

Inspection of Acorn At New Bradwell

New Bradwell County Combined School, Bounty Street, New Bradwell, MILTON
KEYNES MK13 0BQ

Inspection date: 16 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff build strong and meaningful bonds with children and families. These begin before children start nursery. Through a programme of highly effective home visits and settling-in sessions, staff and children build trusting relationships. Children start at the setting feeling they are already part of the 'nursery family'. This sense of belonging continues to grow and develop, due to the care and kindness staff continue to show. Children show through their demeanour, behaviour and enthusiasm that the nursery is 'their place' and that they feel totally safe, secure and welcome. As a result, children are in an excellent position to make the most of the high-quality, meaningful learning opportunities on offer.

Staff view every child as an individual, capable of learning lots and contributing to nursery life. Staff consistently reinforce behavioural expectations, taking the time to explain why rules are in place. Children listen thoughtfully and happily comply. For example, children understand the safety implications of pouring water on steps and so take the water elsewhere, so their friends remain safe.

The content and delivery of the curriculum is completely tailored to the needs of the children. Children not only develop a vast range of skills and knowledge but also a real love of learning. Babies, toddlers and older children play and learn together. Staff have the confidence and teaching skills they need to ensure each child gets the support, challenge and encouragement they need to learn extremely well through this approach. For example, as children explore the water tray staff enable babies to splash and scoop, toddlers begin to pour with control and older children to develop their understanding of weight and measurement.

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

- The manager is an exceptionally committed and talented leader. She aspires for the very best for the children in her care. She inspires and supports staff to provide care and education of the very highest quality. The impact of her leadership skills are evident throughout the provision and in the extremely effective partnership working with parents and other professionals.
- The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary and highly effective. Great thought is put into deciding how to use additional funding and staffing to help children fully integrate into nursery life. Additional support is tailored to each child's specific needs. The manager is highly inclusive in her approach, going above and beyond to ensure the nursery is truly welcoming to all children.
- Staff fully understand how to support and challenge children, so their play results in meaningful learning. Staff deploy themselves, so that all children, regardless of where and with what they choose to play, are consistently exposed

to high-quality interactions. Staff are extremely skilled at knowing when to ask questions, when to demonstrate new skills, when to join in with play and when to give children the space and time they need to practise what they have been taught.

- The whole staff team know all children exceptionally well. Staff are given the time they need to observe their key children and build an accurate picture of each child's progress and learning needs. This information is then shared with all staff, enabling children to have their learning needs met in a consistent manner. It is hugely impressive just how well all staff know each and every child.
- Babies and toddlers thrive. The high levels of confidence and independence they show at such a young age is testament to the care and skill of the staff who look after them and keep them safe. Babies confidently crawl and toddle around the room, choosing what to do. They delight in the company of older children, confidently learning alongside them. From the start, children are becoming very curious and independent learners.
- Staff expertly support children's language development, especially when they identify that children need some extra support in this area. Staff talk clearly to children about what they are doing, introducing new words and reinforcing words and phrases children already know. Staff carefully arrange toys and resources to encourage conversation. This approach is especially effectively used by staff working with children aged between two and three years.
- The manager carefully monitors the effectiveness of teaching strategies and the learning environment, always focusing on the best interests of the children. Resources and activities are set out with real care, ensuring a learning environment that is calm, yet exciting and inviting. Staff adapt routines when needed to ensure children take part in the learning experiences they need most. For example, babies now come together for high-quality story and singing, whereas staff weave high-quality story times for older children through the course of the day, without the need to unnecessarily interrupt children's play.
- Ensuring children know their own worth is at the heart of nursery life. The 'family' approach is fully embedded. Whenever possible, children keep the same key person throughout their time at nursery. Staff put their key-person responsibilities at the heart of their work. They use their in-depth knowledge of each child's home life and cultural background to ensure it is represented, respected and celebrated at nursery. Children are proud of who they are and what they can achieve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY495127
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10317220
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 11
Total number of places	89
Number of children on roll	361
Name of registered person	Acorn Early Years Foundation
Registered person unique reference number	RP901362
Telephone number	01908 870352
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Acorn At New Bradwell re-registered in 2016. The provider offers care from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the year. In addition, the provider offers before- and after-school care and holiday care for school-age children. The provider is in receipt of funding to provide early years education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 24 members of staff. The manager holds early years professional status. Of the other staff members, 12 hold relevant qualifications between level 2 and level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Holley

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 and the manager completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.
- Parents shared their views and the inspector took these into account.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager to find out about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector looked at a sample of key documentation.

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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