

# Inspection of Acorn Day Nursery, Emberton

Emberton Primary School, Olney Road, Emberton, Olney MK46 5BX

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Inspection date: 24 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Staff are welcoming and jolly. They greet children with broad smiles and continue to create a positive and happy environment throughout the day. The impact of this on children's well-being and sense of belonging is seen very clearly through children's clear enjoyment for being at nursery.

The manager has developed a clear and ambitious curriculum for all children. She knows what she wants children to learn and why. Staff share her desire for children to develop the skills, knowledge and dispositions they need for their future learning. Staff consistently help children learn to manage their emotions and consider the needs of others. Children respond by behaving very well for their age. Staff place a strong focus on helping children develop into curious and independent learners. They create a very appealing learning environment that children thoroughly enjoy exploring. Another strength of the curriculum lies in the outdoor provision, especially the 'Nature Kindergarten'. Here staff are especially effective at teaching children about the natural world and how to manage risks and keep themselves safe. Staff identify children who may need extra support to reach their full potential in order to plan how to close gaps and help them catch up with their peers.

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

- Staff understand the value of repetition and routine to children's learning. Younger children can recall the words and actions to songs because staff revisit core songs with them and clearly teach them the words and actions. Children remember how to butter bread because staff show them how to hold knives at angles that enable them to do so, and encourage them to practise at snack times.
- Babies and young toddlers receive a highly effective start to their learning journey. They thrive in the nurturing and inspiring learning environment that staff create. Staff are very alert to the changing needs of these young children. For example, they recognise when babies need a cuddle and then, just as accurately, identify when they are ready to begin playing and exploring again. By the time these youngest children move into another room in the nursery staff have ensured they have the skills and confidence to manage the move successfully.
- Staff working with all ages of children consistently promote children's language development well. Babies learn the sounds that animals make and the words they need to express their needs. As children progress through the nursery staff introduce them to more complex sentences and new vocabulary. Staff encourage older children to talk about what they are doing. Staff read to children regularly to further enhance their language skills.

- Staff's teaching focus is on delivering the curriculum through grasping opportunities to extend children's skills and knowledge as they play. Overall, they do this well, especially when children are confident to approach staff and engage well with the activities on offer. However, staff do not always notice when quieter children need support to join in with learning experiences that will best support their development and concentration.
- The curriculum for older children has a positive impact on their health, physical development and ability to keep themselves safe. Staff structure days so these children can spend prolonged periods learning in the 'Nature Kindergarten'. Children revel in the opportunities to run, climb and explore. They learn well how to stay safe while doing so. For example, they learn how to identify different plants and how to hold and use tools safely.
- The manager is relatively new to her post. She has focused well on creating a positive working environment and is a good role model for staff. She leads by example, consistently modelling high-quality teaching skills when working directly with the children. However, systems for monitoring staff practice are not fully embedded. Although overall teaching is meeting the needs of children well, there are some minor inconsistencies in staff's understanding of how best to focus their teaching on what children most need to learn next.
- Parent partnerships are strong. Staff are especially effective in working closely with parents to understand children's routines and needs so there can be good levels of continuity for children between home and nursery. For example, staff closely follow sleep and weaning routines from home. This further promotes children's sense of security and belonging.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve strategies for encouraging and supporting quieter, less confident children to join in with learning experiences, to best support their development and progress
- enhance arrangements for monitoring the delivery and impact of the curriculum, to focus support for staff to continually develop their practice.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2663416
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347116
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	57
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	68
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Acorn Early Years Foundation
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901362
<b>Telephone number</b>	07889 540737
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Acorn Day Nursery, Emberton registered in 2022. It is open 7.30am to 6.15pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the year. Children can also attend the Nature Kindergarten only, 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. The provider employs 12 members of staff. The manager holds a childcare qualification at level 5 and six other members of staff hold qualifications at level 3. The provider offers funded education for children aged two, three and four years.

## 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.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and representatives of the provider to find out about the leadership and management of the setting.
- Parents and children shared their views, and the inspector took these into account.

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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