

# Inspection of Little Oaks Nursery, Acomb

Little Oaks Nursery, Main Street, Acomb, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 4PL

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Inspection date: 29 June 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

Staff plan exceptional opportunities to help children make excellent progress at this extremely friendly and welcoming nursery. Children benefit greatly from a range of highly exciting, stimulating and challenging activities and experiences. They are encouraged to explore outdoors with wood, straw and rope. Children develop balance and coordination as they climb and slide on outdoor equipment. They learn first-hand about nature and wildlife in woodland and a field close to the nursery. Children explore the effects of water on soil and hunt under rocks for insects. As a result of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, parents no longer enter the nursery. However, staff use electronic and verbal methods of communication to help ensure parents are extremely well informed about their child's day.

Children's behaviour is outstanding. They are very happy, safe and secure. Those that are new settle quickly. There is a very strong focus on friendship, kindness and respect. Children show great enthusiasm for the activities on offer. They discuss with staff the properties of stones, conkers and pine cones as part of a memory game. Children use words, such as 'smooth', 'cold' and 'soft', as they explore the inside and outside of each object. They love coming to the nursery and are eager and highly motivated to learn. Children enjoy playing with puzzles and building imaginative worlds with bricks. Staff have high expectations of all the children in their care.

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

- Staff have superb relationships with the children. They are excellent role models, who encourage the children to be respectful, take turns and help others. There is a very strong focus on children's well-being. Staff encourage children to talk about their 'buckets' being full or empty as a way to express their feelings and emotions. They provide excellent opportunities for children to access fresh air and exercise. Staff encourage them to help care for and nurture the nursery's pet guinea pigs. These experiences contribute highly to children's emotional and physical well-being. Staff promote children's growing independence very well. Children are confident and not afraid to ask for help.
- The highly skilled, well-qualified and experienced staff work together exceptionally well as a team. They are confident, dedicated and passionate about their work. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very good. The nursery works very well in partnership with the local school and partner professionals. This helps to provide a consistent approach to support for children's learning and development.
- Children learn to be resilient, to solve problems and to create their own solutions. For example, they help to fix the slide into position and experiment with soft-play equipment to build their own jumping platform. The pace of

activities is relaxed and matched to children's individual interests and needs. As part of the nursery's focus on the environment, the children learn about the importance of sustainability and recycling.

- Children's communication and language skills flourish. Staff introduce new vocabulary, for example words such as 'experiment' and 'photosynthesis'. They ask children questions that encourage detailed replies. This helps extend their thinking and vocabulary still further. Children listen to, interpret and help retell well-known stories. They add their own creative endings.
- Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills. For example, children explore shape, space and pace as they roll inflatable rings up and down hill on the nursery field. Children enjoy singing number rhymes and playing group games that enhance their understanding of space and position. Children race cars down the slide to see which is the fastest. They talk about the size of the vehicles and how far they travel.
- The nursery plays a vital role in the local community. Parents cannot speak highly enough of staff and the quality of education and care they provide. They feel fully involved in their children's learning. Parents appreciate the individual attention their children receive. Many speak of the warmth and support they have received from the nursery as a family, particularly through the pandemic.
- The manager is inspirational and has a very strong vision for the nursery. She has very high standards and supports staff well. Staff have completed specialised training to support them in their work with children outdoors. They reflect deeply on the experiences of children and the views of parents, in order to provide the highest quality learning and care.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff explain fully to children the reasons for rules and boundaries and what is expected of them. This helps children gain an exceptional understanding of the reasons for safe practices. The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities around keeping children safe. All staff attend training to keep themselves up to date with procedures to protect children. They know very well how to identify any concerns about children or staff, what procedures to take and who to contact. Children have rich opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they discuss with staff how to handle pets safely and the reasons people wear helmets during bike rides.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2503549
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10194415
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	31
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Oaks Nursery, Acomb CIO
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2503548
<b>Telephone number</b>	01434613422
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Little Oaks Nursery, Acomb registered in 2018. It opens Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm, during term time only. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. All are qualified at level 3 or above. One member of staff holds a level 6 qualification and is an early years professional. The nursery follows forest school principles. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Julie Foers

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager discussed with the inspector how the nursery organises and plans the curriculum and experiences for children. The inspector viewed the inside space and visited a field used by the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact on children's learning. The manager and the inspector evaluated an activity together.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents. This included evidence of training and suitability of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff. She spoke to a number of parents to gather their views on the nursery. She took into account the written views of others.

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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