

# Inspection of Little Acorns Nursery

36 Kneesworth Street, Royston SG8 5AB

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Inspection date: 20 July 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

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

### **The provision is good**

Children are happy and demonstrate strong friendships within the group. They share resources and encourage their friends to join in with them. When balancing along a narrow path, children call for their friends to 'Look, follow me!', sharing their experiences. Children learn about a range of emotions and talk regularly about how they are feeling. They are taught about the impact of their actions and children recognise what 'sad' and 'happy' might feel like to themselves and others.

Children learn a range of physical skills while at the setting. They learn to skilfully balance on scooters and ride in toy cars. They use a range of equipment, including balls for throwing, catching and kicking. Older children learn to extend their basic skills by negotiating space and speed when riding downhill.

Children make good progress and staff support children's language skills. They enjoy joining in with a range of singing, rhyming, and reading. Children listen carefully to a range of stories and are engaged in their learning. They ask questions and talk about the pictures they can see. Some share special events from home and they learn new vocabulary. Children demonstrate a love of reading and early learning.

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

- The setting focuses their curriculum on the three prime areas of learning with a primary focus on communication and language development. In each room there are clear targets for children to work towards, and staff plan meaningful activities based on children's interests and what they already know and can do. This means children are prepared for their next stage of learning. The curriculum is sequenced throughout and when children reach the pre-school room staff focus on school readiness, preparing children for school.
- Staff skilfully introduce new vocabulary. They plan exciting activities that gain children's attention. For example, they use the lights in the sensory room to extend children's knowledge of colours. Children are also taught basic sign language to support their communication development. Children demonstrate their understanding of these signs by using them when communicating with adults.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given extra support throughout their time at the setting. Through regular and ongoing observations and tracking, staff recognise when children maybe show a delay in their development and seek advice from the setting's special needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo). Children receive one-to-one support, and the SENDCo plans appropriate targets for each child to support their continuous development. However, key persons for children with SEND do not always have

all relevant information to be able to extend learning opportunities further.

- Staff plan mathematical activities for children throughout the day and they introduce new mathematical language. When blowing bubbles, children learn the words 'tiny', 'little' and 'bigger'. When children are building with magnetic shapes, they join them together and staff introduce 3D shapes to their vocabulary, such as 'pyramid', extending children's mathematical learning.
- The setting supports children's transitions to school. Staff teach children important skills to help them in their next stage of learning. School teachers are invited into the setting to meet children and discuss their development. However, when children transition within the setting, parents do not always receive all relevant information regarding these changes and therefore some families do not feel as supported throughout the transition process compared to other events.
- Staff attend regular training and the manager uses supervision meetings to review individual training needs. The management team offer support for staff who are completing ongoing training, such as apprenticeships and degree level courses. The setting also provides staff with well-being support and guidance, and there is a trained member of staff who offers mental health sessions to all staff when needed. Staff report on excellent support from the management team and discuss how any minor worries that are reported by staff are dealt with quickly and professionally. Therefore, morale at the setting is high and staff enjoy working as a team.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and know how to protect young children from harm. They attend regular training and have a good understanding of wider safeguarding concerns. They can recognise signs when children are being exposed to extremist views, and know how to report this to the designated safeguarding lead. Staff are confident to report concerns about another member of staff and concerns about management and follow the whistle-blowing procedure in place. Contact details for the local safeguarding designated officer are displayed throughout the setting for staff to refer to if needed.

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

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

- share more information to ensure that key staff know how to offer the very best support to children with SEND
- strengthen parent partnerships by providing further information and support regarding children's transitions within the setting.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2678543
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10303576
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	52
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	46
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Acorns Royston Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2603027
<b>Telephone number</b>	07769646072
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Nursery registered in March 2022. The nursery is located in Royston, Hertfordshire. They operate all year round, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm. The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 10 have a relevant level 3 qualification and the manager holds early years professional status. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Vikki Reynolds

## 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 setting.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff 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.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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