

# Inspection of Little Acorns Montessori Ltd

Berkshire Guide Centre, Windlesham Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG42 1GG

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Inspection date: 10 July 2023

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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|--------------------------|-------------|
| The quality of education | <b>Good</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| 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 | Inadequate |
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## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children arrive happy and quickly settle into their play and learning. They form close bonds with the staff who are kind and nurturing. The manager and staff plan an ambitious curriculum for children and adapt this to enable all children to participate in activities and make progress. Children are becoming increasingly independent. For example, they learn self-help skills, such as using tongs to serve their own food.

Children and babies benefit from frequent opportunities to play in the exciting outdoor areas. Pre-school children work together to make maps for their ship and ask their friends where to go to next. Younger children enjoy being physically active as they climb steps to the small slide and negotiate space when they push themselves along on ride-on toys. Children are kind and respect their friends. Staff model positive interactions and teach children to share and take turns. Children think critically and are beginning to solve problems. Staff introduce a sand timer to give their friends equal amounts of time with a toy they all want to use. This helps children's understanding of sharing.

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

- The manager has taken effective action to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. They have reviewed their risk assessments and ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed. The manager and staff work closely with parents and other professionals to help children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Individual target plans are put in place to ensure that gaps in learning are lessened, enabling children to make good progress.
- Manager and staff focus on improving children's communication and language skills well. Staff use lanyards with visual communication prompts to help children communicate. They provide a language-rich environment and narrate children's play. For example, staff use words such as 'roll' and 'squeeze' as children create with play dough.
- Staff promote children's physical development well. They give positive praise to children who are learning to walk as they take small steps. Children practise their coordination, as they carefully post objects into plastic bottles. Older children delight as they dig outside making tunnels, and using their imagination as to where the tunnel will take them.
- Staff say they are supported in their roles. There is a strong focus on upskilling staff. For example, the nursery gives opportunities for staff to gain childcare qualifications to enhance their knowledge. The manager reflects on what the nursery offers and completes reviews and peer observations on staff, giving them feedback to help them to improve their practice.
- Parents report that staff are 'amazing' and their children enjoy attending. They

say communication is good and that they are fully informed on what their children are learning about and their next steps in learning. Staff give guidance to parents on how to support their children, for example on potty training.

- The manager has high aspirations for the children and staff. Children have access to a stimulating and well-resourced environment. Staff observe and assess children's development well and plan a broad curriculum. However, children's play is frequently interrupted by changes in the routine. For example, children's choice of free play is sometimes interrupted by staff calling them to another activity or nappy change. This does not support children to engage in deep concentration consistently.
- Staff organise the learning environment in a way that motivates children to play and learn. Older children access their own resources. They show good levels of motivation in their self-chosen play. Younger children enjoy dressing up in role-play costumes and being imaginative.
- Overall, children make good progress. Staff are aware of what children know and can do. They plan activities that interest and motivate children. However, on some occasions, staff do not implement the curriculum intent specifically enough. This means that not all activities fully challenge children and build on their prior knowledge.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures that staff have a robust understanding of the signs and symptoms that indicate a child is at risk of harm. In addition, they know the procedure to follow should they have concerns about a colleague. Staff attend a range of training sessions to refresh and extend their knowledge. Staff know how to carry out risk assessments to identify and address any hazards to children. The manager follows safe recruitment processes and verifies that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff hold current paediatric first-aid certificates and food safety training to help keep children safe.

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

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

- support staff to implement the curriculum intent more sharply to build on what children already know and raise the quality of education to a higher level
- support staff to ensure that daily routines do not disrupt children's play and learning.

## Setting details

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|--|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | EY464703  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Bracknell Forest  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10283715  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                           | Childcare on non-domestic premises  |
| <b>Registers</b>                                   | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| <b>Day care type</b>                               | Full day care   |
| <b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b> | 1 to 4  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 75  |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 75  |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | Little Acorns Montessori Limited  |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP532743  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 01344 411928  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 28 February 2023  |

## Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Montessori Ltd registered in 2013. It is situated at the Guide Centre in Bracknell, Berkshire. The nursery follows the Montessori ethos. The nursery opens from 8am until 5pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 15 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, 13 hold relevant qualifications.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Claire Boparai

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the childminder and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working at the setting.

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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