

# Acorn at Kents Hill

Wadhurst Lane, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6JF



<b>Inspection date</b>	25 June 2015
Previous inspection date	25 June 2014

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	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 <b>meets legal requirements for early years settings</b>			

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- The quality of teaching is good and monitored effectively. Senior and experienced staff model good practice. Staff support children's communication and language development well by explaining, commenting and asking open-ended questions.
- Children are content and enjoy their time at nursery. Key persons ensure that parents receive regular information about their children's care, learning and development.
- Staff are secure in their understanding of how to keep children safe. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements.
- The outdoor learning area provides excellent opportunities for older children to play and explore. Opportunities for active learning, planned around the children's interests, are plentiful and help to ensure that all children are making progress.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- The youngest children within the nursery have fewer opportunities than the older children to develop their understanding of natural materials and everyday objects through their play and exploration.
- Appropriate checks have been made on all staff, but, the systems for recording the suitability of staff and staff training do not support the manager in monitoring this area of the nursery's work effectively.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the monitoring of the safe and efficient running of the nursery by making sure records of staff suitability and training are easily accessible to the manager
- enhance the youngest children's opportunities to play and explore further by introducing more natural, everyday resources and materials for them to investigate and experience.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector took account of the views of parents.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager.
- The inspector observed and spoke to children at play, both indoors and in the outside area.
- The inspector looked at documentation relating to staff suitability, safer recruitment and staff training. She also looked at accident and incident reports, systems for observation, assessment and planning and the nursery's action plans and self-evaluation.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the nursery manager.

### Inspector

Penny Fisher

## Inspection findings

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

Children in all age groups enjoy their time at the nursery. They are able to choose from resources and activities that interest and challenge them, so they are busy and actively learning. Teaching is consistently good. Staff explain things well to children, for example, when they are interested in the sound of a tree cutter nearby. Children, especially the older boys, benefit from learning in the large and exciting outdoor area. For example, they develop the physical skills they need for writing by tapping tacks into wooden blocks and using chunky chinks on the concrete. Two-year-old children learn about shape and measure as they design and build towers using large blocks in a well planned adult-led activity. Children's communication and language development is well-supported; staff interact with the children throughout the day, for example, singing frequently to the babies, telling stories outdoors and playing an active part in imaginative role play.

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

Good settling-in procedures ensure that parents and children receive a warm welcome. Children are settled and feel safe. They explore the environment with confidence and are supported to take managed risks, such as exploring the trees in the outdoor area and climbing. Key persons know the children and their families well. Staff are warm and caring. They quickly provide comfort and reassurance when needed. Children's behaviour is generally good because they are well-occupied, engrossed in their play and staff manage children's behaviour consistently well. There are good opportunities for children to develop their independence, which helps them to be ready for school. The environment is calm. There is a wide range of resources easily accessible to the children, which they move around freely both indoors and outside. The nursery staff have correctly identified the need to further enhance the resources in the baby room.

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

The nursery manager is experienced and capable. She is highly appreciated by her staff team, who feel well-supported and value the opportunities they have to develop their practice. For example, staff talk enthusiastically about their learning from a very recent training event. Despite many changes in staff, the manager has driven progress over the last year. Effective monitoring of the quality of teaching has led to improvements. Staff observations and assessments are now precise and accurate. Systems are used effectively to identify individual children's progress and the progress made by groups of children. Regular reviews, peer observations and annual appraisals support staff well with ongoing professional development. The setting has robust safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that staff are suitable and understand how to keep children safe. However, the current systems that hold information regarding records of staff suitability and staff training do not assist the manager to monitor this aspect of the nursery's work effectively.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY447040
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	1006136
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 0
<b>Total number of places</b>	54
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	74
<b>Name of provider</b>	Acorn Childcare 2
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 June 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 200 281

Acorn at Kents Hill re-registered in 2012. Situated in purpose built premises in the residential area of Kents Hill in Milton Keynes, the nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery employs 14 staff, all of whom hold relevant qualifications. Two members of staff are qualified as Early Years Professionals and four others are qualified to degree level. There are currently 74 children on roll. The nursery receives free early education funding for children aged two, three and four and is open weekdays from 7.30am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year.

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