

Inspection of Acorn Montessori Nursery

St. Georges Church, 98 Pinner View, HARROW, Middlesex HA1 4RJ

Inspection date:

15 March 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children have continued to attend the nursery following the first lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic. There has also been a change to the ownership of the nursery during the pandemic. In the main, children go happily into the nursery, as staff warmly greet and welcome them. Parents continue to drop off and collect their children at the front entrance.

The manager has an adequate understanding about what she wants children to learn. However, this does not always transpire in practice. There is currently a high turnover of staff, which has an impact on continuity of care and learning for some children. The quality of teaching is variable in different areas of the nursery. Organisation of circle time for story and nursery rhymes in the toddlers' and pre-school areas is not effective. For example, in the toddlers' area, it is too noisy. In the pre-school area, staff interrupt story time during circle time to take children to the toilet. This disrupts children's listening and attention skills. Additionally, the groups are too large for all children to engage effectively. Children who speak English as an additional language are not consistently supported effectively.

Staff support children to learn to become independent and develop skills to take care of their own needs. During mealtimes, babies and toddlers finger feed and learn how to use cutlery. Pre-school children pour their own water and self-serve. In pre-school, they learn to go to the toilet independently and wash their hands. Practising their self-help and care skills as part of their daily routines supports children to move on to their next stage of learning. However, leaders are not yet monitoring staff practice well enough in order to ensure that curriculum planning is delivered consistently and effectively.

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

- Most children feel secure and happy. Children behave well, learn to take turns, and share. Most babies settle and form bonds with their familiar staff. However, some staff do not use effective strategies to soothe new and settling children to meet their emotional needs.
- Babies practise their emerging walking skills as they navigate their surroundings while being supported by staff. Toddlers practise their physical skills and negotiate their movements as they enjoy playing on the climbing apparatus in the garden. Pre-school children enjoy yoga sessions. They bend, reach high and low and stretch their bodies, which develops their physical skills.
- Some staff in the pre-school plan some interesting activities. Children enjoy exploring what happens when they mix water and paint with flour. They ask questions. For example, they say, 'What else can we make using flour?' This encourages children to think. Children respond with ideas such as 'parathas',

'roti' and 'pancakes'. However, staff do not always give children enough time to respond or sequence their learning well enough to help them make good or better progress.

- The support for children's communication and language varies in the setting, including for those who speak English as an additional language. Babies develop their attention and listening skills, as they enjoy joining in with action nursery rhymes and looking at picture books with their familiar adult. In the toddlers' and pre-school areas, some staff encourage children to talk during activities and routines to promote their communication skills. However, at times, other staff do not model language or phrases to help children to build and extend their thinking and responses during activities and routines.
- Arrangements for staff coaching, mentoring and support are not fully effective. This is because leaders do not place enough emphasis on their quality of teaching to make sure that children make good enough progress.
- The key-person system is not consistently implemented throughout the nursery. In the babies' and toddlers' areas, some key persons know their group of children while others, who are bank staff or new, do not know or remain with the children long enough to build and extend their learning and form links with their parents.
- Parents report that their children are happy and enjoy coming to the nursery. They get information about their children's care and learning via an electronic app and at parents' evenings. However, there are also some parents who express frustration about the quality of information shared on the electronic app and about the lack of information about changes in staffing and who their child's key person is.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider has not informed Ofsted of significant changes within 14 days. However, this has not had an adverse effect on children's welfare. Staff take effective steps to risk assess the environment children access to make sure that they can play safely. They adequately supervise children by making sure that they are within sight and hearing. The manager and staff have an appropriate understanding of what to do if they become aware of matters which may affect children's welfare. They know the reporting procedures to follow. Suitability checks are carried out to ensure that staff working with children are safe to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
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put appropriate arrangements in place to support all staff, including the manager, to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively	22/04/2022
ensure that an effective key-person system is implemented to offer children a settled relationship with familiar adults and build relationships with their parents	22/04/2022
improve the curriculum planning and delivery so that all staff understand what they are expected to teach, to support all children's communication and language, including those who speak English as an additional language.	22/04/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY470929
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10218382
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	95
Name of registered person	Acorn Montessori School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP905780
Telephone number	07791767819
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Acorn Montessori Nursery registered in 2013 and is based in the London Borough of Harrow. The nursery employs 21 members of staff. Of these, 11 hold relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Seema Parmar

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- This inspection was carried out following Ofsted's risk assessment process.
- The inspector had discussions with staff and parents and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders about nursery practices and procedures.
- The inspector carried out several joint observations of activities with the manager.
- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and children.

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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