

Inspection of Acorn At Cold Harbour

Highland Close, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK3 7PD

Inspection date: 10 March 2022

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not applicable |

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and safe at the nursery. They have adapted well to adjustments in routines during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they happily greet staff on arrival and part from their parents with ease. An effective key-person system helps children to feel settled and secure throughout their time at the nursery. Staff get to know children well and prioritise building nurturing relationships with them. Children are confident and happy to talk to visitors.

All children enjoy being outdoors. They enjoy having access to extensive grounds, for instance woodland and Forest School areas. Older children demonstrate their motivation to learn as they become fascinated with investigating the mud to search for worms in the garden. They consider what will happen if they touch the worm and if they should move it to keep it safe.

Babies and some young children communicate through gestures and the sounds of their voices. Staff interpret their wants and needs well, while also repeating sounds and modelling single words to encourage their speaking skills. Toddlers practise their good handling skills while playing with oats, scoops, spoons and containers that staff provide in a large tray. Children are developing the skills needed for their future learning.

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

- The manager provides regular time through team and individual supervision meetings for staff to discuss their work and the children they care for. Staff receive support for their ongoing professional development, including four annual training days, delivered internally to all staff. This helps support their practice and children's learning needs. Staff are confident in approaching the management team and feel that their well-being is valued.
- Partnership working is strong. Parents report that their children's experiences in the nursery are entirely positive. They comment on the 'absolutely amazing and dedicated staff team', and find the 'leadership approachable and efficient'.
- Staff actively seek support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables early diagnosis and support plans to be implemented without delay and for gaps in learning to close swiftly. Staff have detailed knowledge of the very specific needs of each child. They work closely with parents and outside agencies to agree and constantly update individual care plans. Staff use additional funding that children receive successfully to support each child's individual needs.
- Children are provided with healthy meals and snacks. Mealtimes are social occasions and children's independence is supported well by staff. For example, children pour their own milk or water and scrape their plates when they have

finished their lunch.

- Overall, staff support children's developing language skills effectively. Children hear a wide vocabulary of familiar and new words, and are gaining the confidence to engage in meaningful conversations. Staff identify children who need extra support with this area of learning and plan accordingly. However, sometimes, staff do not grasp opportunities to join in with these children's play. This means some children do not hear as much good-quality language as they could. This impacts on how swiftly some children can catch up with their peers.
- Most children behave very well in the nursery. For example, they can share and are polite to one another. Children know the rules and follow them well. However, at times, some staff do not consistently use the planned strategies with children to deal with unwanted behaviour. As a result, some children are not always clear on the boundaries that are expected of them.
- The manager and staff are committed to providing the best possible care and education for all children. They reflect on the nursery and plan a broad and exciting curriculum that supports children effectively to make good progress from their starting points.
- Children enjoy listening to stories. Staff read to them individually, in small groups and in larger groups. They also sing songs together. Staff help parents to support children's love for reading. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They undertake regular training. The manager discusses safeguarding with staff at meetings and supervisions, and keeps them updated about wider safeguarding issues. Staff have an accurate understanding of the signs that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. They know how to share these concerns and understand the importance of doing so promptly. Staff complete daily checks and risk assessments that help to provide children with a safe environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to use children's interests to offer the extra interactions some children need to make the best possible progress with their communication and language development
- ensure all staff consistently use the successful behaviour strategies so that children clearly understand the type of behaviour that is expected of them.

Setting details

| | |
|--|---|
| Unique reference number | 2556721 |
| Local authority | Milton Keynes |
| Inspection number | 10221642 |
| 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 | 54 |
| Number of children on roll | 102 |
| Name of registered person | Acorn Early Years Foundation |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP901362 |
| Telephone number | 01908 983 393 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |

Information about this early years setting

Acorn At Cold Harbour registered in 2019 and is situated in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.15pm, for 51 weeks of the year. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 18 staff, 15 of whom work with children. Ten staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, ranging from level 3 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amanda Perkin

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager showed the inspector around the setting and all areas of the building, and discussed how they use the areas to support children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. They discussed how the nursery is run and checked that all legal requirements are met.
- The inspector spoke to a parent and took account of their views, as well as reviewing written testimonials.
- The manager and the inspector undertook a joint observation.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022