

Inspection of Acorns Pre-School

The Old Police House, Little Market Place, Masham, North Yorkshire HG4 4DY

Inspection date: 6 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Inadequate
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Leadership and management	Inadequate
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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 inadequate

There are weaknesses in the leadership and management of this pre-school that compromise children's safety and welfare. Managers have not implemented effective systems to check the suitability of all staff who work with children. Despite weaknesses, children are happy to arrive and enter the pre-school confidently, ready to start their day. Staff are caring, kind and nurturing towards children. Children show that they feel secure, as they form relationships with staff and friendships with their peers from an early age.

Children make good progress from their starting points. The manager and staff plan a curriculum designed to help children build on what they already know and can do. Children enjoy using the varied range of resources and activities available and can make choices about their play. For example, children enjoy measuring and mixing ingredients to make chocolate truffles. Older children learn to name and trace letters of the alphabet.

Children behave well and understand the expectations for their behaviour. They know to line up and when to tidy their toys away. Staff act as positive role models to children in how they behave. For example, they speak to children in a calm, respectful and caring manner. Children are supported to resolve conflicts and show respect for one another.

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

- Managers fail to ensure that all staff who are caring for children are suitable to do so. Not all staff who work directly with children have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check in place. In addition, any changes to staff's personal circumstances are not monitored to see if there is an impact on their ongoing suitability. Consequently, children's safety and welfare are not consistently promoted.
- Supervision, coaching and mentoring of staff is not effective. Managers do not regularly monitor the quality of education delivered to children. This means that staff do not have opportunities to receive feedback about what they do well and what they could do better. Staff do not get enough support to help them improve their practice and highlight any training needs.
- Partnership with parents is a strength of the pre-school. Staff establish effective and trusting relationships with parents. They offer additional support to families, when needed. Parent feedback is highly complimentary about the support they and their children receive. They say how much progress their children have made since starting, especially in their confidence and social skills.
- Staff support children to be independent and confident. All children enjoy washing their hands and hanging their coats on their pegs when they arrive.

Children eagerly talk to authorised visitors about their pre-school and what they enjoy doing. For example, they explain how they write letters and post them in the role-play post office. Children learn the importance of independence and are confident to ask for help when they need it.

- Children's communication and language skills are well supported. Staff read familiar books enthusiastically and encourage children to interact with the story. Children join in during singing sessions and confidently sing together with their friends. Staff provide a language-rich environment, commenting on what children are doing and asking questions. This supports children to build their vocabulary and communication skills.
- Children are taken on regular outings. For example, they visit the local shops, church and library. Children also enjoy visits to the local market, where they try new foods, such as crabs and cherries. This supports children to learn about their local community.
- Children learn about healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to regularly wash their hands and are provided with nutritious meals and snacks each day. Children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise. Alongside an outdoor area, they also have the use of a local field to play games, explore and investigate.
- Children have opportunities to develop their imaginative skills. For example, they use wooden blocks to build a space rocket. Staff extend children's learning and encourage them to count down from five as their role-play rocket takes off. Staff provide resources to spark children's interest and imaginations, such as in the changing role-play areas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The manager does not ensure the continued suitability of the staff who are employed by the pre-school. Nevertheless, staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding and child protection issues. Staff understand what to do if an allegation is made against them or a colleague. Staff attend safeguarding training and understand the possible indicators of abuse. Important safeguarding information is displayed for all staff to access. Staff closely supervise children to ensure they are safe. Staff carry out regular risk assessments to ensure the areas children use are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
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obtain suitability checks for all staff who work directly with children, to protect children and keep them safe	14/07/2023
implement effective supervision arrangements to mentor and coach staff and highlight any training needs.	30/07/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY266330
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10280018
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	2 to 9
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Acorns Childcare Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP521549
Telephone number	01765 680203
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Acorns Pre-School registered in 2002 and is located in Masham, North Yorkshire. The setting employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 7.30am until 4.30pm. There is a holiday club that runs Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, from 9am until 3.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jennifer Cowton

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 pre-school.
- The inspector completed a learning walk with the manager through all areas of the premises used by the children.
- The manager carried out a joint observation with the inspector.
- Parents shared their views through verbal feedback. The inspector took account of these views.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a meeting with the manager and the nominated individual. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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