

# Acorn At Cedars

Cedars County Combined School, Bury Street, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire,  
MK16 0DT



<b>Inspection date</b>	15 September 2016
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The manager's monitoring, supervision and coaching processes are not fully effective. Staff teaching skills are not consistently at a good level. Children develop some key skills for their future learning, but they do not make good enough progress from their starting points.
- Staff do not organise or plan some activities consistently to ensure learning opportunities are fully explored. This hinders children at times from having sufficient challenge or support to extend their learning further.
- Staff do not establish effective partnerships with parents. For example, some parents comment that they do not feel well informed about their children's development and are not able to share learning which has happened at home.

### It has the following strengths

- Staff teach positive values of how to behave, such as having good manners and building friendships. They help children to appreciate differences and similarities in themselves and others.
- Staff support children's good health. For example, they provide home-cooked healthy meals and encourage children to understand why good hygiene is important. Staff make sure that comfortable provision is made for children's sleep routines.
- Staff help children to settle into their day. They help to build children's confidence and encourage them to try tasks for themselves.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage the provider must:**

	<b>Due Date</b>
■ develop monitoring and coaching processes further to raise the quality of staff teaching to a consistently high standard	20/10/2016
■ keep parents well informed of their children's progress to encourage children's successful learning and development	20/10/2016
■ improve the organisation and planning of activities to extend children's learning consistently.	20/10/2016

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play and learning during the inspection.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's developmental records, the setting's key policies and procedures, and self-evaluation.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager and discussed the findings.
- The inspector took account of children's and parents' views through discussions during the inspection, and by sampling feedback comments.

### Inspector

Carolyn Hasler

## Inspection findings

### **Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement**

Most staff show enthusiasm and work steadily towards professional development goals. Although the manager recognises some gaps in teaching practice, such as through her appraisal system, she does not fully address staff under-performance well enough. The manager and staff monitor children's progress well and make appropriate use of other professionals to support children with additional needs. Processes to monitor groups of children's learning are having some effect on closing gaps in development. There are some positive comments from parents; however, processes to collect feedback are not fully effective to ensure all parents feel they can contribute. Overall, the manager makes use of information from others to target improvement plans. Safeguarding is effective. The manager ensures staff understand how to identify and respond to welfare concerns. She ensures there is sufficient staff to supervise children and maintain risk assessments.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement**

Generally, staff help children to develop their interests. However, teaching is not consistent. For example, staff miss opportunities for children to develop their use of language fully. Some staff are more skilled than others, for example, in using equipment effectively and encouraging children to talk. Staff generally help children develop ideas and encourage imaginative play. For example, a staff member encouraged children to throw stars back into the sky. There are opportunities for children to understand that written words have meaning. For instance, children have name cards to find their pegs. Staff help children make marks in different ways, such as in cornflour and with crayons. They encourage children to be active, for example, when throwing and catching balloons.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement**

Generally, staff think about activities and ways to help children prepare for school. However, some staff lack organisation and planning skills. For example, some activities, which are repeated on a regular basis, have become mundane and less interesting, particularly for most-able children. Staff who work with babies are sensitive to their needs. They provide comfort when babies are distressed, and encourage walking babies to explore. Overall, staff encourage children to understand feelings and support their friendships. They give children opportunities to take care of their own needs, such as serving their own meals. Staff encourage children to experience risk taking, for example, when climbing, and gain an understanding of their own safety.

### **Outcomes for children require improvement**

Children form friendships and seek out opportunities to explore and investigate. For example, they enjoy playing with sand, explore texture and count sandcastles. However, due to some inconsistencies in teaching, children do not make the progress they should.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY495445
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	1072824
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	28
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	57
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Acorn Childcare 2
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901362
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 616139

Acorn at Cedars registered in 2016. The nursery provides care between 7.30am and 6pm during weekdays, all year round. The provider receives funding for early years education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 10 members of staff, of whom nine hold childcare qualifications to level 2 and above.

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