

Inspection of Little Acorns Day Nursery

The Elim Family Centre, Hartfield Road, EASTBOURNE, East Sussex BN21 2ET

Inspection date: 16 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are extremely confident and happy in this very well-organised nursery. They benefit greatly from the strong focus on supporting babies' and children's well-being. Each child is nurtured and valued. Older children learn to understand their emotions and express how they are feeling. They follow the role modelling by staff and readily accept other children's differences. Children with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) are completely included. Children show exceptional kindness and are keen to help each other. For example, children find resources for others and demonstrate how equipment works. Even the youngest show good manners as they sign please and thank you. Children consistently behave extremely well.

Children quickly find their own choice from inviting play activities in the carefully planned environment. The familiar routines help babies and children feel safe and secure. Children and babies explore a good range of sensory play in their own welcoming spaces. For example, babies feel textured balls and brushes and splash happily in the water tray. Children strengthen their fingers and use their imagination as they mix oats, water and conditioner to make scented porridge in the 'mud kitchen'. They show high levels of engagement and perseverance. Children are happy to include the attentive staff in their play, listen carefully and hold thoughtful conversations that extend learning.

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

- Staff consistently celebrate children's achievements. For example, children's captions explain photographs of their work that are displayed attractively. Staff add encouraging words, such as 'we are all superstars'. Children feel part of their group and beam with pride when they are successful at a task, such as learning to paint or ride a balance bicycle. This supports children to be consistently motivated to learn.
- Staff plan the environment very carefully to enable all children to have fun and learn. Staff carefully follow children's interests and encourage them to build on previous learning with knowledgeable interactions. For example, toddlers enjoy a story about a shark. They make card telescopes and excitedly hunt for 'shark fins' around the room. Staff extend mathematical learning by describing where the fins are found and helping children count them.
- Children develop good language and literacy skills. Staff provide a wide range of books and foster a love of reading from an early age. Babies and children are highly motivated to look at books independently and to listen to stories. Older children learn to use books to find information, about animal lives, for instance. They acquire new vocabulary and learn to link letters with the sounds they make, in preparation for school. However, some staff use long sentences that

babies are not able to follow. At times, staff do not check that younger children have understood their questions before moving on.

- The manager and staff provide parents with information about their children's activities and encourage them to join in. For example, parents help their children to write messages of praise or kind words and leave them for others to see in the entrance hall. Parents are supported with helpful advice, for example, in toilet training and healthy eating. They say their children are very well cared for and carefully prepared for the transitions from home to nursery and to school.
- The manager uses her experience and knowledge of good early years practice to motivate the strong staff team. She monitors staff interactions with children carefully. The manager encourages staff to use their strengths, such as their knowledge of languages or SEND, to the benefit of children. She supports staff with a good range of training to ensure their skills and knowledge are regularly updated. For example, staff have recently completed training to help them understand how to support children's speech and language. However, this is not yet fully embedded in practice by all staff, with particular relation to interactions with babies.
- The manager and staff get to know the children and families very well. They quickly identify any additional support children may need and work closely with parents and outside professionals to help them progress well. The special educational needs coordinator ensures all staff understand children's support plans. The manager uses funding to give targeted support for disadvantaged children or those with SEND, for example, by providing additional resources.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff treat children's well-being as a priority. They attend training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding and first aid up to date. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The manager and staff discuss any additional support children or families may need, so that all staff can give the same continuity of care. The manager would act quickly in response to an allegation against a member of staff. She carries out risk assessments to help ensure the children can play safely. The equipment is well maintained and premises are secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff teaching skills, so that they consistently support babies' emerging speech and language
- develop staff understanding of how to use questions to check and extend learning effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY373498
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10265262
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	70
Number of children on roll	104
Name of registered person	Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance
Registered person unique reference number	RP520159
Telephone number	01323 731843
Date of previous inspection	31 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery registered in 2008. It operates in Eastbourne, East Sussex. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 5.30pm for 51 weeks a year. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 16 staff; of these, 14 have relevant childcare qualifications at level 2 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sue Suleyman

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 inspector spoke to some parents, staff and children and took their views into account.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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