

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-School

Ingham Village Hall, The Green, Ingham, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN1 2XT

Inspection date: 17 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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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 develop close bonds with staff and feel confident to make choices from a wide range of resources. They become deeply engaged when exploring the well-organised environment, and they happily share their ideas with staff and others during play. Children develop a caring nature and imitate staff's kind behaviour. They fetch a chair for others to sit on, explaining it is so they do not get a 'sandy bottom' from the floor. Staff encourage children to love stories. Children enjoy using pictures in books to create a new story for their friends, starting with 'Once upon a time, there was an old man'. Children listen carefully to staff's instructions. They wait patiently in a line to wash their hands before lunch. Children know how staff expect them to behave. They safely move backwards, making 'beep' sounds when staff ask them to reverse. Children help staff to tidy away resources when they have finished with them. They remind others that they need to do the same.

Children are excited to learn more about the world around them. While bug hunting in the garden, they recall information they have already learned about the life cycle of ladybirds and caterpillars. Children independently find different tools to help them, including magnifying glasses. They respond to staff's encouragement and praise and persevere in digging and exploring. A child enthusiastically exclaims that they have found 'Superworm'.

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

- Since the last inspection, the committee and leadership team have taken steps to ensure all members of the committee and staffing team are suitable to fulfil their role. They have recorded these suitability checks and have ensured they have notified Ofsted of any changes.
- Staff have a good knowledge of their key children's learning and development needs, including those who may need additional support. They observe children throughout the day to assess what they know and can do. Staff identify what they need to focus on, identifying what their key children need to learn next. However, this information is not always shared fully across the staff team. At times during children's self-chosen play, other staff do not recognise how best to help some children with their learning. Therefore, sometimes children do not make the most progress they are capable of.
- Staff are skilled practitioners who plan learning opportunities that capture children's imagination. They clearly consider the important skills and knowledge that children need when planning activities. Staff encourage children to develop their hand muscles through building sandcastles in a tray of sand. They repeat key vocabulary and introduce new words for them to learn, such as naming the 'rake' they are using. Staff hold vibrant conversations with children about times they have visited places with sand. They pose carefully thought through

questions that challenge children's thinking.

- Overall, children develop friendships with others. They listen to each other and use words such as 'please' and 'thank you' when talking to others. Children hold their friends' hands when navigating outside and share toys with staff's support. However, staff do not always support children to develop their emotional resilience. At times, when children have conflicts with others, staff do not help them to identify how to resolve these themselves.
- The manager works alongside staff daily, observing and providing feedback on their practice to have a positive impact on teaching. She provides continual training for all staff, both in the setting and externally, including how to support children effectively with their communication and language.
- Staff mainly support children to try things for themselves, such as blowing their nose and putting the tissue in the bin. They help children to use cutlery to chop their own fruit and encourage them to try to open their own food packaging during snack time. However, at times, the way that staff organise transitions between activities does not fully support all children's development. Some children, who have independently put their coats and shoes on to go outside, spend time unoccupied waiting for others. Staff then rush some children who may need further support.
- Parents and carers comment that their children are inspired by the 'community focused' setting and develop their confidence. Parents feel fully included in their children's experiences and state that their children have 'come on leaps and bounds' because of staff's support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff ensure that the environment is safe for children to play. Thorough arrival procedures are in place, including supervising all doors and checking visitors' identification. Staff assess risks in the environment and take all necessary steps to minimise potential hazards. Leaders and staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They can identify the signs and symptoms that children may be at risk of harm. They know how and when to record, monitor and report their concerns to child protection professionals. Staff work alongside other professionals to support families when needed. Leaders check the initial, and ongoing, suitability of staff and members of the committee.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the sharing of information between children's key person and other staff so that children's learning and development are further supported during play

- provide children with further support to resolve conflict for themselves
- improve the organisation of daily routines to minimise the time children spend unoccupied or rushed.

Setting details

Unique reference number	253462
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10284103
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 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	29
Name of registered person	Little Acorns Pre-School Playgroup (Ingham) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904015
Telephone number	01522 730 868
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2023

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-School registered in 1992 and is situated in Ingham, Lincolnshire. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 4, two hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens during school term time. Sessions are from 7.30am until 11.30am and from 3.25pm until 5.30pm on Monday and Tuesday, and from 7.30am until 5.30pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lora Teague

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a learning walk together, discussing the learning intention for children and how the environment is arranged.
- The manager and the inspector observed and evaluated a section of time.
- The inspector observed staff and children of all ages through the pre-school.
- The inspector held discussions with staff regularly during the inspection.
- Parents' and carers' views were taken into consideration.
- A sample of documents were reviewed, including paediatric first-aid certificates, suitability checks, and safeguarding policies and procedures.

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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