

Inspection of Acacia Pre-School

Malden Wanderers Clubhouse, Cambridge Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4LE

Inspection date: 18 October 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

All children receive good levels of care and attention at this pre-school. They build strong bonds with the staff and their peers. The spontaneous cuddles and comforting words from staff help children to feel happy and safe. As a result, children, such as those who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, are catching up with their learning. For example, children who were anxious are now able to separate from their parents without hesitation.

Children respond positively to the high expectations of staff. For example, during a group activity, children are able to sit for periods of time while holding their attention well. They enjoy singing along to familiar nursery songs and recalling previous learning. Children listen to stories intently, which supports their communication and language skills. They are developing their listening and concentration skills rapidly. There are also opportunities for children to explore malleable materials to support their creativity and imagination. Children are learning about numbers and letters, which promote their understanding of early mathematics and literacy skills. The free-flow provision between indoors and outdoors motivates children to make independent choices in their play. Children's behaviour is good. They are learning to share and take turns.

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

- Parents are very pleased with the service they and their children receive. They find the manager and staff are incredibly approachable and caring. Parents appreciate the way staff inform them about their children's learning. They receive helpful advice from staff on a wide range of issues, such as toileting and behaviour management. Staff's strong partnership with parents promotes a consistent approach to children's overall development.
- Staff speak positively about their training and the support from the manager. They are either undertaking qualifications or have progressed to higher level qualifications to extend their professional development. Recent training has helped staff to reinforce positive behaviour with praise and reassurance. This helps children to behave well.
- Staff observe and monitor children's learning to help them identify and address any gaps in their learning. They have developed an effective working partnership with other professionals to promote continuity of care for the children. As a result, children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff plan age-appropriate and sufficiently challenging educational programmes for the children. Currently, they are promoting children's physical skills through various activities, such as mark making and by using climbing apparatus.

However, occasionally, some staff members do not notice when children, particularly those who are quiet and less confident, need more support. This prevents some children from making the most of all their learning experiences.

- Overall, staff promote children's healthy lifestyles well. They ensure children get regular exercise and fresh air. Children enjoy healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit and vegetable sticks. However, staff do not make good use of opportunities to teach children about healthy options and the effect that food has on their bodies. This does not fully develop children's awareness of growth and development.
- Children learn about the world around them. For example, they see pictures of people and words in other languages within their learning environments. Cultural and religious festivals, such as Diwali, also contribute to children's understanding of the similarities and differences between people.
- Staff teach children what to do in an emergency to protect their welfare. For example, they hold regular fire drills to show children where to go in the event of a fire. Children respond positively to this.
- The manager reflects on their practice and makes effective use of the self-evaluation process to identify any areas for improvement. For example, she is currently reviewing the organisation of group activities to further enhance children's learning experiences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff know how to identify signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm, including signs of extreme views. They are confident in reporting any concerns to relevant agencies to protect a child's welfare. Staff undertake rigorous vetting and recruitment processes to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. They receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff deployment is effective. This enables staff to supervise children at all times, to keep them safe and secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend staff's understanding of how to support children, particularly those who are quiet and less confident, to help them to make the most of all learning experiences
- make more effective use of opportunities to raise children's understanding of the effect that food has on their bodies.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2594266
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10249056
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 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Acacia Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2594264
Telephone number	07816940560
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Acacia Pre-School re-registered in 2020 and is located in the London Borough of Kingston upon Thames. The pre-school opens each weekday from 8.30am to 3pm, during term time only. There are 12 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, one holds early years professional status and two hold qualified teacher status. There are eight staff members who have completed relevant early years qualifications, ranging from level 3 to level 5. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisol Hernandez-Garn

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 setting.
- The manager showed the inspector around the setting and explained to her how staff plan and deliver the early years curriculum. Together, they carried out a joint observation of a planned activity and evaluated the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector observed children's play indoors and outdoors. She interacted with children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Parents spoke with the inspector to share their views on the quality of the provision. Other parents left written feedback for the inspector to read.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff about a range of topics, including safeguarding issues. She checked the required documents during the inspection, such as staff's suitability and training certificates.

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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