

Inspection of Olive Hill Acorns

Olive Hill School, Springfield Road, Halesowen B62 8JZ

Inspection date: 11 June 2024

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff place children at the heart of their work at this inclusive and welcoming pre-school. They plan and deliver activities that promote children's individual interests. At the beginning of the session, children sing familiar songs and enjoy social experiences during circle time. This supports children to start their day with a positive attitude to learning. Children are settled and at ease in the well-resourced environment. They consistently display good levels of engagement. For example, they transport sand in containers and gaze in wonder as they watch it fall through a funnel.

Staff share high expectations for children and demonstrate a secure knowledge of each child who attends. Children form positive relationships with the friendly and nurturing staff. They fully understand the routines of the day and are motivated by the praise and encouragement they receive. Children are respectful and consistently display positive behaviours.

Managers and staff have been proactive in identifying the changing needs of children since the COVID-19 pandemic. They have strengthened their settling-in processes for children to support their personal, social and emotional development. They continue to prioritise children's early language development and communication skills through their responsive and well-embedded curriculum. As such, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

- Children with SEND and those in receipt of additional funding are well supported by the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo). The passionate and knowledgeable SENDCo is committed to making a positive difference to children's lives. She works effectively with parents and professionals to support best outcomes for children.
- Managers are dedicated and have a clear vision for the pre-school. They talk proudly of their close-knit team and work hard to support their well-being. Staff benefit from regular supervision meetings and receive feedback on their practice, knowledge and skills. However, at times, staff do not always reflect deeply enough on the feedback they receive to elevate their already good teaching skills even further.
- The curriculum is well sequenced and meets every child's needs. Managers and staff closely monitor children's progress and ensure that additional support is put in place to narrow any gaps in their learning. As a result, all children, including those with SEND, make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff plan a wide range of purposeful play opportunities that reflect children's

interests and what skills they need to learn next. For instance, children demonstrate good physical skills and coordination as they use paintbrushes to reveal different numbers in a sand tray. They celebrate one another's achievements as they confidently recognise and order numbers from one to seven. Overall, teaching is good. However, on occasion, staff overdirect activities. This sometimes prevents children from exploring their own ideas and developing their critical thinking skills to the highest level.

- Children enjoy spending time outdoors. They work together with their peers as they take part in a scavenger hunt to find a number of resources. Staff use this as an opportunity to promote children's communication and language development. They introduce, model and repeat new vocabulary as children explore the forest area. They ask relevant questions to challenge children and test their understanding. In turn, children follow simple instructions and demonstrate that they are becoming confident communicators.
- Children benefit from many opportunities that promote their independence. They enjoy making choices about the resources they would like to play with and the activities they would like to engage in. They have great fun as they roll play dough and create different shapes using cutters. They are keen to have a go at tasks and persist as they attempt to put on their own wellies. Children receive support and encouragement from staff which supports them to feel valued.
- Parent partnership is good. Parents comment that staff keep them well informed about their children's progress. They express how happy and settled their children are at the pre-school. They add that staff ensure that children with SEND receive targeted support at the earliest opportunity, and their transitions to school are well supported.

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:

- maximise opportunities during activities for children to test out their own ideas and enhance their critical thinking skills
- support staff to reflect more deeply on their practice to elevate their teaching skills to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY499988
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10349305
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 11
Total number of places	51
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Melanie Gooch & Samantha Riley Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP908401
Telephone number	07866264499
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Olive Hill Acorns registered in 2016. It employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold approved early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am until 3.30pm, during term time. The out-of-school club is open Monday to Friday from 3.15pm until 5.50pm, during term time. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Dale Ramsey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with parents to gain their views and opinions of the pre-school.
- The nominated individual, manager and inspector spoke about the leadership and management of the pre-school.

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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