

Inspection of Tamsin's Little Acorns

255 Hawthorn Road, Ashington NE63 0QT

Inspection date: 10 May 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are very happy and safe in this welcoming and homely nursery. Pre-school children enthusiastically run over to their friends who are arriving at the nursery, welcoming them warmly. Children settle quickly and wave happily to their parents when they leave. Parents comment that their children are always excited to come to the nursery. Staff want all children to achieve their full potential and be confident and inquisitive learners. They design the environment to provide children with plenty of opportunities to explore and investigate. This helps to encourage children's curiosity and develop their imaginations.

Younger children explore real food packaging by emptying and filling utensils with dried pasta. Pre-school children use spaghetti to pretend to be 'antennas' on caterpillars. Children have an abundance of opportunities to develop their fine-motor skills in preparation for writing. Children use scissors to cut stems of flowers and carefully squeeze pipettes to transport water. Babies sit on a large tray and enjoy emptying and filling containers with rice. They make marks on water mats with chunky brushes. Toddlers use tweezers to pick up spaghetti. Children try hard and persevere during activities. They have very good attitudes towards their learning.

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

- The manager, who is also the provider, plans an ambitious and challenging curriculum for all children. She wants children to be curious and lifelong learners. Staff sequence the curriculum to help children achieve key skills. For instance, babies learn to hold a cup, toddlers drink independently from an open cup and pre-school children practise pouring their own drinks.
- All children behave well and play together collaboratively. They happily share resources and learn to recognise how they are feeling. Staff teach children to take turns in more structured activities. For example, when pre-school children play board games, they learn the rules and how to wait for their turn.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on children developing their early literacy skills. Children are exposed to core books throughout the nursery. They sit in cosy areas outdoors, retelling their favourite stories. Staff encourage children to continue to read at home, such as with the introduction of a lending library.
- Staff link stories to hands-on and real-life experiences. This helps children to develop a love of books. For instance, children plant beans after they read 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. They experiment to see whether the beans will grow better in the sun or the shade. Toddlers look with interest at caterpillars growing when they read the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. They learn new vocabulary, proudly telling staff that caterpillars live in a 'cocoon'.
- Older children are supported well with their move on to school. They visit school

during pick-up times to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. Staff share detailed information with the teachers and invite them into the nursery to meet the children.

- Children learn to follow healthy lifestyles. They play outside in the fresh air each day and enjoy trips in the local community. Children develop their self-care skills. For instance, pre-school children carefully cut up their fruit for snack. They use 'nose-wiping' stations to look in mirrors and practise cleaning their noses.
- The nursery is extremely inclusive. Staff strive to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who are very well supported. Staff work closely with other professionals to help children with SEND make the best possible progress.
- Staff use additional funding well to meet children's needs. They use funding to provide an increased level of staffing to help include children in all activities. Staff also use funding to purchase resources, such as sensory and calming toys.
- Children are clearly very comfortable and secure in the care of kind and caring staff. They cuddle up to staff, who place a priority on listening to children's views. Staff observe babies to see who they form the most secure attachments with when deciding who will be their key person. However, some staff, such as those who have recently taken over a key-person role, do not have a precise understanding of what individual children need to learn next in each area of learning.
- The manager has an outstanding knowledge of child development and the intent of the curriculum. However, she does not consistently use her monitoring of staff's practice to focus professional development opportunities on enhancing their knowledge to an even higher level.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children are safe in this nursery. Staff recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know the procedures to take if they have a concern about a child's welfare. The manager makes sure that staff attend regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. The premises are secure; there is closed-circuit television to make sure that no unauthorised persons can enter the premises. Children learn to keep themselves safe. For instance, staff teach them about road safety, when out in the community, and how to hold scissors correctly.

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 have a detailed knowledge of what individual children need to learn next in all areas of learning
- focus professional development opportunities on enhancing staff's knowledge

and the quality of education to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2627961
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10280906
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	26
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	James, Tamsin
Registered person unique reference number	2627960
Telephone number	01670 851689
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Tamsin's Little Acorns registered in 2021 and is located in Ashington, Northumberland. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff, of whom six hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for one week between Christmas and New Year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 5.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Melanie Vincent

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the nursery.
- During a learning walk, the manager discussed with the inspector how staff organise and plan the curriculum, environment and experiences for children.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector evaluated children's learning together during a planned activity.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of parents' views that were gathered during the inspection.

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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