

Inspection of Little Acorns

Church House, High Street, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3BB

Inspection date: 24 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy the time they spend in this bright and stimulating environment. Their work and photographs are displayed, which gives them a sense of belonging. Resources are easily accessible to enable children to make choices in their play. Children's mathematical language is good and they incorporate this into their play. They make spiders from play dough and count as they roll the pieces for the spiders' legs. They know that to make the play dough smaller they can break the piece they have in half. Children look at books and staff read them stories. Staff introduce innovative ways to help children to extend their letter sounds and begin to spell simple words. Children sound out letters and know that words such as 'mat' and 'bin' are real words and that 'wiv' is made up. They feed their words into Odd and Bob the robots and laugh as they chew them up and spit them out if they are wrong. Staff are extremely supportive of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. They are empathetic to children's personal circumstances and provide additional support to children and their families. For example, they organise interpreters so that parents are fully informed of what their children are doing. Children behave well. Staff act as positive role models and offer children clear explanations. Children learn to share, take turns and respect their friends.

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

- The setting benefits from a strong management team. The providers are hands on and supportive of staff. They have action plans in place to make improvements that will benefit children. They meet with other providers and local authority advisers to share ideas and keep up to date with any changes.
- Staff practice is monitored by the manager and providers. They recognise the strengths and weaknesses of the staff and can clearly explain how they support them to build on their skills. Staff attend training that is pertinent to the needs of the children and implement what they learn to raise the quality of their practice.
- Staff plan monthly activities that are based on themes and children's interests. They continually evolve the activities to ensure that children's next steps in learning are consistently met. The manager monitors the planning to ensure that there are appropriate activities planned for every child who attends. Staff accurately assess the progress that children make. The providers regularly track the progress made by individual and groups of children. This helps them to swiftly identify any gaps in children's learning and ensure that appropriate intervention is sought, when needed, to help every child reach their full potential.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are asked for information about what their child already knows and can do before they start. They are

encouraged to update this information throughout their child's time at the setting. This helps staff to have an accurate overview of children's interests and capabilities. Staff share children's next steps with parents and provide them with ideas of how they can support children's learning at home. Parents are happy with the care their children receive. They say that children's communication and language have improved tremendously since they have been at the setting and that staff share lots of information.

- Staff know the children very well and are proud of their achievements. They recognise when children need additional support or reassurance to join in with activities.
- Children enjoy the time they spend outside in the garden. They take part in activities such as bark rubbing and blowing bubbles. Children develop their physical skills as they move in a variety of different ways. They can climb, balance and jump, and they ride bikes with dexterity, skilfully avoiding obstacles. However, the outside area is not consistently utilised well enough to fully meet the needs of those children who prefer to play and learn outside.
- Staff use the environment to support children's mathematical skills. They encourage children to look at shapes, numbers and colours. They look at the church clock and count the number of gold triangles they can see on the clock face.
- Children are engrossed in activities and they concentrate well. Staff interaction is positive. They sit with children, chat to them and ask questions. However, sometimes they are too quick to provide the answers, and questions are in quick succession, so children do not have time to process their thoughts and respond. In addition, staff do not make the most of some activities or daily routines, such as snack time and circle time, to ensure that all children are able to fully participate.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. They attend training to ensure their safeguarding knowledge is up to date, including wider safeguarding concerns. They fully understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns and know where to seek advice or support. This includes the whistle-blowing procedure. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that everyone working with the children is vigorously checked and suitable. The environment is safe and secure, and staff are vigilant to ensure the children are safe at all times.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make the most of activities and daily routines to fully extend children's learning
- provide children with even more time to process their thoughts and respond to questions
- utilise the outdoor area even more to fully support those children who prefer to play and learn outside.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY551390
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10130789
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	2 to 10
Total number of places	27
Number of children on roll	69
Name of registered person	Melanie Gooch & Samantha Riley Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP908401
Telephone number	07866264499
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns registered in 2017. The setting employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with level 5. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday and from midday until 3pm. The setting also runs a before- and after-school club which operates from 7.30am until 9am and from 3pm until 6pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rebecca Johnson

Inspection activities

- The quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors was observed, and the inspector assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation and a learning walk with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector spoke with the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection
- A meeting was held with the pre-school manager and providers. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including children's details and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The views of parents were taken into account during the inspection.

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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