

Inspection of Little Acorns Preschool Nursery

St. Georges Church, Front Street, East Boldon NE36 0SW

Inspection date: 29 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish and thrive at this extremely inclusive and welcoming nursery. They form very close bonds with staff, who are respectful, sensitive, caring and kind. Staff develop superb relationships with the children, who they nurture and value as individuals. Children enjoy relaxed but carefully considered and secure daily routines. For example, staff welcome them on arrival to a cosy, tented area with a cushion for each child. Soft lights and bubbles help children feel comfortable and relaxed. As a result, children are extremely happy, confident, settled and secure.

Staff know children individually very well. They plan imaginative and challenging experiences and activities that they know children will be interested in and curious about. For example, children explore printed treasure maps and use lengths of drainpipes for telescopes, as they listen to stories about pirates. Resourcing is innovative, creative and tactile. For example, children practise lifting metal tins with magnets tied to strings. They make imaginary volcanoes, using jelly as pretend lava.

Patient and dedicated staff work very hard to support children to solve any conflicts and to manage their feelings and behaviour. Children help staff draw up rules for the nursery. These include being polite and sharing and listening to and helping others.

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

- Staff provide outstanding support for children's personal, social and emotional development. For instance, children register themselves into the nursery and choose what to play with. Each child has an 'All About Me' tray that includes favourite items from home. This helps children to develop a sense of familiarity and belonging.
- Children develop high levels of respect for each other. They play cooperatively together using empty cardboard boxes. At snack time, staff support them to give out cups to their friends. An emotions board is used by staff each morning to help encourage children to talk about how they are feeling and why. Staff use a kindness board to record kind things all of the children have done for each other.
- There is a strong focus on sustainability, healthy lifestyles and gratitude as a way of supporting children's well-being. Every day, before they go home, children make a circle and share with their friends something they are thankful for that day.
- Children are very confident and growing rapidly in independence. They do up their zips and put on their boots ready to go outside. Children wash their hands,

pour their drinks and clear away their pots at snack time.

- There is excellent support for children's growing communication and language skills. Staff provide plenty of time for children to respond to carefully posed questions. They use sign language and visual cues to help support children's communication further.
- Staff plan very strong support for children's physical development. For example, a large sandpit at floor height provides opportunities for children to explore using their whole bodies. Staff encourage children to stretch and make large movements using ribbons and voiles. Children develop their core strength as they balance on planks and roll tyres carefully across the floor.
- Staff provide outstanding support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work very closely with a range of education and health professionals involved with the children in their care. This helps provide a consistent approach to support for children's learning.
- Staff complete very detailed transition reports for children moving on to school. They provide excellent support to help children prepare for the move. For example, at snack time older children fetch their meals from the kitchen using a tray. This helps to familiarise them with the routine they will be expected to follow at school.
- Parents speak extremely highly of the nursery, the manager, and staff. They praise the safe, inclusive and nurturing environment and the exemplary levels of teaching. Parents say the loving, dedicated and hardworking staff go above and beyond to provide children with an invaluable experience and a clear sense of belonging.
- Any additional funding the nursery receives is spent on training to support children to respect and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- The manager is inspirational. She provides excellent support to her staff for both their professional development and well-being. Staff work together very closely as a team. They gather the views of parents and reflect deeply on experiences for children. The manager uses this information to help plan continuous improvements.
- The nursery's curriculum is creative and progressive. Staff have a deep understanding of how children develop and learn. They have high expectations for all children and care passionately about equipping them with the skills they need for their lives ahead.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe. This includes a range of aspects of safeguarding. The manager and staff know what might concern them about a child in terms of safeguarding. They know who to contact and the processes to take to help keep children safe. Staff complete training in first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene. They have a strong understanding of how to keep children safe on a daily basis.

For example, staff teach children not to run inside and how to carefully climb stairs. They support children to throw balls and carry scissors safely.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2640831
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10288934
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Smith, Samantha
Registered person unique reference number	2640830
Telephone number	07838 340 921
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Preschool Nursery registered in 2021 and is located in East Boldon. The nursery employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and one at level 4. The nursery opens Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, from 9am until 3pm, and Wednesday and Friday, from 9am until 12 midday. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Julie Foers

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 discussed with the inspector how the nursery organises and plans the curriculum and experiences for children. The inspector viewed the inside and outside space used by the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact on children's learning. The manager and the inspector evaluated an activity together.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the setting's documents. This included evidence of training and suitability of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff. She took into account the views of parents.

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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