

# Inspection of Little Acorns

Oaklands Infant School, Weeds Wood Road, CHATHAM, Kent ME5 0QS

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Inspection date: 26 April 2023

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

### **The provision is good**

All children are very happy, settled and confident at the setting. They have a positive attitude towards learning and staff implement the curriculum well. Children enjoy learning through interesting experiences. For example, children are excited about a story about a stick. They go on to collect sticks and make their own version of the main character in the story. Children are independent. For instance, they confidently choose their own play, initiate games, and complete tasks such as putting on their wellington boots. Children are creative. They learn and explore how to make patterns with paint and vegetables, such as asparagus.

Staff are positive role models and children are polite and behave well. Children are kind and caring. For instance, when children look a little nervous to balance along play equipment, other children gently take their hand and kindly help them across. Children learn about the benefits of healthy lifestyles. They choose whether to engage in exercise and active play or enjoy rest and quieter activities. All children develop good physical abilities, and staff help teach them the different ways they can move their body. For example, they enjoy regular yoga sessions.

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

- The manager and staff establish secure and trusting relationships with children. They get to know their individual personalities, abilities and needs well. This helps them plan motivating learning experiences that they know children will enjoy. All children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress.
- Staff successfully help children to develop a good sense of belonging and positive levels of well-being and self-esteem. Children enjoy the company of both their friends and staff. They happily giggle as they play a large-group game of hide and seek. They are proud when they find their friends and take turns to hide with good levels of maturity.
- The manager and staff liaise closely with outside specialists to implement helpful strategies to support children who have SEND. For example, they have created an area where children access to regulate their emotions. They use sensory toys to feel calm and have a sense of safety in being in an enclosed space.
- Overall, staff use some good ways to keep parents informed about their children's learning. For example, they have detailed verbal handovers at the end of each day about what children have enjoyed doing. Parents speak highly of the staff and the setting. However, staff do not use more routine and extensive ways to help parents understand how to support their children's learning further at home.
- Staff evaluate the setting together daily. They observe each other teach, and interact with children and provide constructive feedback. They use their findings

to support their future practice. For example, staff recognised a slight dip in children's mathematical development. Therefore they planned additional activities to include mathematical language to help spark the children's interest in mathematics.

- The manager and staff attend regular and beneficial training. They have made good use of recent training. They learned about the different ways to help manage challenging behaviours and support children to manage their emotions appropriately. As a result, staff have implemented activities where children can safely express how they are feeling. This helps children behave well and know what is expected of them.
- Overall, staff ensure that their practice is inclusive and they welcome families and children from all backgrounds. However, staff do not consistently provide children with more extensive opportunities to learn about peoples' similarities and differences from around the wider world. For example, they are confident to teach children about festivals that are well known to them. However, they do not extend this for countries and festivals from a wider demographic.
- All staff support children to develop confident communication skills. They provide children with a language-rich environment. Staff ask children thought-provoking questions and give them time to think and then answer. They use a wide range of different ways to effectively communicate with children. This includes using signing.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a secure and confident knowledge and understanding of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They know the signs and symptoms of abuse to be aware of that may highlight a potential concern. Staff know who they would contact to seek advice and how to raise and follow up any issues. Staff keep their safeguarding knowledge current. For example, they complete regular training and discuss safeguarding in team meetings. Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves and others safe. For instance, they follow safety instructions as they climb and balance and understand the well-embedded rules and boundaries.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- strengthen the already good partnerships with parents to help them fully understand their children's next steps in learning and how to support these at home
- support staff to understand how to further extend children's knowledge and understanding of people outside of their communities and experiences.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103828
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	10285565
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 2
<b>Total number of places</b>	16
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	13
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Acorns Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP522615
<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 668187
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 October 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns registered in 2000. It is located in Chatham, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 8.50am until 11.50am, term time only. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two years. The setting employs three members of staff, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Kelly Hawkins

## 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 setting.
- The inspector carried out a learning walk with the manager. The inspector assessed the impact of the quality of staff interactions and the learning opportunities they provide children.
- The inspector viewed the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The inspector reviewed written documentation. This included safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, children, parents and staff at convenient times and considered their views.

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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