

Akeley Wood Nursery

Akeley Wood Junior School, Wicken Park Road, Wicken, Milton Keynes, MK19 6DA

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

07/01/2014

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

- Good use of the outdoor area engages children in exciting activities which develop their large muscles, such as jumping in washing up liquid filled puddles to create bubbles.
- Staff teach children to become interested in literacy by engaging them in lively story time sessions.
- Children display high levels of contentment and confidence at the nursery because of the strong key person approach.
- Thorough supervision of staff creates a capable and responsive staff team who are motivated in their work, securing children's good progress and providing a safe environment.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children sometimes become overtired at lunchtimes meaning that they do not fully enjoy the social occasion of mealtimes.
- There is scope to enhance the opportunities for children's imaginative play, such as developing role play areas where children can make believe.

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 rooms in the nursery and the infant hall.
- The inspector had discussions with staff, children and carers.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's records, safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation.
- The inspector had a meeting with the Head of Early Years and Manager.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full report

Information about the setting

Akeley Wood Nursery was registered in 2007 under the name First Tracks Nursery but changed its name in 2009. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It is owned by the Cognita Limited group of schools. The nursery operates from three rooms and an enclosed garden area within Akeley Wood Junior School, in Wicken, Milton Keynes. The nursery is open from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery has broad catchment area and is accessible to all children.

The nursery employs 16 members of child care staff. Of these, the Head of Early Years has Early Years Teacher Status, three staff have a relevant level 4 qualification and eight staff have appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 66 children attending the nursery who are in the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop more flexibility in daily routines so that children follow their own individual needs for rest and sleep to enable them to fully enjoy the range of activities on offer, including mealtimes
- extend opportunities for children's imaginative play further; for example, by having more role play areas which all children can explore.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff plan a varied and exciting curriculum of activities for children. They embrace the changing seasons to stimulate children's physical development when playing outside. After heavy rainfall all children dress in their wellington boots and coats and enjoy jumping in puddles. To stimulate children's curiosity and interest further, staff add washing up liquid and rubber ducks into the puddles. The children squeal in delight as they watch bubbles emerging and jump more enthusiastically to watch them grow. This helps them to develop strength in their legs and an understanding of cause and effect. Staff cater for children's sensory learning experiences equally well indoors. Children play with a wide range of media and materials which they squeeze, rub between their fingers and enjoy the sensation of. This helps them to develop the smaller muscles in their hands. Older children

make marks in the mixtures as they practise their early writing. Heuristic play sessions are an important part of the week, where children explore natural materials at their own pace, in small groups. Young children enjoy looking at wooden objects and feeling the texture of chains and keys. Older children combine the resources to make sounds as they bang on tins with wooden spoons. Staff stand back and allow children to discover the properties of the materials, while being available for younger children who chose to return to sit on their laps as they look at the objects. Children feel confident to try new things because of the wide array of activities they experience. This increases their explorative impulse and they become confident and capable learners who display the skills they need to be successful in their future learning and eventual entry to school.

Staff are good role models who teach children to be curious and excited. When reading stories to groups of children, staff are animated and use differing tone of voice and sounds to draw children in. As a result, even very young children become fascinated with the story, pointing at characters and joining in with sound effects of their own. This teaches children to enjoy books and develop a love of reading. Staff use skilful questioning to extend children's vocabulary and increase their ability to communicate. Young babies repeat the words that staff use as they develop early language. Staff respond to this giving children chance to listen and respond before praising them, teaching them the rules of conversation. As a result of these quality interactions, children are confident to talk with adults and each other. Children enjoy playing in the 'infant hall' where a wide range of activities are on offer, such as climbing frames and treasure baskets for children to explore. Resources are generally easily available for children, at their own level and boxes are labelled with photographs so children know what is inside. However, when staff rotate equipment, younger children do not always have ready access to role play materials and dressing up items to frequently support their imaginative play.

Staff observe children when they first enter the nursery and talk with parents to determine their individual starting points. This helps to ensure that staff are able to plan for their next steps in learning and to move them forward in their development. Staff share summaries of children's achievements frequently and discuss their progress on a daily, weekly and termly basis. Information boards let parents know what activities children enjoy each day and daily books ensure that parents know children's individual achievements. As a result, parents are successfully able to share in children's learning and support their development at home. Parents readily share information via photographs from home and observations. This means that children experience consistency in their learning.

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

The key person system at the nursery is well-developed enabling children to build strong bonds of attachments to those who care for them. Very young children quickly develop closeness to their special people and raise their arms for comfort and affection. Staff readily comfort children by cuddling them and sitting them on their laps. This helps children to feel secure and content and the move between home and the nursery is smooth for children as a result. This means that children are emotionally well prepared for

learning. A toddler group session for parents helps children to become familiar with the nursery and staff before children are left with them. This further helps them to feel safe when in their care for the first time. Staff prepare children equally well for moving between rooms at the nursery. They share information and children visit the room to become familiar with their new key person and surroundings. Children make the move into school with confidence because staff prepare them well. Staff know that very young children need to build links with home when they are away from people who are special to them. Consequently, they find ways for them to see images of their family, pets and friends. Staff make books with photographs and make innovative toys for children by wrapping photographs around tubes and boxes which young children like to handle and study closely. Staff talk with parents and share information in daily books to ensure that staff are aware of the routines children follow at home. However, the nursery routine has some set sleep times for younger children. This does not always suit all children all of the time. Some children become very tired while eating their lunch, and staff encourage them to stay awake to finish their meal so they are not hungry. This means the children do not always fully benefit from the social occasion of meal times.

Children have healthy balanced meals at the nursery. They learn about healthy choices as staff encourage them to eat their meal before pudding and encourage them to frequently drink water to remain hydrated. Children delight in playing outdoors and staff ensure that they have fresh air and exercise every day. Older children have sport sessions where they begin to understand about the effects of exercise upon their bodies and test out what they can do. This increases their awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Children manage their own personal hygiene as they wash their hands and use tissues when they need to wipe their noses. The staff explain to young children about care practices, talking to them when they change their nappy so they know what to expect and understand why things are happening. Children become increasingly independent as staff have high expectations for what they can do. When children return from playing outside they take off their wet boots and socks themselves and tidy away their clothes into a bag before sleep time. Children make choices about what they play with, meaning they become aware of how to make decisions.

Staff help children to understand their actions and encourage them to behave well. They reward older children's good behaviour with stickers and star charts when they celebrate an achievement, such as using the potty. As a result, children play harmoniously together and are respectful of each other, staff and equipment. Children learn about risk and challenge as they climb, slide and crawl through the climbing frame. They understand about keeping themselves safe as staff gently support younger children as they climb and older children wait for their turn so they do not bump into each other.

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

Senior staff review and update the extensive policies and procedures to ensure that they are accurate and successfully underpin the work of staff. This gives staff very clear guidelines for keeping children safe and outlines what action they must take should they

have any concerns about children's welfare. There are clear channels for staff to report any concerns they might have to the designated officer for child protection. The nursery operates a rigorous induction for all new staff. Before staff begin in their work, the nursery undertakes checks to confirm their suitability to work with children. Staff are vigilant in monitoring children and maintain safe and legal staff to children ratios at all times. Staff conduct daily checks of the areas where children play to help eliminate any potential risks to their safety.

The nursery use the observations and assessments staff make of children's progress to track and monitor the education programme. This data enables them to review groups of children and resources. This information is used to plan for children's next steps in learning and to identify how to enhance certain areas. Staff track individual children's progress to ensure that they make consistently good progress. Staff use this information to summarise children's development to date. This includes the progress check for children aged two. This is a very accurate account of children's abilities and identifies any areas where children need extra support. Parent's consultations provide opportunity for parents to further discuss children's development.

The highly qualified Head of Early Years leads and motivates a strong staff team who are dedicated to their work. The manager monitors staff performance and supervision is supportive enabling them to develop within their role. Staff undertake regular in-house training and have a positive attitude towards professional development. Staff demonstrate the value of their extended knowledge as they make multiple changes in their work for the benefit of children. This reflective practice is embedded through all aspects of the nursery. Regular audits test the rigor and effectiveness of procedures and close working with local authority workers enables the nursery to sustain ongoing improvements. The positive attitude staff have towards self-evaluation enables parents and children to share their views. The development of a parent steering group means that parents have a greater say in the care their children receive. This demonstrates that the nursery has a strong capacity to maintain and raise the quality of care for children. The nursery manager works very closely with the attached school to support children in their move into formal education. She contacts wider schools that children attend to invite teachers to meet children before they start school. The nursery builds links with the local children's centres and share information which might be helpful for parents. The staff are aware of the benefit of working with other providers when the need arises. Parents leave their positive feedback for staff at the nursery, sharing their trust and confidence in the quality of care staff provide for children

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY360266
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	821002
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	66
Name of provider	Cognita Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01908 571231

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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