

Inspection of Acacia Pre-School

Acacia Intergenerational Centre, 230 Grove Road, MITCHAM, Surrey CR4 1SD

Inspection date: 28 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are safe, happy and settled, and make good friendships. They arrive and separate from their carers with ease and quickly settle into activities that interest them. Staff create a warm and welcoming environment and children enjoy their time at pre-school. The setting is committed to helping new children settle quickly. Staff work exceptionally closely with parents during times such as home visits to find out about children's starting points and specific needs. This supports children to quickly form warm, strong emotional attachments with their key person. Staff know children well and provide a stimulating learning environment for children of all ages. However, opportunities for younger children's independence during daily routines could be strengthened.

Staff have high expectations for all children, overall. They establish a thorough understanding of children's abilities and plan challenging experiences to support their ongoing development. Staff carry out effective observation and assessments of children's learning. However, children's independent access to technological equipment is not always strategically planned for. Nevertheless, children make very good progress in relation to their starting points.

Throughout the year, children develop an understanding of a range of cultural festivals that reflect their own backgrounds and those of their friends. This helps them to learn to be respectful of differences.

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

- Children have daily opportunities to spend time outdoors being physically active and exploring their local area. They make good progress in their physical development as they access secure, well-resourced outdoor areas. Children enjoy plenty of fresh air as they take part in initiatives such as the 'mini morning mile'. They use a wide variety of equipment in the outdoor area that enables them to climb and explore. Children take trips on trains, trams and buses to visit local shops and the library.
- The management team is committed to the pre-school's continuous improvement. For example, they closely monitor the progress that individual and groups of children make. This information is used effectively to further enhance the curriculum and target improvements. They have recently extended the literacy provision to inspire boys to make marks during fun activities.
- Children are supported well to develop a growing awareness of how to keep themselves healthy and manage reasonable risks. Staff provide them with good opportunities to gain practical skills, for example, independently washing their hands before snacks and cutting and peeling their own fruit. However, younger children's independence is not fully encouraged during snack time routines.

- Staff place a high importance on promoting children's communication skills. They work at children's level, promoting good eye contact and extending children's thinking and learning through effective questioning. Staff implement strategies such as visual timetables to support children with speech and language delay and help them to understand daily routines.
- Partnerships with health services, some of which are located in the same building as the pre-school, are strong. This gives children and families good access to early health services. Staff are quick to draw on the expertise of professionals. This helps them to offer carefully tailored support to meet the individual needs of children.
- Parents have very positive views of the pre-school. They are encouraged to play a major role in supporting their children's development and share 'wow' moments from home. This supports consistency in children's learning and promotes very good outcomes.
- Children's mathematical development is progressing well. Staff skilfully introduce mathematical language, such as 'big', 'tiny' and 'enormous', as children play. Children independently count for a purpose, which helps promote their school readiness.
- Staff encourage and support children's knowledge of technology when on outings and through planned activities. However, staff do not make the most of the wide variety of technology equipment. At times it is not easily accessible to children.
- The management team implements effective vetting and recruitment strategies to ensure the suitability of staff. They provide staff with regular support, such as through appraisals, meetings and training opportunities, to ensure their ongoing professional development. This helps to drive forward the quality of the provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe and protect their welfare. They are aware of the possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff are familiar with the pre-school's policy for safeguarding and they know how to record and report any concerns that may arise. The pre-school has robust recruitment processes, which help to ensure the suitability of staff who work directly with the children. Staff use thorough risk assessments to keep children safe and secure at all times, including on outings.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen daily routines to promote younger children's independence

- provide even further opportunities for children to develop their technology skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY450616
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10128524
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	London Borough of Merton
Registered person unique reference number	RP524519
Telephone number	0208 5453140
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2013

Information about this early years setting

Acacia Pre-School registered in 2012. It is situated in Acacia Intergenerational Centre. Children have access to a large playroom with direct access to the large garden. The pre-school runs during term time with morning sessions from 9am until midday. Seven staff currently work with the children. The manager has a degree in early years and the other staff are qualified to level 2 or 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Trisha Edward

Inspection activities

- The inspector and the manager looked around the setting and discussed how staff plan for children's learning. The inspector spoke with children and staff during the inspection.
- A management meeting was held with the pre-school manager and the nominated person. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to parents and considered their views.
- The inspector also spoke to staff about their knowledge of safeguarding and the procedures in place for reporting any concerns.

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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