

Inspection of Little Acorns

Main Street, West Hagbourne, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 0NA

Inspection date: 16 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate that they feel safe and are happy at the nursery. They are warmly welcomed by kind and nurturing staff, who are on hand to help them settle quickly. Children show that they are motivated to learn as they relax to activities that provide them with a good range of learning experiences. For example, pre-school children enjoy mark-making activities, which support them in letter recognition for preparation to write their own names. Staff engage well with the children and provide an environment which is rich in language. For instance, all staff read books to the children with great expression and enthusiasm. This helps to captivate children and maintain their attention.

Children show they have secure relationships with each other and the staff. For example, babies and younger children show that staff are important to them as they cuddle them for comfort as needed. Children in the pre-toddler and toddler room are beginning to form good relationships and play well together. For instance, staff remind children to be kind and they help them to develop negotiation skills as they take turns when riding on bicycles. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in their learning

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

- The management team have taken positive steps since the last inspection to improve the quality of the curriculum within the nursery. Staff have received good support to develop their practice. The curriculum is well implemented through planned and purposeful activities. Staff communicate well with the children and maintain a consistent dialogue with them to help develop their language effectively.
- The management team have a clear vision for the nursery and have been working with the local authority to improve practice. There have been many positive changes made. However, there are some inconsistencies where monitoring of staff practice is not yet fully effective. Staff comment that they are happy at the nursery, feel supported and explain that the manager is approachable.
- Staff know the children well and understand what they need to learn next. For example, babies are supported in their physical skills, as staff provide and encourage them to use the walkers to help them to master the skills to walk. The pre-school children are supported in their persistence for developing coordination skills, as they catch and throw a ball.
- Children are learning the importance of following a healthy lifestyle. For instance, they learn the importance of washing their hands before meals, and older children are taught the technique of using the tissues to wipe their noses.
- Children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Staff know

children's individual dietary needs well and cater for these accordingly. Staff sit with the children during mealtimes and make this a social occasion. All staff show a secure awareness of ensuring food is cut to a suitable size to help reduce the risks of choking.

- Children behave well, and older children understand what is expected of them. Staff provide clear and consistent expectations to children from a young age. Children's self-esteem is enhanced effectively by staff, as they provide children with a good amount of praise and encouragement.
- Parents comment that they are happy about the care and education their children receive. They remark that the staff are 'amazing', 'very supportive' and that 'the facilities are wonderful'. Parents explain that they receive daily feedback about the activities their children have enjoyed and care routines at the end of the day. At times, staff do not keep parents fully up to date on how their children are developing to help them support learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff working with the children have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They are confident in the signs and indicators of abuse, and are aware of the referral procedures to follow should the need arise. Leaders provide regular safeguarding training to the staff, and they check their knowledge through regular meetings and quizzes. The premises are safe and secure and suitable risk assessments are undertaken. All staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the children. Recruitment procedures are robust. This helps to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice to focus more sharply on developing staff's knowledge and skills
- build on the information shared with parents even further to help them support their children's learning even more consistently at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY462210
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10242567
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	92
Name of registered person	Little Acorns (West Hagbourne) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP532569
Telephone number	01235 851423
Date of previous inspection	20 April 2022

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns registered in 2013 and is located in the village of West Hagbourne, near Didcot, Oxfordshire. There are currently 23 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 12 hold recognised childcare qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays. In addition, the nursery offers holiday care. Sessions run from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Tracy Bartholomew
Lisa Robinson

Inspection activities

- One of the inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager explained the nursery's curriculum during a learning walk with the inspectors.
- The manager and one of the inspectors completed a joint observation of an activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning afterwards.
- Children spoke to the inspectors about the activities they took part in.
- Parents available at the inspection provided feedback about 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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