

Acorns Nursery School

St Birinus House, Langley Hill, Reading RG31 4QX



Inspection date	25 February 2019
Previous inspection date	16 March 2018

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Strong leadership and management, along with ambitious self-evaluation, help to ensure that the nursery is run well. Staff work confidently with the children and have good relationships with them.
- Children are provided with a variety of interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. Resources are easily accessible in response to the age or needs of children.
- Children's physical development is good. They experience daily opportunities to enjoy fresh air and can access a range of stimulating and challenging activities in the outdoor environment.
- Children show caring attitudes towards each other. Older children learn to manage their behaviour. They take turns and share independently. Younger children receive praise and support for being kind and helpful.
- There is a good focus on children's speaking and listening skills. Staff promote language development through fun activities, for example when they encourage children to talk about the interesting show and tell items that they have brought in from home.
- Staff are well qualified and promote children's learning effectively. This helps them to develop the skills they need for their future learning, including their move to school. Children are confident, enthusiastic learners who are keen to explore and investigate.
- Staff do not seek precise information from parents about what children already know and can do from the onset, to identify accurate starting points in their learning.
- The arrangements to support staff's continued professional development are not highly focused on identifying training needs, to raise the quality of teaching to a higher level.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- gather more precise information when children first start and consider prior achievements fully when assessing their starting points, to inform future planning
- extend programmes of professional development for staff and focus more precisely on identifying their training needs, to raise the quality of their interactions further.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the four main areas and garden.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including planning and a selection of the setting's policies and children's records.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the deputy manager. She spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Anneliese Fox-Jones

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. All staff attend regular core training on child protection matters and are confident of the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child's welfare. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children well, ensuring that their safety and security are prioritised. The manager reflects on the quality of practice and actively involves staff, parents and children in this process. Leaders accurately monitor the progress that children make in their development. Gaps in learning are effectively monitored and addressed. Parents feel well informed about their children's development and speak positively about the nursery and the warmth and friendliness of the staff. Staff have developed good partnerships with the local schools and other professionals. Overall, the manager holds supervision and staff meetings and generally provides opportunities to support staff to gain knowledge and strengthen their skills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff support children's learning well, which they base around children's interests and individual learning needs. This contributes towards children making good progress in their learning and development. For older children, staff plan interesting activities that excite them to take part and promote their thinking. For example, children explore sounds and their letters and are eager to find objects that start with the letter 'M'. Staff successfully promote children's communication and language skills. For example, older children use complex sentences to describe their actions. Staff use children's interests to provide stimulating activities that children enjoy. They interact well with the children and actively support their ideas. Children develop an interest in numbers as they count each other, sing number songs and predict how many are left when one is taken away. Younger children develop their hand-to-eye coordination as they use paints for making marks and thread tiny beads onto pipe cleaners.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are encouraged to be independent learners as they manage their own personal care. The effective key-person system contributes towards children developing strong emotional bonds and trusting relationships with staff. Children thrive in the outdoor areas. They balance on logs, take risks as they climb on large play equipment and use their imaginations and cooking skills in the pretend kitchen area. Staff provide consistent boundaries that help children learn how to behave well. Staff plan a wide variety of opportunities that support children to become aware of similarities and differences between people in society. This helps all children to feel valued and they demonstrate a strong sense of belonging in the nursery.

Outcomes for children are good

Children explore in the rich and stimulating environment. They have an array of opportunities to develop their communication and language skills and continually extend their vocabulary. All children make good progress, including those who receive early years pupil premium funding and those who speak English as an additional language. Older children are enthusiastic, active learners who have a keen interest in early reading and writing in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY493676
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10084825
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Love Your Community
Registered person unique reference number	RP534909
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2018
Telephone number	01189 420475

Acorns Nursery School registered in 2015. It is based in a self-contained converted house in the grounds of the Baptist Church in Tilehurst, 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 provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. It employs seven members of staff. Of these, three hold qualified teacher status and four have a childcare qualification at level 3.

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