

# Inspection of Widcombe Acorns Pre-School and Forest School

St Marks Community Centre, St Marks Road, Widcombe, Bath BA2 4PA

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Inspection date: 5 December 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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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 manager and staff have built an exceptionally strong and caring ethos. They follow highly individual arrangements to help each child settle into the pre-school very quickly. Staff plan carefully for each child's needs, well-being and safety. Children's confidence and self-esteem develop rapidly. They thrive on the wonderfully warm, caring and productive relationships they build with staff. Such a close and nurturing environment is evident to all. Children very much enjoy their time at the pre-school and parents are full of praise for the dedicated staff team. Staff make excellent use of all areas of the pre-school and areas outside to present exciting and inviting spaces which children are very eager to explore. Additionally, staff take children on motivating adventures out into the nearby woodland and local areas to expand children's understanding of the world further. Children enjoy being active and develop their coordination skills very effectively. They relish the freedom to explore the forest school area. They enjoy activities with staff in the warmth of the wooden hut around the fire and watch with fascination as birds feed on items they have made and just put outside. Children readily take on challenges and develop their creative thinking excellently. They have great fun racing cars down long pipes and solve problems related to what items are heavy enough to stop the cars at the bottom.

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

- The manager's passion for her work, her high attention to detail and excellent leadership skills inspire all those who work with her. Her cohesive, experienced pre-school team show strong expertise and commitment to their roles. They focus precisely on closing the gaps in children's learning to ensure children have the best start in life. The manager works effectively with the pre-school committee. They bring a range of relevant expertise and useful skills from their areas of profession. As a result, they play a vital role in supporting the manager to run the pre-school to such a high standard.
- There is a strong shared vision by all who work and learn here. Systems for self-evaluation are highly reflective and lead to continuous improvement. The manager leads regular in-depth supervision and monitoring of staff practice. She is dedicated to continuing to develop her team through an extensive programme of ongoing training. This develops teaching and learning in new and exciting ways, such as providing innovative story times and superb focused sessions to develop children's communication.
- Children behave exceptionally well. This includes those who require a greater level of intervention than usual and/or additional support. Children very quickly become familiar with the staff team's patient approach and consistently high expectations for behaviour. Children learn to share and take turns and begin to make friendships with other children.

- There is a concerted and collaborative approach to providing a rich and individualised curriculum for children. Key persons and all staff observe children closely. They precisely identify children's learning needs and interests quickly from when they first attend. They use this information exceptionally well to focus promptly on key areas of children's development. All children make excellent progress.
- Children's language, listening and attention and their confidence and conversation abilities progress exceptionally well right from when they start at the pre-school. Children who speak English as an additional language and those who need additional help to develop their communication are well served by specific individual programmes of support. Children very quickly gain the confidence and skills to express themselves and learn new words swiftly, closing gaps in their development rapidly.
- Staff provide a relaxed environment with an abundance of fun activities where all children are respected and valued. Children confidently and competently sing songs in other languages. They greet each other at group registration time by saying hello in multiple languages of their choosing. They learn tolerance and respect for others and develop an optimistic attitude and a positive approach to learning. They are exceptionally well prepared for life at school.
- Children's early literacy skills and imagination develop superbly. They relish making marks for a purpose. For example, they carefully draw items when creating letters to Father Christmas. They have fun decorating a chalk Christmas tree on the paving outside and they make marks to create a finish line for their car track. Parents comment very positively on how they love to see their children's storytelling emerging so excellently through the imaginative story sessions.
- Strong partnerships with parents mean that they are fully involved in their children's development and are well informed on how best to support learning at home. Staff offer excellent support, for example new in-depth ways for parents to support children's strength and coordination, to provide a sound basis for their early writing skills.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a very strong understanding by the manager, committee and staff, of their duty to protect children. There are thorough recruitment processes and prompt vetting of staff and committee members. Staff attend child protection training and have a robust knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Higher-level training for designated safeguarding staff ensures they can lead confidently in this area. Introductory training for committee members ensures they are also knowledgeable about their responsibilities. Staff are vigilant about children's welfare. They assess risks constantly making sure that children can play and explore safely. They offer very timely support to help children to recognise and manage the risks they encounter.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133108
<b>Local authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10126077
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	3 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	25
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	39
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Widcombe Acorns Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP523091
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 445446
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 December 2015

## Information about this early years setting

Widcombe Acorns Pre-School and Forest School registered in 1975. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday from 8am until 4pm, during term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Rachel Howell

## Inspection activities

- The manager took the inspector on an informative walk around the setting, showing her how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a joint observation. The inspector observed activities in both main playrooms and the outside areas.
- A meeting was held between the inspector, the chairperson of the committee and the manager of the provision. The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the setting's documents, including evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and by reading their comments on messages and questionnaires given to the manager.

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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