

Inspection of Acorn Day Nursery

2 Roman Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 2QT

Inspection date: 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The quality of education is variable. Staff's knowledge of their curriculum intentions varies, including the quality of their interactions with the children. Staff working with the younger children and babies, sometimes, overlook opportunities to extend children's interests and to build on what they know and can do. Therefore, on occasions, these children do not show good levels of curiosity or engagement in their play. Furthermore, younger children and babies are not consistently provided with sufficient resources and inviting activities. This restricts opportunities for the children to explore and develop their own ideas and creativity.

Nevertheless, children demonstrate that they are settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. Older children enjoy the company of their friends. They learn to play corporately together and to share the toys. Children enjoy being physically active in the fresh air. They develop their balancing skills as they walk along the upturned crates, learn to throw and catch balls and jump onto the hopscotch squares. Children use tools, such as paint brushes, to make marks in the sand and toy tweezers to pick up objects. This helps to prepare them for skills, such as holding and controlling a pen. Younger children develop their hand-to-eye coordination skills as they learn to move rice and lentils from one container to another. Babies enjoy playing peek-a-boo games with the staff.

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

- The management team has recently evaluated the quality of the provision and identified areas for improvement. The nursery is currently going through a period of staff change and refurbishment. However, the supervision and monitoring of staff has become inconsistent. Staff do not receive effective support, coaching, and training to enable them to perform their roles and responsibilities to a consistently good level. This includes the development of their knowledge of the curriculum and their interactions with the children.
- Staff working with the younger children do not consistently structure the curriculum to support and build on what children already know and can do. For example, when children become interested in their play staff do not always use the opportunity to spontaneously challenge children's thinking and ask probing questions. Additionally, resources and planned activities do not always stimulate children's curiosity and engagement.
- A welcoming and friendly atmosphere greets all children and their families. Staff are kind and caring towards the children. They are attentive to the children's care needs, which supports their emotional security. Staff develop appropriate partnerships with parents and other professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improvements have been made regarding staff's management of the children's

behaviour. Overall, children behave well. Children learn to follow nursery rules and boundaries, such as why it is important not to run in doors and the importance of being kind and caring towards their friends.

- Management and staff have adapted routines, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure the good health of children attending. For example, parents are currently not allowed in the building during drop off and collection times. Staff actively supported families during the national lockdowns. They delivered learning packs to support children's ongoing learning at home, and made regular telephone calls to keep in touch with vulnerable families. Furthermore, management have provided emotional support such as counselling to the staff.
- Management and staff have recognised that some children require additional support to develop their communication and language skills. Older children, including children who speak English as an additional language and children in receipt of early years pupil premium, are supported to extend their range of vocabulary. For example, older children learn descriptive words associated with the texture of pineapple and rhubarb. They are developing the confidence to use language to talk about what they are doing as they pretend to make a cake at the play cooker.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Management and staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse, including wider aspects, such as radicalisation. They know how to report child protection concerns, including if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff. This supports children's safety and well-being. Management follow appropriate recruitment procedures. Newly appointed members of staff follow an induction process, which supports them to understand their role and responsibilities. This includes the completion of child protection training. A range of written policies and procedures are in place to support the management of the nursery.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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<p>improve staff's personal effectiveness including their knowledge of the curriculum and interactions with the children, to ensure all children receive meaningful and challenging learning experiences that build on what they already know and can do</p>	<p>25/03/2022</p>
<p>ensure staff receive effective support, coaching and training opportunities to improve their practice, increase their knowledge of the curriculum and their interactions with the children.</p>	<p>25/03/2022</p>

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

- review the organisation of the environment to ensure resources and activities support children's motivation to explore and develop their play and ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY233564
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10221032
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	Fisher, Christiane Elisabeth
Registered person unique reference number	RP513525
Telephone number	01582 574390
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Acorn Day Nursery was registered in 2002. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications ranging from level 2 to level 6. One member of staff is a qualified teacher. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Ann Austen

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID- 19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years curriculum is organised.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with the children during indoor and outdoor activities, and assessed the impact this has on the children's progress and achievements.
- The provider, manager, staff and children engaged in discussions with the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and discussed the children's progress and achievements.
- A sample of the nursery documents was reviewed by the inspector. This included evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents by speaking to them.

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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