

Animal Crackers

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



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

28 September 2017

19 March 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The learning environment is very well organised. Pre-school children and toddlers have constant access to the outdoor learning environment. This enables children to learn in an environment that suits their individual learning needs.
- The manager evaluates and continuously improves the provision. She shows a commitment to continually making improvements to help children achieve good outcomes. She monitors the quality of teaching closely to ensure it is consistently of a good standard.
- Staff know the children very well. They use this information to challenge children effectively in their learning. Staff observe and assess children's progress and planning for future learning is based on a good knowledge of each child's interests.
- Children of all ages make good progress in their communication and language development. For example, staff support babies as they begin to use single words and older children extend their language skills through learning Spanish.
- A strong key-person system ensures that children form secure attachments with staff. A nurturing approach helps children to settle well and to feel safe and secure.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Although the manager tracks the progress of groups of children, this is very broad. The information gathered does not always accurately reflect children's development to enable her to evaluate the reasons why any gaps in children's learning occur.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- refine the system for monitoring children's progress so that it reflects children's development even more precisely to enable any gaps in children's learning to be identified swiftly.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as policies and procedures, children's developmental journals and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Lynsey Hurst

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff have a secure understanding of their role to safeguard and protect the children in their care. The leadership team follows robust recruitment and selection procedures to employ suitable staff to work with the children. Staff are provided with regular supervision meetings and continuing professional development opportunities to enhance their practice and improve the outcomes for children further. Parents are complimentary about the nursery and comment that their children are provided with additional learning experiences, such as learning Spanish and forest school activities. Staff work effectively with parents and other early years professionals to ensure that children receive any additional support that they need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and provide them with fun experiences that ignite their passion for learning. They support children's mathematical skills extremely well. During snack time, staff introduce children to fractions, talking about how two halves of a biscuit make a whole biscuit. They count and use mathematical language with the children regularly. For example, when children look for leaves in the extensive outdoor learning area, staff engage them in counting the number of children who are present as they move from one outdoor area to another. They introduce words to describe size when looking at leaves and fruit. Staff ask lots of questions, test children's understanding and extend their thinking skills. Staff support children's understanding of letters and the sounds they can hear in words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

All children are well behaved and have a clear understanding of the expectations of the setting. For example, when the toddlers explore the outdoor learning environment, they know in which areas they need to stay close to staff and when they can run freely. They understand how to keep themselves safe and understand why gates need to be closed and headcounts completed. Comprehensive risk assessments support children's safety and are reviewed regularly. They cover all aspects of the nursery, including children accessing the out-of-school club. Staff offer praise and encouragement to motivate children, and to let them know what they do well. Children are provided with nutritious home-made meals and snacks which helps to support their healthy lifestyles.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress in their learning from their starting points. They acquire the skills they need to support the next stages in their learning, including the move to school. Children explore the nursery with confidence and make independent choices in their play. Pre-school children actively engage in stories, using props to bring stories to life. They are aware of who writes the story and who draws the pictures. Children have good physical skills and coordination. They can ride tricycles, balance, and control a football with skill.

Setting details

Unique reference number	218403
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	1090028
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 12
Total number of places	86
Number of children on roll	183
Name of registered person	Animal Crackers Children's Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP520129
Date of previous inspection	19 March 2015
Telephone number	01283 791030

Animal Crackers registered in 1999. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications, including two at level 6 and one with qualified teacher status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, except for a week at Christmas and all bank holidays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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