

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-School

St John's Church, Church Road, St Johns, Woking, Surrey GU21 7QN

Inspection date: 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety and well-being cannot be assured. Staff who have lead responsibility for child protection have not acted on and reported serious concerns. This puts children at potential risk of harm. Managers do not follow their own procedures to protect children's welfare. They do not ensure that robust processes are in place to check staff suitability. These failures compromise children's safety.

Staff do not always meet the emotional needs of children. They fail to recognise the signs that children are feeling unwell. This affects how safe and secure children feel in their surroundings. They become disengaged in learning and find the environment challenging.

Staff have implemented adequate risk assessments to identify and remove hazards. However, they do not support children to recognise potential risks to keep themselves safe. For example, children do not learn about why a wet floor may be dangerous. This limits children's understanding when effectively managing risks.

Children mostly behave appropriately and respond to the rules and boundaries of the preschool. Some of the activities provided, keep children engaged and focused. For instance, staff hold children's attention during a small group activity. Children wait with anticipation for what the adult is going to do next. However, not all activities engage children in the same way. Children do not make sufficient progress in their learning and development.

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

- Leadership and management is weak. The manager does not successfully oversee the care and provision that is provided. She has not ensured that required records are available. Arrangements for responding to child protection concerns in a timely way are ineffective. This does not safeguard children's welfare.
- The manager has not implemented a curriculum that is clear and securely embedded in practice. She lacks clarity about what she wants the children to learn and how she can best support them to achieve their goals. This has a significant impact on children, who are not challenged to achieve goals that are in line with their abilities.
- The key-person system is not robust. Children are not adequately supported by the person who knows them best. Some staff lack knowledge of where their key children are developmentally. They do not identify the next steps for all children to enhance their learning. This has a significant impact on the children's personal, social and emotional development. Despite this, children will seek comfort in the adults and go to them for emotional support.

- Leaders have failed to put in place effective staff support and training. Staff do not receive sufficient supervision to ensure that areas they need to develop are recognised and supported. This includes gaps in their safeguarding knowledge. Furthermore, leaders and managers do not identify significant weaknesses in practice. This has a negative impact both on children's well-being and the quality of education that they receive.
- Children follow basic hygiene routines and wash their hands before meals. However, staff do not encourage them to cover their mouths when coughing. Tissues are not available for them to wipe their nose. Weak hygiene practice puts children at risk of the spread of infectious diseases. Children are not taught about the link between hygiene practice and good health. Additionally, they are not given opportunities to promote their independence skills and embed good hygiene foundations.
- Staff support the children to engage in some new experiences but are not always attentive enough to children's care needs. For example, children investigate the snow outside. They show their delight when exploring the snow. However, not all children have appropriate clothes for this weather. The staff fail to recognise that some children have extremely cold hands and wet clothes. This affects the children's well-being and they lack interest in learning.
- Since the last inspection, some positive steps have been taken to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) has put strategies in place to help children with SEND make appropriate progress. She works well with parents and other agencies to ensure that these children have the right support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The manager does not have a sufficient oversight of staff knowledge of child protection. Managers and staff do not have a secure understanding of how to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. The designated safeguarding leads have failed to report concerns to the relevant authority in a timely manner. As a result, the children's safety is compromised. Recruitment procedures are not robust. The manager cannot produce records to confirm the suitability of staff who work directly with children. Effective systems are not in place for keeping essential records. Staff suitability cannot be assured. This puts children at potential risk.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
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take action to ensure that all managers and staff understand the setting safeguarding procedures to act swiftly and respond to safeguarding concerns	23/03/2023
ensure that those who take lead responsibility for safeguarding children can identify, understand and respond to signs of possible abuse	23/03/2023
take action to ensure that managers and staff have sufficient safeguarding knowledge to identify and respond to child protection concerns in a timely manner	23/03/2023
put robust systems in place to ensure that those who have contact with children and their families are suitable to do so	23/03/2023
implement appropriate supervision arrangements for staff to provide support, coaching and training	23/03/2023
maintain records and obtain and share information with parents and professionals, to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting to meet children's needs	23/03/2023
ensure that records are easily accessible and available and stored effectively to maintain confidentiality.	23/03/2023

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
implement a well-structured curriculum that is ambitious and meets the needs of all children	04/04/2023

ensure that arrangements to promote children's good health are robust and that necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection	04/04/2023
implement an effective key-person system to ensure that children's individual needs are met	04/04/2023
improve planning arrangements to ensure that children are gaining tailored learning in line with their capabilities across all areas.	04/04/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY392763
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10242513
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	14
Name of registered person	Pattinson, Michelle
Registered person unique reference number	RP902951
Telephone number	07947145710
Date of previous inspection	20 April 2022

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-School registered in 2009 and is located in Woking, Surrey. It is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 2.30pm, during term time only. The pre-school is in receipt of funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four hold a level 3 qualification and one holds a level 5 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kelley Ellis

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to several parents 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 manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The SENDCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.

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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