

Acorns Early Years Centre

Joy House, Franklin Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 7UZ



Inspection date	6 September 2018
Previous inspection date	18 January 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of 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

The provision is good

- Staff establish positive partnerships with parents and keep them fully involved in their children's learning. For instance, they regularly share children's achievements with parents.
- Staff skilfully help prepare children for their eventual move to school. For example, they introduce routines that they will experience at school, such as independently getting changed into clothes for exercise sessions.
- Children are polite and behave well. For instance, even the youngest children sign 'please' and 'thank you'. Older children confidently follow the setting rules.
- The manager and staff work closely together to review their practice. For example, they evaluate the day's events with children and listen to their views. Staff use the feedback to support their future activity plans. This helps keep children motivated to learn. This supports children to continue to make good progress.
- Staff establish positive relationships with children and get to know their individual personalities well. This helps children develop positive well-being and self-esteem.
- Staff support children to develop good communication skills. For example, they ask them thought-provoking questions and give them time to think and then respond.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently encourage children to fully understand the importance of following good health and hygiene routines.
- Staff do not always manage the changes in routine effectively to help ensure that they keep all children engaged in their learning experiences.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend children's opportunities to develop their physical well-being further and fully understand the importance of consistently following good hygiene routines
- review and improve the organisation of changes in routine to support all children to know what is expected of them and remain engaged throughout.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interacting with the children and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector viewed the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector looked at written documentation, including a sample of policies and procedures, risk assessments and staff training records.
- The inspector spoke to children, parents and staff, and considered their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector
Kelly Hawkins

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

The manager closely monitors the consistency of the quality of care and teaching that staff provide children. For instance, she regularly observes staff interaction with children and provides them with helpful advice to support their future performance. All staff are keen to build on their skills and knowledge further. They attend a wide range of training. For instance, they learnt about different ways to support children to learn how to behave and manage their feelings effectively. Staff use additional funding effectively to support children's individual learning needs. For instance, they purchase additional resources to support children's physical skills. Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the safeguarding procedures to follow to help protect children's safety and welfare. This includes ensuring that staff supervise children well and thoroughly monitoring and risk assessing any accidents and administration of medication to keep children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff communicate with other early years professionals to help provide children with a good consistent approach to their shared care and learning. For example, they share children's next steps in learning with staff at other settings they also attend. There is a good range of resources and activities to interest children of all ages. The manager and staff closely monitor the progress of individual children and specific groups of children. This supports staff to promptly highlight any gaps in children's development and provide them with good support to help close them. Staff extend children's interests well. For instance, children who enjoy a story about a gingerbread man, go on to bake their own gingerbread biscuits and act out the story to bring their imaginations alive.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children develop good social skills and build meaningful friendships. For example, they are kind to each other and invite them to join in their play. Children challenge their physical skills. For instance, they negotiate obstacles with confidence, such as balancing on beams and stepping stones. Younger children use good equipment to explore different ways that they can move, such as using tunnels to crawl through. Children have good opportunities to learn about other people's similarities and differences outside of their own communities. They celebrate festivals traditional to other countries, such as Bastille day.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in relation to their individual starting points. Children are independent and are confident to choose their own play. Children develop good mathematical skills to support their future learning. For example, younger children enjoy number songs and older children confidently count as they play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY243975
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10063897
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	80
Number of children on roll	126
Name of registered person	Acorns Early Years Centre
Registered person unique reference number	RP520995
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2016
Telephone number	01322 550568

Acorns Early Years Centre registered in 2006. It operates from Dartford, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs 31 members of staff, 24 of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 2 and above. This includes one member of staff who has a level 4, one member of staff who has a level 5 and one member of staff who has an early years qualification at level 6.

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