

Oak Tree Kindergarten Ltd (Ashcroft Road)

229 Ashcroft Road, LUTON, Bedfordshire, LU2 9AA

Inspection date	29/05/2013
Previous inspection date	31/01/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children make very rapid progress based on their starting points and are extremely well prepared for their future learning in school because the quality of teaching is high.
- Arrangements for supporting children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptional. Staff go that extra mile in planning precise and effective help to enable children to reach their potential in learning and development.
- Children are highly motivated and eager to use their skills and knowledge in different play situations, such as acting out their ideas and using emergent writing in imaginative role play.
- Children display excellent levels of independence because they are encouraged and motivated from a young age to be helpful and to do things for themselves.
- The nursery management is highly effective in evaluating and monitoring its performance and setting challenging plans for improvement to maintain the high standards already achieved.

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

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all the main rooms and the garden, and made a joint observation with the manager of a story session with a group of two- and three-year-old children.
- The inspector held discussions with the registered provider, the manager and staff, and spoke to children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector examined a number of children's learning records and planning documents.
- The inspector examined evidence of staff suitability and qualifications, a selection of policies and some record-keeping systems.
- The inspector spoke to some parents on the day and took account of their views expressed in parent questionnaires.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full Report

Information about the setting

Oak Tree Kindergarten Ltd (Ashcroft Road) was registered in 1989 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two nurseries in Luton under new ownership and this provision operates from a converted residential property located in Ashcroft Road, close to local shops and schools. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery serves the local area. The older children are located in rooms on the first floor accessed by stairs.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and the manager holds Early Years Professional Status.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 106 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop and implement plans for the garden to further enhance opportunities for children to explore and investigate the natural world.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make exceptional progress in their learning and development in this vibrant and welcoming setting. Consequently, they are extremely well prepared for school. Staff consistently use a highly effective system for observing, assessing and planning for children's next steps in learning. This ensures that activities and topics appeal to children's interests and are precisely matched to their levels of achievement. Parents and carers are fully engaged in supporting their children's learning. In addition to daily communication and opportunities to review their child's learning records at consultation evenings, the nursery suggests ways that parents can help prepare their children for school by reinforcing and practising the skills they teach in nursery, such as, independent dressing and confident scissor or pencil control.

Arrangements for supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are

exemplary. Staff monitor children very closely so that any intervention is made in a timely fashion and children receive any additional support that they need. Staff go to great lengths to work with parents and other professionals, often providing home visits and accompanying parents and children at meetings to discuss future support strategies. Children, therefore, make rapid progress based on their starting points. Staff are very sensitive to the needs of those children with English as an additional language. They work closely with their parents to establish key words to use and arrange to borrow books from home so that children can hear and use their home language in the nursery setting, which is essential for their language development.

Children become confident communicators because staff are excellent role models. They are very effectively deployed to engage children in conversation while children play, explore and eat their meals. During a group story staff talk expressively and vary their pitch or tone of voice to sustain children's interest, motivation and good listening skills. At the end of the story they use well-structured questioning to encourage children to think and use language to recall what happened. Equally, children enjoy listening to stories alone. They sit quietly in the book corner listening to a story on a cassette player while following the story in the book. Children express their ideas in imaginative play with great enthusiasm and confidence. They use well-developed language to act out scenarios in the Chinese Restaurant role-play area, all the while having regard for others as they negotiate turns to share resources and roles. They take great delight in waiting on customers by writing down their orders on a pad, replacing the pencil behind their ear and calling to the chef to check if the selected dishes are available. They use their knowledge of numbers and measurement as they use play money in their game and use watches to predict the time. The staff further promote children's communication, language and literacy by making use of the same phonics programme throughout all rooms in the nursery, starting off by using action rhymes in the baby room and building up to word blending and early reading in the pre-school room. This complements the phonics schemes used by local schools and thus provides children with very solid literacy skills.

Children of all ages have regular opportunities to venture beyond the nursery setting in order to learn about the local community and the wider world. They enjoy travelling on the bus and walking to the local shops. They learn about different animals and how to handle them when a visiting farm visits the nursery. At certain times of the year they sow seeds and grow vegetables in the garden but resources to allow them to freely dig in soil and to fully explore and investigate the natural world within the garden are not consistently available. However, the nursery recognises there is scope to further enhance such opportunities and has plans to develop an area of the garden into a 'natural classroom.'

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

Key persons build very effective relationships with parents and carers in order to support children's personal care needs. Comprehensive information is gathered initially to find out everything of relevance so that individual care plans can be drawn up for each child. This ensures that children's routines and any specific dietary or health needs are fully understood and managed very efficiently and safely. In addition, children make strong

emotional attachments to their key person and other familiar adults because their needs are consistently met and they feel secure. There are excellent and well-established systems to ensure that children are prepared emotionally for making the transition to the next room within the nursery or their next early years setting. Some activities, for example, may be made more structured in advance of children moving up to gradually prepare them for a change in routine and environment. Children make regular settle visits to meet new staff and see their new room, along with their key person for security. Parents are fully involved in the process as they are encouraged to borrow photographic books showing their child's new room so they can share this with them at home ahead of the move. As a result, children are supported very well in making new relationships, building self-confidence and managing their feelings.

Children learn to behave very responsibly from a young age and to cooperate within a group. For example, even young toddlers learn about responsibility and being helpful as they are encouraged to help hand out feeding bowls to the other children at meal times, which they do with great confidence. Older children show a high regard for keeping themselves and their environment safe. The consistently adhere to rules for wearing protective caps when playing in the sand to prevent unwanted sand in their hair and carefully sweep up any spillages and dispose of them in the bin.

Children are highly independent at every level. Babies eagerly try to feed themselves using spoons and manage this very successfully, helped by the fact that bowls have suction pads to prevent them from moving around. As children get a little older they ably use knives and forks to cut their food and are willing to keep trying until they succeed. Staff consistently encourage and reinforce good hygiene practices and health awareness through everyday routines and activities. As a result, children learn to manage their health, hygiene and personal care very well. They relish being active outdoors in all weathers because there are interesting and challenging opportunities for them to move about and handle equipment and apparatus. For example, there is great interest in rolling balls down a sloping length of gutter pipe and collecting them from the basket at the bottom. Staff supervise children well to reinforce how to use such equipment safely.

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

Arrangements for the recruitment and training of suitable staff are very robust. The management strives for a well-qualified workforce and provides a rigorous induction programme followed by on-going training and supervision. This ensures that staff feel very well supported and have secure knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and responsibilities confidently. The management and staff have a robust knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and ensure that procedures are implemented swiftly in order to protect children. Meticulous records of any concerns or complaints are kept, in addition to records that support everyday practice, to ensure there is accurate accountability. Any issues of concern that come to light are fully investigated and reviewed in order to improve systems. This includes, working closely in partnership with parents and the appropriate agencies in order to meet requirements and ensure children's safety and protection.

The management set high expectations for staff performance and children's achievements. There is a very well-established and effective system of self-evaluation that drives continuous improvement based on the views of all stakeholders. Parents' views in particular, are very important to the continuing development of services. For example, the nursery asks parents to complete really searching questionnaires following the completion of each learning topic to find out how useful it has been in terms of what children have learned and how well involved parents have been. This enables the nursery to evaluate and reflect more deeply on the effectiveness of the curriculum that they provide. Staff too, are trained to reflect deeply on their own practice when evaluating how well plans have worked so that improvements can be made to the environment and to further enhance children's capacity for learning. Consequently, the nursery sustains high levels of achievement over time. This is borne out by data from the very effective system that the management has developed to monitor and track the progress made by each cohort of children. This is used very successfully to identify any particular trends in learning and to identify where any changes to the curriculum are needed in order to meet the needs of every child.

Strong partnerships with other early years providers make a significant contribution to ensuring that the needs of all children are met. For example, teachers from the local schools visit the children at the nursery in the term before they move up in order to build relationships and share information. In some cases, the nursery staff may accompany children and their parents when they visit their new school, or arrange a visit with the school teacher or special educational needs coordinator in order to inform them more specifically about how to plan and provide for children with additional needs. Consequently, children's transitions are as seamless as possible and there is excellent provision for their continuity in learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary 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 action. 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	105253
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	919539
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	106
Name of provider	Oak Tree Kindergarten Ltd
Date of previous inspection	31/01/2011
Telephone number	01582 720072

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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.

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