

Inspection of Acorn Childcare Nursery

Off Greenbank Lane, Hartford, Cheshire CW8 1JJ

Inspection date: 27 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy in this safe nursery which celebrates what makes each child unique. Their own heritage is celebrated because staff work closely with parents to provide familiar and meaningful experiences for children. Babies develop close bonds with key staff who know them well. As a result, they are settled and calm in their time in nursery. Babies smile at the encouragement they receive from attentive staff as they learn to crawl, stand and take their first steps. Their physical development is further supported as they learn to drink from open cups and feed themselves independently from a young age.

The nursery is filled with the sounds of staff and children talking, singing and reading together. Children of all ages quickly develop a love of books. All of this supports their communication and language skills. Toddlers practise dancing in time to music, developing their balance, coordination and rhythm. In the extensive outdoor areas, children learn to take managed risks in their play as they climb and jump with confidence. Older children enjoy the familiar routines that will be expected of them at school. They show their ability to concentrate for longer periods, and persevere when faced with challenges.

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

- Leaders have taken prompt and effective action to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. They have provided all staff with extensive training and support to ensure that they deliver a broad, sequenced curriculum that builds on what children know and can do. As a result, children receive tailored learning experiences which grab their interest and embed new knowledge.
- Leaders have significantly strengthened the induction processes for both managers and staff. All employees have a clear knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures from the day they start. This ensures that they have a firm understanding of what is expected of them from the outset which, in turn, contributes to keeping children safe.
- The positive impact of leaders' renewed focus on training has resulted in significant improvements in how children's behaviour is supported by staff. This is now approached in a consistent manner in all rooms, with strategies shared with parents to better support children at home. Children demonstrate a positive approach to significant times in the day, such as focused learning activities and mealtimes. Therefore, children are now much better prepared for their eventual move to school.
- Staff consistently support children to develop their speech by modelling language well and introducing a rich and varied vocabulary. Staff give children the chance to verbalise their thoughts by ensuring that they receive lots of time

to communicate. This contributes to the rapid progress children are making in their communication and language skills.

- Staff teach children about the natural world and give them first-hand experience of growing a variety of crops. These are used in some of the meals they eat in nursery. Children remember what they have been taught to help plants grow and flourish, which helps them to develop key life skills.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked hard to support staff in providing the quality of care and education children deserve. Staff talk about the positive support for their well-being and the feedback they receive from leaders on their practice. However, leaders acknowledge that more precise feedback is needed to strengthen staff practice. For example, there are occasional inconsistencies in practice, such as how effectively children's independence skills are developed.
- Parents talk positively about the strong communication with nursery. They praise the prompt action the nursery takes to implement additional support for children's progress and their joint working with other agencies. They explain the nursery has made a difference in their children's confidence, imaginative play and communication. Parents express that the nursery team 'make children feel valued' and that their children have 'been given the best start in life'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Leaders have ensured that staff now know how to apply their safeguarding knowledge effectively. As a result, staff can now recognise and know what to do if they are concerned about a colleague's behaviour. The whole staff team have a secure knowledge of potential indicators of abuse and know how to report any concerns they may have. Additionally, they are confident to challenge should they feel leaders are not acting to keep children safe. Risk assessment procedures have been improved since the previous inspection. Potential risks are now identified and removed or minimised, which helps keep children safe. All staff understand that this is their responsibility and leaders are robust in maintaining a detailed oversight of the ongoing suitability of the premises.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen existing supervision arrangements to provide more precise evaluations of staff teaching practice.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY280796
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10282121
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	65
Number of children on roll	100
Name of registered person	Acorn Childcare Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP523881
Telephone number	01606 77877
Date of previous inspection	16 February 2023

Information about this early years setting

Acorn Childcare Nursery registered in 2004 and is located in Hartford, Cheshire. The nursery employs 27 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold qualifications at level 5, 20 hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. One member of staff holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks per year, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Richard Sutcliffe

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the setting.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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