

Little Acorns Preschool

The Cabin, Barnard Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3PH



Inspection date

29 April 2016

Previous inspection date

12 May 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
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 manager, staff team and committee members are all passionate about providing the highest-quality care and learning for children. Every member of staff strives to continually improve their practice. Meticulous self-evaluation processes include gathering the views of all staff, parents and children.
- Staff place an exceptionally high emphasis on promoting children's emotional well-being. The excellent key-person system ensures that children's needs are fully supported during times of change.
- Children's sense of self-esteem and confidence flourishes and their behaviour is exemplary. Staff are excellent role models and really value children's contributions, constantly encouraging them to share their ideas.
- Children are extremely confident and motivated learners. They have rich and rewarding experiences as they explore the inspirational outdoor play area and also when they go on outings to the nearby woodland. These experiences support children's imagination and critical-thinking skills and allow them to test their abilities.
- The monitoring of children's learning is extremely thorough. The key persons' assessments identify precisely what children need to learn next and ensure all areas of development are comprehensively promoted.
- Excellent partnerships with other professionals and local schools help children to prepare well to begin the next phase of their learning. Staff are highly skilled in sharing relevant information to optimise children's learning and development.
- Parents are very eager to share their opinions of the pre-school. They describe the rapid progress their children have made since starting. Parents give tremendous praise for the staff and quality of teaching.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the planned introduction of even more new and exciting ideas to promote children's physical development into the already excellent setting and evaluate the impact on children's outcomes.

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 joined children and staff on an outing to nearby woodland and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff, children and representatives from the committee.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's development records.
- The inspector reviewed evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from their responses to surveys organised by the pre-school.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

Children's safety and well-being are given the utmost priority. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff and committee members complete safeguarding training. They all have a comprehensive understanding of their role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm. Staff are exceptionally well supported. Highly effective supervision meetings are carried out to monitor practice and children's learning. There are frequent opportunities for the well-qualified staff to observe each other. Staff are constantly updating their knowledge and extending their understanding of how children learn through a targeted programme of professional development. The staff team is also highly proactive in supporting other early years professionals. They meet and shares ideas and expertise to inspire them to improve outcomes for children in the locality. The manager and committee have given priority to developing exceptional relationships with families. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning. A real sense of community has been created as parents and staff work together for the benefit of the children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Teaching is creative and exciting. Staff understand the different ways children like to learn. They are highly responsive to children's interests and learning needs. Staff overcome the constraints in relation to the premises exceedingly well. A rich array of activities allows children to learn through their senses, both indoors and outside. Sharply focused planning helps all children, including those with special educational needs or disability, to make excellent progress in their learning. Staff consistently support children in developing their communication and language skills. They are given time to think and negotiate, which helps them to explore their own ideas. Children who speak English as an additional language are given extra support to make particularly good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children become extremely independent. They learn how to take responsibility for their hygiene, and develop excellent self-help and problem-solving skills through their play. Children freely access a wide range of tools and equipment that supports their physical skills. They display high levels of confidence as they balance and develop their coordination on a variety of apparatus and equipment. They serve themselves at snack times and use tools safely to tend plants in the garden. The manager and staff are looking at further ways to accelerate children's physical development by introducing even more exciting new ideas and resources to the programme of activities.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children, including those whose starting points are below those of others of the same age, make rapid progress. Some children demonstrate they have the potential to surpass expectations for their age and stage of development. Children become highly inquisitive learners and are motivated and eager to learn. They concentrate for extended periods on self-selected activities. Children develop outstanding skills for future learning and in readiness for their move on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY294250
Local authority	Southend on Sea
Inspection number	848806
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	27
Number of children on roll	55
Name of provider	Little Acorns Pre -School (Leigh-on-Sea) Committee
Date of previous inspection	12 May 2011
Telephone number	01702470310

Little Acorns Preschool was registered in 2004 and is run by a committee. The pre-school employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, one member of staff holds early years professional status, two staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 5, nine staff hold a qualification at level 3 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Sessions are from 9.30am to 4pm on Monday to Thursday and from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children who have special educational needs or disability.

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