

Acorns Nursery School

St Birinus House, Langley Hill, Reading, RG31 4QX



Inspection date

16 March 2018

Previous inspection date

20 September 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- The manager has not effectively evaluated all aspects of her provision. She does not record details of occasions when it is necessary to physically restrain children. This is a breach of the welfare requirements. There is no information to indicate whether the level of support used was appropriate for the situation.
- Staff have not fully developed systems to share all information about learning with parents. Some parents are not aware how staff are preparing older children for school.
- Staff do not consistently support children to understand the feelings of others. At times, children snatch toys from their friends, and this causes minor disruption.

It has the following strengths

- Staff support children to use their imaginations. They make suggestions about how to develop the role-play area. Staff support children to use their speech, such as when they talk about furniture they have at home. They collect similar items for their realistic room. Children are proud of their achievement; they show friends the finished product.
- Staff offer children plenty of physical play opportunities and the outdoor area is very well organised. Children particularly enjoy moving their bodies in interesting ways and they balance and roll as they move across the garden area.
- The manager deploys staff well and children are able to speak to an adult when they need support. Staff extend children's learning and sensitively ask children questions without distracting them from play. Children progress well in all areas of their learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

Due Date

- ensure written records are kept relating to any occasion where the use of physical intervention is necessary to protect children from harm. 30/03/2018

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

- continue to develop systems to self-evaluate practice and to identify breaches in requirements to raise the overall quality of the provision
- strengthen communication with all parents and share details with them about how staff are preparing children for the move to school
- support children to express their emotions appropriately and to understand the feelings of others so they learn to resolve their own disputes.

Inspection activities

- The inspector asked parents for their opinions about the support staff offer children.
- The inspector jointly observed an adult-led activity with the manager and they evaluated what they had seen.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their knowledge of safeguarding and the procedures they follow to protect children's welfare.
- The inspector viewed children's learning records and talked to staff about the progress individual children are making.
- The inspector held a leadership and management discussion with the manager and they discussed her methods of self-evaluation.

Inspector

Julie Bruce

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The manager has worked hard with staff to raise standards at the setting. However, she has not recognised that there are still weaknesses that have not been addressed. For example, the manager accessed physical intervention training. However, she has not identified that this type of support needs to be recorded to fully protect children involved. She does talk to parents about the action that is taken. Safeguarding is effective. The manager regularly checks staff's understanding of safeguarding. She asks them questions relating to relevant topics. She offers staff appropriate support to address any gaps in their knowledge. For example, recently they learned in detail about latest government guidance regarding child protection issues. The management team has strengthened the recruitment and vetting procedures. The team always seeks references from previous employers and checks applicants' work history. The manager is sensitive to the needs of staff. She offers them effective support and training to complete their job role. She has introduced a written complaints policy. There are now clear procedures should parents want to raise concerns about the service on offer.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use their knowledge of how children learn to plan exciting activities for children of all ages. They encourage children to engage in books. For example, children pretended to be at the beach. They rode the waves on surfboards and raised their arms as they fought to balance and were hit by choppy waves. Staff teach children to develop an interest in technology. For instance, children moved the cursor and identified health workers in their local community. They talked about the role doctors and dentists play in keeping people healthy. Assessments of children's progress are precise and staff set achievable next steps. They form strong links with professionals that support children's development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff do not consistently support children to understand why they should take the feelings of friends into account. At times, this causes children some frustration. It is not clear to all parents how staff are helping children to get ready for school. Staff do protect children's dignity; they help children to change their clothes in an appropriate space. They offer children emotional support and children form secure attachments to their special adult. Staff teach children to develop a sense of responsibility. For example, they guided children to sweep up paper cuttings the group had dropped on the floor.

Outcomes for children are good

Younger children identify numbers and older children confidently order numbers. Children learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs (SEN) attain well. Children learn many skills they can utilise at school. For instance, children learn to identify and blend letters, and they write a range of letters.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY493676
Local authority	West Berkshire (Newbury)
Inspection number	1114787
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Love Your Community
Registered person unique reference number	RP534909
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2017
Telephone number	07703 102805

Acorns Nursery School registered in 2015. It is based in a self-contained converted house in the grounds of the Baptist Church in Tilehurst, near Reading, in Berkshire. The nursery offers term-time care. Opening hours are 9.15am to 4pm from Monday to Thursday and 9.15am to 1.15pm on Friday. The nursery employs nine members of staff. Five members of staff hold qualified teacher status and four members of staff have a childcare qualification at level 3.

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