

Inspection date	28 January 2016
Previous inspection date	25 May 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The highly effective performance management of the staff team and commitment to training have a very positive impact on the outcomes for the children attending. The staff are reflective and continually adjust their practice, which results in all children's needs being met.
- Children make rapid progress at this vibrant pre-school. The staff team shows excellent teaching skills. They have a genuine interest in what the children are doing, helping to develop children's learning through high-quality interaction.
- High priority is given to safeguarding. Effective procedures ensure the premises and site are safe and secure. Staff complete regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. This results in them having a secure understanding of how to keep children safe and ensure their welfare.
- Highly productive partnership working with parents results in staff being able to use information from home to inform their planning of activities and respond to any changes required to children's care.
- Children's independence skills are increasing rapidly. With support from staff, children settle quickly when they arrive. They are familiar with the daily routines. Children are confident to choose their own activities and approach staff to ask for items they need to extend their play.
- Children behave exceptionally well. They are learning to treat each other with respect and to work together well. Staff provide a very consistent approach relating to the expectations for behaviour. They provide clear explanations which help children to learn about keeping themselves and others safe.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider ways to further extend children's thinking and how to make connections between their ideas and experiences.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and two members of staff. She discussed relevant documentation, such as the self-evaluation, and checked evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The manager and staff put a strong emphasis on effective supervision and manage the times when children can move between the inside and outside play areas very well. Very effective use is made of assessment information to ensure that different groups of children are supported to make the best possible progress. Robust procedures for recruiting staff and checking their ongoing suitability ensure that children's welfare is promoted. The staff team works extremely well together. They support each other to continually improve and reflect on their activity with the children. Staff have increased their knowledge through attending training courses and this has subsequently had a positive impact on their confidence, which is clearly reflected in their interactions with children. The pre-school have correctly identified ways to continue to enhance the excellent support for children to develop their thinking, and how to extend their learning through connecting ideas and experiences.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Children thoroughly enjoy the staff's involvement in their play and eagerly join the exciting activities that are planned for them. Highly supportive teaching from the staff enables children to make rapid progress given their individual ability and age. Staff talk to the children, asking very well-placed questions to extend their vocabulary and giving them time to consider their responses before moving on. Children explore a wide range of activities which promote all areas of learning. Staff are efficient in their observations of the children and use the information to plan activities that are closely linked to children's interests. Often the planning is adapted immediately as staff will add resources to enhance children's play. This swift response to children's interests actively consolidates and values their ideas and learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children are able to settle in when they start attending because staff work with them and their parents individually to decide the best way forward. Staff are extremely aware of each child and quickly get to know them. This results in them being able to fully support any specific needs children may have. Children are confident and happy in the pre-school. They are developing friendships and show a clear attachment to the staff. Children initiate conversations and ask for assistance. Children are learning about how to keep themselves safe. Staff talk to them about the importance of using tools safely and of walking together as they go to the canteen for lunch. Children's awareness of healthy lifestyles is promoted. They are excited to play outside, are eager to tuck into their snacks and independently help themselves to a drink of water.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children are learning to be very independent. They are supported in their self-care and assist with the preparation and washing up after snack time. Older children are very well prepared for their move on to school as they take part in interesting and varied activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY393468
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	1033115
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	29
Number of children on roll	55
Name of provider	The St Neots Learning Partnership
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2010
Telephone number	01480 374748 ext 216

Little Acorns was registered in 2009. The pre-school is part of the St. Neots Learning Partnership. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications between levels 2 and 5. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon on Monday, and from 9am until 3pm Tuesday to Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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