

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-School Kingsmere

Kingsmere Community Hall, Whitelands Way, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 1EG

Inspection date: 8 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. They confidently leave their parents at the main door, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are warmly welcomed into the pre-school by the staff, who know them well. Children enjoy a good range of toys and resources. They show pleasure and excitement in the activities planned by staff. For example, they enjoy exploring in the local woodlands and hunting for sticks. Children have fun investigating with ice, where they work together to free hidden toy animals. Staff have high expectations for children's development and their teaching supports children's learning and progress securely.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have their personal needs met by the caring and nurturing staff. Children are kind and friendly towards each other and develop lovely friendships. Children enjoy exploring with a wide variety of sensory activities. They have fun investigating with different materials, such as crafts, water, and sand. Children's physical development is well supported as they enjoy climbing, hopping, and riding bicycles outside. Inside, they enjoy singing to action songs and dancing to music. Staff use additional funding effectively to enhance children's learning experiences and development.

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

- The leadership team and staff have worked well together to address the actions raised at the last inspection. For example, they have adjusted the routines for screen time available for children. Leaders have provided training to staff to enhance the key-person approach. Additionally, they have adapted the drop-off routine to ensure information is consistently exchanged regardless of the time children arrive. This has a positive impact on the well-being of the children.
- Staff meet the needs of the children well. They understand the expectation of activities and know what children need to learn next. They adapt activities that children show interest in purposefully to enhance learning. For example, when children make biscuits, staff give support in their personal, social and emotional development as needed and introduce mathematical concepts such as thin and thick.
- Staff support children's emerging language skills well. For instance, staff provide a consistent narrative of what they are doing. This helps children to hear a range of words, which promotes their understanding. Staff ask children questions throughout their engagement with them. However, at times, some staff do not give children sufficient time to think or respond before staff answer the questions for them.
- Staff support children's emotional needs well and talk to them about any

troubles or family events, giving them incredible support as needed. Children are well behaved and understand the need to use timers to share or wait their turn for a toy. Staff offer good praise to children, such as when helping to tidy away toys and resources.

- Staff are well deployed to support children. They provide a safe environment where all areas and activities, such as using skipping ropes, are sufficiently risk assessed. This helps to minimise any potential risk to children. Staff provide nutritious snacks to children. However, they do not consistently support them to understand how healthy eating contributes to their overall health and fitness. Staff are familiar with children's individual dietary requirements, and they sit with children while they are eating to make this a sociable time.
- Staff have good relationships with the parents at the pre-school and work in strong partnerships with other professionals involved in children's care. They encourage parents to be part of the parent focus groups. This helps them to be included in making decisions about the pre-school. Parents comment positively about the staff and how their children enjoy attending. Staff communicate effectively with parents through a variety of ways. For example, they have daily discussions and hold regular parent meetings.
- The leadership team work well together and have implemented successful strategies to support staff and develop their knowledge, skills, and practice. Staff comment that they are well supported, and that daily 'huddles' and meetings help them to feel valued and included.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Robust recruitment and vetting arrangements are in place to ensure that those working with children are safe and suitable for their role. All staff, including the designated safeguarding leads have a suitable knowledge and understanding of child protection. They are confident in the action they would take if they had concerns about a child's welfare or a colleague's practice. Staff receive regular opportunities for safeguarding training. The manager regularly checks staff's understanding of child protection issues, referral processes and wider safeguarding matters through quizzes and team meetings.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend ways to help children understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle
- strengthen staff practice to consistently give children the time they need to put their thoughts into words when responding to questions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2523557
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10217774
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	24
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Little Acorns Preschool Kingsmere
Registered person unique reference number	2523556
Telephone number	07554 615163
Date of previous inspection	22 September 2021

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-School, Kingsmere registered in 2019. It operates from the Kingsmere Community Hall in Bicester. The pre-school employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including the manager, deputy manager and a further member of staff who holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from 8.30am until 3pm, Monday to Thursday, during term time. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracy Bartholomew

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager explained the nursery curriculum during a learning walk with the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning afterwards.
- Children spoke to the inspector about the activities they took part in.
- A number of parents provided feedback about the nursery through discussions with the inspector.

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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