

# Inspection of Little Acorns Childcare

Runamokka, 221-223 Whitley Road, Whitley Bay, Northumberland NE26 2SY

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Inspection date: 13 October 2021

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

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

### **The provision is good**

Children are happy and secure and enjoy the time they spend at the nursery. They form close bonds with staff, who are nurturing and attentive to each child's individual needs. Staff carefully consider information about children's individual health needs, with the close involvement of their parents. Children behave well. They are kind and respectful towards each other. They understand how to stay safe and follow the nursery rules to use 'kind hands, walking feet and listening ears'. Older children take turns to talk during group times and listen to what others have to say. They show a clear understanding of expectations and staff offer continuous praise.

Children have lots of opportunities for sensory exploration. For example, older children describe the smell and taste of basil leaves and feel how soft the flower petals are. Toddlers discover the patterns they can make as they roll toy cars in the paint. Older children use their imagination as they engage in role play with their friends. For example, they decide to use the play dough to make cakes so that they can sell them in their pretend shop. They use coins and various buttons as money and count them to make sure they have enough to buy a cake.

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

- The educational programme for children is effective. Regular observations, along with knowledge of children's current interests, allow staff to plan a curriculum that supports what children need to learn next. Staff swiftly identify any gaps in children's learning and plan suitable next steps to help them catch up.
- Staff promote children's language skills well. They show a genuine interest in what children say. Toddlers copy the actions of staff as they sing and repeat some familiar words. Staff ask children questions. However, they do not maximise the learning possibilities from children's responses, as these are not always fully explored.
- Staff promote children's love of books. They enthusiastically respond to requests to share and read stories. Staff use good intonation, and children are very motivated and engaged as they become engrossed in the story. However, when supporting children's early reading skills, some staff teach phonics incorrectly. For example, they do not always use the correct sound that letters make.
- The manager oversees the quality of teaching and children's learning experiences effectively. For example, following recent monitoring, the manager and staff have reviewed and enhanced the opportunities to support children's mathematical understanding. The manager provides all staff with the coaching, guidance and training they need to continue to develop their teaching skills.
- Staff promote children's mathematical skills successfully. For instance, they encourage children to use numbers and identify shapes during the daily routines

and activities. Toddlers learn simple number rhymes and can say numbers in the correct sequence, while older children learn more complex concepts such as opposites.

- Since returning from the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, staff have noticed a weakness in children's social skills. Staff skilfully lead extra group songs and game times to support children's social interactions and to further enhance their confidence and communication skills. Managers are clear that they want all children to become more independent by the time they move on from the nursery. However, this approach is not always consistently reinforced by staff. At times, staff complete simple tasks for children that they could attempt to do for themselves, such as wiping their nose, or putting on their shoes and coats.
- Children learn to follow healthy lifestyles. They enjoy exploring and using their physical and coordination skills in the soft play area, and as they practice yoga. They talk about cleaning their teeth and understand the importance of washing their hands. Children enjoy healthy, home-cooked food. Staff provide children with a wide range of experiences to help them to learn more about the local community. They learn about similarities, make comparisons and learn to respect others and value their differences.
- Parents are very positive about the communication they receive from the staff about their children's progress. They explain that they feel relaxed leaving their children at the nursery because they feel their children are safe.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a secure knowledge of how to keep children safe. They know how to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect, and the procedures to follow to report any concerns they may have about children or a member of staff. Recruitment processes are robust to help ensure the suitability of adults working with children. The deployment of staff is well organised so that children are always supervised. They implement effective risk assessments that help to ensure children can play in a safe and secure environment.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- support staff to extend their knowledge in the teaching of phonics to better support children's early reading
- make the most of questions posed by staff to extend children's knowledge and understanding to the full
- develop staff's understanding of how to make even better use of opportunities to support children's independence skills, to ensure a more consistent approach.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2510497
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10208891
<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>	0 to 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	39
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Acorns (ne) Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2510496
<b>Telephone number</b>	07793238816
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Childcare registered in 2018. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 5, three hold level 3 and four hold level 2. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector carried out a learning walk with the manager and discussed how the curriculum is delivered.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning. She spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with parents 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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