

Inspection of Croston Acorns Nursery and Pre School

Dob Bridge Cottage, Brick Croft Lane, Croston, LEYLAND PR26 9AA

Inspection date: 17 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children excitedly arrive at nursery and are greeted by the vastly experienced and enthusiastic staff team. Children's independence is encouraged from the moment they step into the nursery. They are encouraged to choose a 'job' for the day and excitedly share that they are going to help with setting up for dinner. The highly effective key-person system helps to ensure that children settle quickly, feel safe, secure and are eager to learn.

Children are highly engaged in their play. They sustain excellent concentration levels and follow clear instructions from staff extremely well. The expertly planned environment ensures that children have an enormous range of experiences that reflect their interests and precisely match the next stages in their learning. Children have freedom to actively explore and lead their own play. Staff skilfully link play experiences to children's knowledge of their favourite stories. For example, during messy activities, children enthusiastically mix glitter, glue and paint. They join in with phrases, such as 'they filled up the cauldron' and other well-known lines from the story 'Room on the Broom'. Children's faces light up when they recall and make the connection between a well-known story and their own play.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. The youngest children are supported to share resources. Older children share the rules of safety when buttering bread and using a knife. Staff are meticulous in teaching children to be polite and courteous to each other.

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

- Leaders and staff devise an inspiring and challenging curriculum that is extremely well-sequenced to ensure that children build purposefully on what they already know. Staff skilfully use children's interests, starting points and any gaps in their knowledge to provide highly engaging experiences. Every moment is utilised as an exciting teaching opportunity. Children make excellent progress.
- Staff are skilful in consolidating learning and capturing children's imaginations. They use wonderfully exciting activities to spark children's recall and memory. Staff talk about the 'magic tray' and children eagerly join in with this exciting activity. Children close their eyes while staff remove an item from the tray. They are encouraged to spot which item has disappeared. Staff are brilliantly engaging, which results in children becoming deeply immersed in their learning. Staff introduce exciting new words and explain their meaning. Children expertly use words such as 'vanished' in their conversations. Children are confident communicators who develop excellent listening and attention skills.
- Staff promote children's literacy skills outstandingly well. This begins as staff introduce new songs and signs with babies. Toddlers get a superb introduction

to rhyme and repetition through activities, such as clapping the syllables in their name. This gradual and well-sequenced progression then enables older children to understand the foundation of early phonics. Children are so engaged that they do not realise that staffs' interactions encourage them to work hard.

- Children develop a strong sense of self as staff find out about their experiences from home. They are given opportunities to share their special interests with the other children during 'expert of the week'. Children share their love of trains or board games and talk about these during group times. Staff also share their special talents and give children further experiences to increase their knowledge. For example, the manager shares her love of science with children across the setting. This gives children a sense of pride in their own talents.
- Parents comment on the friendly, warm care that the nursery provides. They are overjoyed with the excellent progress their children make at nursery. There is an extremely positive and mutually respectful culture of communication at the setting. This facilitates exceptionally strong working relationships among the staff and parents. Parents have an excellent understanding of the developmental targets that are specific to their child and are exceptionally well supported to further extend their child's learning at home.
- Leaders ensure that staff understand their exceedingly high expectations. They create an ethos of continual reflection and have a robust development plan, which is shared across the setting. Staff are encouraged to undertake carefully targeted training for their own continued professional development. They are encouraged to share their impressive skills with each other to help to ensure that teaching is consistently of the very highest quality.
- Leaders monitor staff performance robustly, through peer observations, supervisions and regular professional discussions. The management team understand the importance of staff spending time with children and carefully monitor their workload. They have created a system of observation, planning and assessment which is manageable and effective. Staff are extremely positive about the support provided. The management team work together with staff to make changes and facilitate improvement. Consequently, staff feel their views are valued. Leaders regularly gain feedback from external professionals, such as local schools, to help to evaluate their practice and the impact of staff development. As a result, they are continually striving to make improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have very secure knowledge of the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm and relate this well to the children in their care. Staff know the procedures to follow should they need to report a concern about a child. Staff attend frequent training, and safeguarding is high on the agenda during supervision sessions and staff meetings. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that anyone working with the children is safe and suitable. Children play in a very safe and secure environment that is routinely risk assessed.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY449320
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10235853
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	49
Number of children on roll	69
Name of registered person	Croston Acorns Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902328
Telephone number	01772 601074
Date of previous inspection	11 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Croston Acorns Nursery and Pre School was registered in 2012. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. Five members of childcare staff hold level 6 qualifications. The nursery opens all year round, from 7.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stacey Wendrenski

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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