

Inspection of Acorns Nursery School Ltd, 2-4 Park St

2-4 Park Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 2BN

Inspection date: 31 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 excitedly come into the nursery, where staff greet them warmly. They are happy, well cared for and have good relationships with staff. If needed, children feel confident in going to their key person for reassurance. Children's views are highly valued and staff provide them with opportunities to make decisions. They are encouraged to choose which toys they would like out for the day and where they would like to play, either indoors or outdoors. Children listen well as they share their views with each other. They learn new skills through carefully thought-out activities. For example, staff model how to use scissors correctly. Younger children beam when they successfully cut the play dough using the plastic scissors. Older children develop early mathematical skills as they learn about capacity while filling and emptying tubes in the discovery tray. Younger children learn to put their own shoes on as they play in the 'shoe shop', supporting their independence skills effectively.

The manager is aware of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's personal, social and emotional development. She quickly puts strategies in place to support children with this. For example, she encourages children to take part in small-group activities to develop their emotional and social skills. Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. This includes children who receive additional funding, those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum is broad and balanced and builds on their skills and experiences. This means children learn useful skills in preparation for school.

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

- Partnerships with parents are good and well established. Staff work closely with parents to get to know their children and to share information about their children's day at nursery. Parents say that they are happy with the care that their children receive and how they are well informed about their children's learning.
- Staff successfully support and develop children's physical skills and emotional well-being. Children regularly take part in mindfulness activities and play outdoors. For example, children learn to be active and engage in physical play as they run, jump, climb in the playground, chase bubbles and dance to music.
- The leadership team has a clear vision for the future of the nursery. Staff comment that leaders are available to offer well-being assistance as needed. Leaders have a clear vision for the intention they want the children to learn in each room. However, staff performance management is not sharply focused on developing some inconsistencies in staff practice to raise the quality of the overall provision further.

- Children are happy, build meaningful friendships and enjoy each other's company. They enjoy playing games with each other and show enjoyment as they play. Children display good levels of confidence.
- Staff provide children with healthy and nutritional snacks and meals that promote their good health. They support children in developing their self-help skills, such as at mealtimes. For instance, staff encourage younger children to use their cutlery. Staff encourage older children to self-serve their lunches and help prepare their snacks. Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene skills. They wash their hands before coming in from the outside area and before eating snacks.
- Many high-quality interactions take place between staff and children. Children are excited to tell staff about what they have found out and what they are learning. Generally, staff ask thoughtful questions to extend their learning. However, some staff do not always ask questions which encourage speech or give children enough time to respond to questions. This means children do not always have time to develop their communication and thinking skills as well as they could.
- The manager shows her commitment to professional development, providing staff with opportunities to build on their current teaching skills through training. For example, staff have recently attended 'communication' training and are looking at ways to improve their own teaching practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures that staff understand that child protection and promoting children's welfare is everyone's responsibility. All staff complete safeguarding training, including the 'Prevent' duty, which is regularly updated. They recognise the signs and symptoms of when a child may be at risk of harm and are very aware of the correct procedure for reporting and referring concerns. Recruitment procedures are robust. The nursery building is safe and secure, enabling children to explore the indoor and outdoor spaces confidently and safely. Staff supervise children effectively and keep a close check on their well-being. Staff focus on children's safety consistently well. They carry out effective risk assessments to keep children safe. In addition, staff carry out regular 'head counts' when children play outdoors to ensure their welfare.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the support given to staff to ensure that they all offer children the same high-quality interactions to support their learning further
- enable children more time to consider their responses to questions and help

them to develop their thinking skills and express their own ideas more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2518644
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10194575
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	90
Name of registered person	Acorns Nursery School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527779
Telephone number	01285 655505
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Acorns Nursery School Ltd, 2-4 Park St registered in 2019 and is situated in the centre of Cirencester, Gloucestershire. The nursery opens on Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5.45pm, all year round. The nursery employs 22 members of staff. Of these, 13 hold relevant early years qualifications from level 3 to level 5. The owner has a teaching qualification and early years professional status. The nursery receives funding for children aged two, three and four years old.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracey Cook

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 inspector observed the staff's interactions with the children indoors and outdoors to assess the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery documents. This included evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through feedback forms available on the day.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector carried out two joint observations with the manager and the impact this has on the children's development.

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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