acting out real life situations to develop their sense of independence. Staff and children have set up a hairdressing salon in the role play area. Children enjoy developing their small muscle skills as they wind rollers into each other's hair and use brushes and combs. Children use their imagination as they act out the real life situation. They ask their 'clients' how they would like their hair done and commentate as they complete the hairstyle. Staff have taken this activity and used it to provide rich learning opportunities for children. They have introduced counting activities, colour recognition and use activities in this area to extend children's vocabulary. However, during more formal group sessions, such as lunchtime, staff talk over children, leading the conversation. Children do not always have the chance to discuss their own ideas at these times.

Babies and toddlers have lots of opportunities to develop physical skills that enable them to be independent learners and to explore the rooms they play in. Soft mats, sand trays, soft balls and noisy, shiny toys enable very young children to explore the effects of their movements on things around them. They enjoy throwing soft balls and watching where they land. Toddlers enjoy developing their social skills as they explore the sand tray. They squeal with delight as they bang on a mould and lift it to find a sand castle. They enjoy investigating with the group and are beginning to interact with their peers as they play.

Parents have many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and development so that staff can respond to their needs. They speak to key persons daily, discuss things that their children have done in the nursery and share goals that children have reached at home. Staff use daily diaries to communicate with parents, especially those who learn English as an additional language. All children have free access to books. They choose their favourites with enthusiasm and approach adults to read them, pointing out things that interest them. They enjoy singing number rhymes and playing with simple technology that enables them to interact with stories on a computer. Children press buttons and enjoy exploring what happens when they click different areas of the screen. However, children who learn English as an additional language do not have the opportunity to hear familiar stories and songs in their home language to help them develop their confidence as communicators and feel more settled in the nursery.

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

Staff are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy working with children. Staff are kind, gentle and have positive concern for children's safety and welfare. All children benefit from close contact with their key persons and good links with parents, carers and other professionals involved in children's care. Staff greet all children excitedly when they arrive and make a point of asking them how they are to make them feel welcome and secure. However, some children who speak English as an additional language have more trouble settling in. They may benefit from more opportunities to explore their home language in the nursery. The key person system is used well across all minding rooms and children have made warm friendships with staff and other children. Staff have a good awareness of children's individual needs as they observe them closely and accurately. They are therefore able to

respond to their individual needs, likes and dislikes. Children make better progress as a result of more targeted planning and are confident and engaged because activities and resources cater for their individual needs.

Children behave very well in the nursery. They benefit from clear, consistent routines and this enables them to manage their own behaviour. Staff use gentle reminders and distraction to discourage negative behaviour and they respond quickly to any minor altercations between children. All children's nutritional and toileting needs are met well which promotes their positive behaviour and confidence.

Areas where children play are well organised so that children can select what they would like to play with in free play sessions. Planning is closely monitored and learning intentions are clearly identified so that children receive experiences that cover all areas of the curriculum. Children enjoy exploring books and equipment on low shelves. They create a construction site using large vehicles and lots of wooden blocks and play a lively game of 'building.' The children concentrated on this for significant periods of time and cooperated well. They develop a strong sense of belonging as they are able to feel in control of their environment. Children are making good progress in all areas, enabling them to acquire the key skills needed for school.

Children all enjoy developing a healthy lifestyle. Policies and procedures are fully in place to protect their health. Older children readily wash their hands and tidy up without prompting. Younger children get up to wash their hands before mealtimes and are clearly aware that this is expected after messy play as they hold out their hands for cleaning. Children learn about healthy eating as they enjoy group mealtimes and eat nutritious cooked food. Staff encourage children to eat well as they sit with them at mealtimes and support their efforts to use cutlery and try new foods.

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

Children benefit from the clear structure provided by an effective management team. The manager and the nominated person work closely to support and develop staff and both are involved closely in the daily running of the setting. Staff and children have undergone a significant period of adjustment since the setting was taken over by the present organisation. This has been managed well and children are benefiting from a wide number of positive changes to curriculum planning, policies and procedures in the nursery. The manager is knowledgeable about her responsibilities to meet both the safeguarding and welfare requirements and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She closely monitors all planning to make sure that it covers all areas of learning and that it responds to children's individual learning needs. The manager is very involved in the nursery and she spends time in each room, every day. She is familiar with staff, children and parents and she has a good awareness of strengths and areas for development because she is able to observe practise closely.

The manager encourages all staff to be ambitious about their personal development. She

has high standards and communicates these well to her team, identifying training that may improve their practice. Staff are encouraged to observe each other and state that they have found this useful and that it promotes better practice as they can learn from each other. The manager has clear targets for the immediate and long term future of the nursery and she and the nominated person have developed effective strategies to evaluate their progress. They include plenty of input from parents, who meet regularly as a committee. Parents and children are encouraged to say how they feel about the nursery and the management team have made improvements as a result of their feedback. They add to the nursery 'wish list' and children feel empowered as their choices are evident in the nursery. The nursery work closely with other professionals involved in children's care. Early years teachers, local authority advisors and any therapists are welcomed into the nursery. Staff encourage good continuity of care as they share development information with all relevant persons. This underpins the good outcomes for children who have more than one professional involved in their care.

Children are well safeguarded by strong policies and procedures and well trained staff. All staff undergo thorough safeguarding training as part of their induction and ongoing professional development. As a result they are confident to record and report and concerns they may have to protect children in their care.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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. 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	EY447040
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	795439
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	35
Name of provider	Acorn Childcare 2
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01908 200 281

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted’s website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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 that are usually their 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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

