

Animal Crackers

Sandy Hill Farm, Fradley Junction, Alrewas, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, DE13 7DW



Inspection date

19 March 2015

Previous inspection date

28 March 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff are well qualified, and consequently, have a good understanding of how children learn. They provide a broad range of fun and stimulating activities, which children of all ages thoroughly enjoy.
- Children benefit from very strong and caring relationships with their key persons. This secures their emotional well-being.
- Parents are highly valued as their child's main educator and staff take every opportunity to involve them in their child's daily care and learning. This fosters very positive relationships.
- Managers and senior staff work effectively as a team to evaluate practice and drive forward improvements. Consequently, all children benefit from a richly resourced and very welcoming environment.
- Staff prioritise outdoor learning as an important aspect of child development. This means that children from each age group benefit from very exciting and adventurous active play and exploration opportunities.
- Staff are very committed to continuous professional development, which enables them to work well as a team and develop their teaching skills. Consequently, children receive good levels of support and are effectively motivated to learn and try new things.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not fully enhance children's communication, language and literacy development.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maximise children's progress in communication and language development, for example, by extending opportunities for children to use expressive language and visual resources to describe main story settings, events and characters.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a varied range of children's activities, indoors and outside.
- The inspector completed joint observations of children's play and learning activities, with the nursery owner.
- The inspector held meetings and discussions with key persons, lead practitioners and the owner, throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and policies relating to safeguarding, staff suitability checks, recruitment and vetting procedures and children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents and children to obtain their views.

Inspector

Jayne Rooke

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff skilfully engage children's interest, across all areas of learning. For example, babies and young children delight in the sensory experience of paint and texture play. All children benefit from stimulating and enjoyable songs, stories, dance and drama activities, which successfully capture their imagination and creativity. However, staff do not always extend opportunities for children to enhance their communication, language and literacy skills. For example, children are not consistently encouraged to use story props and costumes to act out and retell well known, and much loved stories. Parents' and children's views show that children are very happy to attend. Parents state that staff support their children very well. They report that their children gain very good skills, specifically in their personal, social and emotional development. This prepares children well for their next stage in learning and school.

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

Children develop excellent physical and investigative skills, as they join in with active games and explore the natural world outdoors. For example, they learn how to work together to make a tricycle and trailer move along, taking turns to push, pull and balance their movements. Young children thrive as they enjoy playing in the fresh air and develop the ability to walk up and down hills and through archways. Boys and girls play happily with mud and water in the pretend kitchen, and learn about animal habitats as they observe the chickens and search for insects. Children's good health and hygiene is supported very well through the daily routine. Staff provide nutritious meals and snacks which promote children's healthy growth and development. Children develop increasing levels of independence, as they learn how to manage their own care routines.

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

Leaders and managers support staff well to help them deliver the educational programmes. This means that all children benefit from good quality learning experiences. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of all safeguarding procedures to protect children. They are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and confidently describe the referral procedure. They adhere to safe procedures, such as the mobile phone and camera policy, to ensure that risks to children's safety are effectively managed. New staff and trainees are supported well, through robust vetting and induction procedures. Staff closely supervise children at all times, to ensure children's safety and well-being. The owner of the nursery has successfully addressed previous actions and recommendations to improve practice. She involves staff in the self-review process, to enhance their skills and expertise. Consequently, all staff have developed a more secure understanding of their role and responsibilities. Partnerships with other providers and health agencies are strong and supportive. This means that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive consistent care and learning opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	218403
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	968985
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 11
Total number of places	86
Number of children on roll	120
Name of provider	Animal Crackers Children's Nursery Limited
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2014
Telephone number	01283 791030

Animal Crackers was registered in 1999. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including two staff with level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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