

Inspection of Acorn Pre-School CIO

Acorn Pre School, Portakabin, Mill Lane, Whaplode, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 6TS

Inspection date: 12 May 2022

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 happy and show high levels of engagement in pre-school. They have formed secure emotional attachments with staff, who are very attentive to their needs. Children relish the responsibility of being the helper at snack time. Staff entrust them to invite their friends to the table. Children pour drinks out for their friends and ask them if they would like some apple and cucumber. This helps to promote children's self-esteem and gives them a sense of responsibility. Children investigate the range of resources available to them. They explore cereals and small world animals, using their imagination. Staff encourage children to use their fine motor skills. Children use child-safe knives to cut up real vegetables and then use these to pretend to feed the animals they play with.

Children have developed a strong interest in books. They sit alongside staff and carefully turn the pages and point to pictures. Children giggle as staff read stories using an animated voice. This contributes to their literacy and reading skills. Children are confident and well-behaved learners. They understand the pre-school routine and respond to instructions. For example, they listen for the five-minute warning to tidy-up time, then eagerly get involved with tidying up. Children use a dustpan and brush to sweep up the play dough. This helps them to learn how to look after the environment.

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

- The manager and staff evaluate the quality of the pre-school successfully to make ongoing improvements. For instance, there are plans in place to develop the garden to provide more learning opportunities that include planting and growing. This improvement has been identified from the children's interest.
- Staff know the children well and constantly interact with them as they play and explore. However, staff do not always build on what children know and can already do. One example of this, when children use bricks to build a tower, staff introduce mathematical language to describe size but do not encourage counting.
- Staff build on the children's interests. For example, toddlers show an interest in the book 'Big Red Bath'. Staff provide resources that relate to the book and capture toddlers' interests. Children are encouraged to put on aprons and play with water and toy animals. This helps to develop their sensory experiences and brings the book to life.
- The manager and staff work in partnership with parents and external professionals. This enables them to meet children's individual care and learning needs effectively. Staff include all children equally in the activities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff observe and assess children's learning. They put in place a curriculum that

helps children to learn key skills for future success. For example, staff know that some children will be going to school in September. They encourage them to do as much for themselves as possible, such as putting on their own shoes and coats. Staff recognise that this helps children to develop their independence and self-care skills.

- Staff teach children how to play cooperatively with others. They offer explanations about sharing such as when two children want to play with the same toy. This helps children to develop good social skills.
- Staff support children's communication and language skills well. They encourage children to take part in everyday discussions and talk to them about what they are doing as they play. Children openly talk about their families and home lives, they comment, 'I make pizza at home with mummy.'
- Overall, parents are positive about the pre-school and the staff. They comment that their children have made good progress since joining the pre-school. Parents all know who their child's key person is. However, staff do not support all parents to know how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Staff support children to develop a healthy lifestyle. They encourage regular hand sanitizing and washing hands after using the bathroom. Equally, staff talk to the children at lunchtime about the importance of making healthy choices from their lunch box.
- Staff recognise the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children's learning, particularly their physical development. They encourage children to play outside and occasionally take them on walks in the local environment. Children take safe risks as they balance across the stepping stones. This helps to close gaps in children's development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They access training and have regular updates from the designated lead for safeguarding. This helps them to understand the risks to children from a wide range of safeguarding issues. Staff know what procedures to follow in the event of a concern about a child to safeguard their welfare. Staff talk to children about the importance of wearing sun cream and sun hats to keep themselves safe when playing outdoors. The manager confidently discusses the secure procedures she follows when recruiting new members of staff. She checks the suitability of staff, both before and during their employment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support all staff to consistently extend and build further on children's learning

- extend the partnerships with parents further to help all parents understand how to support their child's individual learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2516397
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10238391
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Acorn Pre-School Cio
Registered person unique reference number	2516396
Telephone number	01406373400
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Acorn Pre-School CIO re-registered in 2020. They are located in Whaplode, Lincolnshire. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions offered are from 9am until 12 midday, 12 midday until 3pm and a full day care session 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sharon Alleary

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and took account of written feedback offered.

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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