

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre School

Boxmoor & Warners End Neighbourhood Association, Warners End Community Centre, Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 3QG

Inspection date: 12 July 2021

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 are inquisitive and eager to learn. They select what they want to play with from the carefully planned resources. Children persevere at their own chosen tasks. For example, they work together to find out why the oven door will not close. The staff help younger children extend their concentration skills by including them in exciting activities. Children watch quietly as they wait and listen for a balloon to be pumped up and then deflate. They repeat words that match the actions, such as 'longer' and 'hiss'. This helps give meaning to their increasing vocabulary.

When children arrive, they join in with music and movement. They move their bodies in a range of fun ways and sing songs with delight. Children continue learning about their bodies and how they can move. For example, outside they crawl into tyres and negotiate climbing frames.

Children express themselves in a range of creative ways. Younger children paint their hands and mix the colours together to explore the paint. They sing happy birthday after making pretend cakes with dough. Children build on the skills they need for writing. They enjoy using large decorating paintbrushes outside and felt tips on paper.

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

- The well-qualified staff team work together effectively to benefit the children. They communicate well about what they can each do to help children build on what they already know. This means that children receive a consistent approach to help them make good progress in their learning.
- A lot of information is gathered about children and their families when they begin attending. This means staff can begin to prioritise children's learning immediately. This also enables them to plan for wider opportunities that help children's well-being, overall.
- Staff know children well. They have a good understanding of how children learn. This results in interactions that help children learn and extend on what they already know. For example, staff encourage young children to try different options to fit puzzle pieces together. They ask older children to sort the puzzle pieces by recognising the numerals printed on the back of each piece.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are supported to practise their English and words of their home language. However, not all possible opportunities are built on to support children to use their home language in a range of ways.
- Children gain an awareness of what helps keep them healthy. They have many opportunities to practise self-care skills. For example, after wiping their nose they wash their hands. Children are keen to do things themselves. They fill and

refill containers of water so they can continue to paint the playhouse.

- Staff integrate mathematical concepts into everyday activities. For example, they guide children to problem solve by reminding them to look up high and down low. They count toys accurately and have use of a range of measuring items, including cups and rulers.
- Staff sensitively help children who struggle to manage their emotions. They are calm and patient while they wait for the children to articulate what they are feeling. All children receive regular praise for their efforts, which helps their growing confidence.
- All children's language development is given high priority. Staff identify those who are not developing within age-related expectations and work with parents and professionals to give them the best chance to catch up in their development. Additional funding is spent effectively to support children's individual needs.
- Parents are extremely happy with the pre-school. They value the information they receive from staff about their children and the ideas they can use at home to help them learn.
- The committee and manager make checks to ensure the long-standing staff team remain suitable for their role. There are procedures in place to help keep children safe in a multi-use hall. For example, there are doors with code locks so strangers cannot enter the playroom.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Designated safeguarding officers work tirelessly to communicate with professionals to support families. The staff have a good understanding of what might be a concern and the appropriate action to take. They are aware of possible signs that might indicate that a child or the family are vulnerable to extreme views. Staff are knowledgeable about how the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has had an impact on some of the families and children who attend.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff find ways to give children more opportunities to see and use their home language so there are more familiar links for children while at pre-school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY557984
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10190088
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Boxmoor And Warners End Neighbourhood Association
Registered person unique reference number	RP557983
Telephone number	01442266732
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre School was registered in 2018. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am to 2.15pm on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, then from 9.15am to 1pm on Tuesday and Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Elke Rockey

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 pre-school manager and the inspector completed a tour of the nursery and discussed how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact these have on children's learning.
- The pre-school manager and the inspector completed a joint observation.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the pre-school manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff and committee.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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