

# Inspection of Acorn Day Nursery (Sharnbrook)

Unilever Research Site, Sharnbrook, BEDFORD MK44 1LQ

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Inspection date: 6 February 2020

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children embrace the ethos of expanding their knowledge through nature. They climb, swing, hide and explore in the area designated for forest school activities. Children sit on logs and watch in anticipation while staff prepare delicious food on a fire for them all to enjoy. They explain why they cannot go near the fire, demonstrating their understanding of why rules are set. Children confidently use appropriate tools under the very close supervision of vigilant staff, helping them learn how to begin to keep themselves safe while they take suitable risks.

Babies and very young children enjoy being immersed in sensory stimulation. They move shapes on a light-box and pat different textures during their explorations. Aromas from segments of citrus fruits in trays of rice help to add to their experiences while they watch the dried rice fall from their hands. Children crowd around staff to listen to stories, sharing a passion for books that staff initiate. They learn to listen and begin to hear new and exciting words, helping to support their growing vocabularies.

Children feel valued in the nursery. They display photographs of their families from the branches of a tree and share news from home with their key person and friends. Children respond to the questions staff ask them, giving their opinion about their enjoyment of activities. They help to decide which new playthings and equipment should be introduced into the group rooms.

## **What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?**

- The manager and provider evaluate the quality of care and education effectively. They gather feedback from parents, children and staff to help make continual improvements.
- The well-established key-person system is effective. Parents work in close partnership with staff. Staff encourage parents to add photographs, comments and observations from home on a secure app. This supports staff to plan stimulating activities, helping to build on what children already know.
- The manager and the provider strive to encourage staff to continue their own professional development. Dedicated training days help staff to focus on aspects of their knowledge and understanding to drive the quality of care and education further forward. New staff and those employed to cover staff absences are given clear inductions. From their very first day, staff know how to safely evacuate children in the event of an emergency.
- Staff support children to identify their own emotions and to consider how others might be feeling. Staff gently remind children to be kind and to share. This helps to strengthen the very good behaviour children display.
- Children are immersed in the local community. Staff take them on regular trips

to a local care home to read and play with the residents. Partnerships with parents are particularly strong. Parents are highly valued and welcomed into the nursery. They are very supportive, and feel it is a special place. On occasions, they have arranged trips for small groups of children to visit suitable departments within the science park. These new experiences help to trigger children's desire to discover new interests.

- Children return to favourite activities throughout the day. They scoop out oranges and fill the skins with lard and seeds for birds to eat. Children talk about the birds they can see in the trees and decide where they can put their feeders.
- Staff work closely with other professionals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. Staff follow care plans and act on the advice of others who work with and know the children. This helps staff support children to reach new milestones at a pace most suited to them.
- Staff use the information they gather from observations to help them set challenges that build on what children already know. When children first start in the nursery, the key person finds out from parents about children's routines at home, interests and preferences.
- During mealtimes, staff sometimes miss opportunities to encourage children to join in meaningful conversations, to help enhance their speaking and listening skills. Some children and babies are not always positioned in a way for them to easily see and hear others, further limiting the interactions they have.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are able to identify, record and report any concerns they might have about children's welfare. They remain vigilant to what they see and hear. Staff are confident in their roles to help protect children. The manager and provider follow robust selection and recruitment procedures to help ensure that all staff are suitable.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- review and adapt mealtimes to further promote additional opportunities for rich communication, language and social interactions

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY550865
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10143477
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	62
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	100
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Acorn Early Years Foundation
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901362
<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 608899
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Acorn Day Nursery (Sharnbrook) registered in 2017. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold relevant qualifications at level 3 or above. Two members of staff hold qualifications in forest school education. The nursery is open all year round and operates from 7.15am until 6.15pm, Monday to Friday. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Katrina Rodden

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the group rooms, garden and forest school. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.
- Meetings were held between the inspector, the manager and a member of the provider's senior team. The inspector checked evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector joined the manager on a walk around the nursery. They discussed how staff plan to support children's progress.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents. She read emails that had been sent from parents for the inspection and took all of these views into consideration.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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