

Inspection of ACE Day Nursery

6A Priory Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB5 8HT

Inspection date: 16 September 2021

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The babies and toddlers that attend this setting receive a wealth of excellent learning experiences. This means they are extremely well prepared for the next chapter of their education when they move to a pre-school setting. Children form exceptionally strong bonds with the adults that care for them, helping them to feel safe and secure. This also supports them to have the confidence and desire to explore their environment independently. Staff go to exceptional lengths to ensure new children settle in at their own pace and receive excellent support and reassurance.

Children move very confidently between play areas and make their own play choices from the interesting variety of activities on offer. They are curious and excited to explore the resources and show excellent levels of engagement for their age. For example, children independently fetch water from the water butt to use in a variety of ways. They fill their buckets to water plants or tip out the water to make puddles for jumping in. Babies squeal in excitement when they throw a ball in a bucket and the water splashes them.

Children are supported to begin building strong friendships from an early age. Sharing and turn taking is consistently reinforced and strategies, such as a sand timer, help children to clearly understand this. Children beam and enjoy the praise they receive when they complete tasks independently. For example, when they expertly scrape their left over food from their plate to the bin.

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

- The manager, committee and staff positively share and promote the clear ethos and vision for the nursery. There is a sharp focus on continually evolving and supporting staff to maintain the high quality of education children receive during their time in the nursery. Staff say they are extremely well supported, they enjoy working here and their well-being is a high priority.
- Children benefit greatly from the outstanding focus placed on meeting and developing their personal, social, and emotional needs. The key-person system works exceptionally well to ensure that new children and their families receive tailored support to help them settle. For example, staff send photographs to parents of the room set up before children arrive. This helps children to visually know what to expect and provides reassurance.
- Staff know the children they care for extremely well. They demonstrate a deep understanding of children's learning needs and consistently deliver high-quality interactions that effectively build on what children know. Children react very positively to staff during their play and show high levels of engagement for their young age.

- Staff provide a rich curriculum, both in and away from the nursery. For example, children spend time in the community at local meadows, where they can explore a natural environment. They engage in exciting and challenging activities, such as den building, bark rubbing and blackberry picking. Staff use this time to teach children of how to be aware of their own safety when they are in the meadow.
- Staff are highly skilled at supporting children's communication and language development from an early age. Staff speak warmly and clearly to children. Toddlers are beginning to think critically, and they are confident to ask questions. Children's vocabulary rapidly expands as they are introduced to new words, such as soil and moist. Staff consistently repeat the words they use for reinforcement. Staff are competent in sign language, which they use effectively as additional communication for children.
- Parents receive excellent communication from staff about their children's time in the nursery. Staff listen to parents and value their input. They give them constant support and ideas of how to complement their children's learning at home. Parents appreciate the weekly updates, photographs, and online meetings they are offered, especially as they are not yet spending time in the nursery due to the COVID 19 (coronavirus) pandemic.
- The excellent nursery cook provides children with freshly cooked, homemade meals each day. A well thought out menu ensures that children receive a very healthy and well-balanced diet. Children are often involved in the preparation of meals and other small tasks that replicate home life. For example, they help to make a fruit salad or hang the washing out to dry. This helps to continually foster their independence and self-esteem.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a great awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse, including any concerns associated with female genital mutilation or radicalisation. They are very secure in their understanding of the nursery procedures to follow, should they have any concerns about the children or adults associated with the children's care. Robust recruitment procedures and regular checks of ongoing suitability ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children. A culture of embedded risk assessments ensures children play in a safe and secure environment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY284088
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10113149
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	1 to 2
Total number of places	17
Number of children on roll	22
Name of registered person	A.C.E. Nursery School (Cambridge) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902799
Telephone number	01223 366355
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

ACE Day Nursery registered in 2004. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round except for two weeks in summer, one week at Easter and a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8.30 to 5.30pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Carly Mooney

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID 19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the 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 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.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector spoke to a parent during the inspection and took account of written views.
- 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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