

Acorn Day Nursery Castlethorpe

17 South Street, Milton Keynes MK19 7EL



Inspection date	12 February 2019
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
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

This provision is good

- The dedicated and passionate acting manager leads her staff team well. She provides good support to a well-qualified team who work together to meet children's needs. Self-evaluation is effective and improvement plans are sharply focused.
- Parents speak highly of the staff in the setting. They feel very well informed about their children's progress and how to support their child's learning at home. They regularly share their child's learning and interests outside of the setting with the staff. Parents compliment the level of care and learning experiences their children receive.
- The key-person system is strong. Staff build close relationships with children and know them well. This helps children feel confident, happy, secure and well equipped to take on new challenges in their learning.
- Children benefit from good daily opportunities to be physically active and play outdoors. Staff help children take some risks in their play, make independent choices and learn how to play safely.
- Staff make good use of information from observations to accurately assess what children know and can do. Planning is effective and sharply focused on children's individual interests and next steps in their learning. Children make good progress from their starting points.
- Make more effective use of opportunities for children to learn about the important hygiene practices that contribute to good health.
- Staff working with the younger children sometimes miss opportunities to encourage children to understand fully the consequences of their behaviour.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- make more-effective use of opportunities to promote children's understanding of good hygiene practices and how these contribute to their good health
- make the most of opportunities to encourage younger children to fully understand the consequences of their actions.

Inspection activities

- The inspector was given a tour of the nursery by the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching in all age groups, during activities inside and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff, parents and children during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and senior childcare manager. She looked at a range of documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff, and policies and procedures.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of an adult-led activity with the manager.

Inspector

Louise Adams

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff understand the procedures they must follow in the event of a concern about a child's safety or welfare, or the behaviour of a colleague. The management team supports staff well. For example, new staff complete a thorough induction process and the manager consistently mentors and offers her support to give clear direction to staff. Staff attend supervision meetings and appraisals where effective targets are set and training needs are identified. Monitoring of children's progress is effective. Any gaps in children's learning is identified swiftly to ensure that all children progress well. The manager completes a self-evaluation process, where staff and parents are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings about the provision. This information is used well to set future goals.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use a wide range of effective teaching techniques that help children make good progress. They provide children with enjoyable, interesting and exciting learning opportunities. Younger children become enthralled while playing with sensory 'gloop'. They explore natural materials, such as wooden and metal objects, ribbons and brushes. This helps promote their natural sense of curiosity. The pre-school children explore a well-resourced outdoor area and are supported well to take manageable risks during their play. For example, children challenge each other to walk across the wooden beams. Adult-led activities build on prior learning and help children to make sense of the world around them. Staff ensure parents are aware of activities children enjoy, through daily verbal discussion and through electronic communication.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

The setting is exciting and interesting for children, who thoroughly enjoy investigating and exploring the learning spaces. Staff are knowledgeable about children's needs and interests, and work closely with families. For example, they offer home visits prior to children starting at the nursery, to learn about their individual needs. Snacks and mealtimes are sociable occasions where children enjoy eating nutritious food. Independence is supported well. For instance, children make their own choices at snack time and serve themselves using spoons. Children learn about the wider world through a wide range of learning opportunities, such as on outings in the local community and forest-school sessions.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make good progress, including those in receipt of government funding. Children acquire a wide range of skills, abilities and attitudes that prepare them well for future learning and the eventual move to school. Older children show they are motivated to learn and display good levels of engagement in learning, particularly during activities outdoors. Younger children are eager to learn new words and staff encourage them to repeat the words they hear.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY543686
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10090148
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	1 - 4
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	58
Name of registered person	Acorn Early Years Foundation
Registered person unique reference number	RP901362
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01908 510222

Acorn Day Nursery Castlethorpe registered in 2017 and is situated in Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes. It operates from 7.30am to 6.15pm, throughout the year. The provider receives funding to provide free early years education to children aged two, three and four years. The provider employs 20 members of staff, 12 of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications.

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