

Inspection of Little Acorns (Thornbury)

Gillingstool, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2EG

Inspection date: 21 September 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 receive a warm and inviting welcome from staff as they arrive at nursery. They settle quickly and demonstrate that they feel happy and secure. Children develop secure bonds with the staff who care for them. Babies cuddle into staff for comfort, and older children eagerly involve staff in their play.

Leaders and staff have a clear vision of what they want children to learn and achieve. They provide an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum to build on children's skills and knowledge, and they focus on what they want children to learn. For instance, throughout the nursery, children's language and communication skills are placed as a high priority. The youngest children learn to use signs alongside their developing language to enable them to communicate their needs. Older children learn more complex language, such as what the word 'prediction' means. Children eagerly talk about their predictions during group activities, where they take turns predicting what happens when colours are mixed.

Children benefit from consistent routines and boundaries. Therefore, they quickly learn the behavioural expectations, such as being responsible for their play environment and tidying away the toys when they have finished with them. Children are kind and develop good social skills, and they learn to manage their feelings and behaviour well.

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

- The new manager and management team provide strong and effective leadership for the staff. They have used the feedback from the last inspection to ensure that all staff receive the support and guidance that they need to raise the quality of the nursery. Staff benefit from the targeted training and the support in place. They speak with enthusiasm about the training that is available to them and describe how they implement what they have learned. For instance, staff have been developing their key-person systems and feel that the recent training they have had has helped to raise their confidence with this.
- Staff know the children well, and they regularly monitor children's progress and assess their development accurately. This helps them to swiftly identify where children may need extra help with their learning. Staff provide a good range of support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This involves more targeted support for children and close partnership working with parents. Staff refer to other professionals so that children receive the help and support that they need to make better progress.
- Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the curriculum and how activities are being provided to support children's learning. Children take part in and benefit from activities across all areas of learning. For example, staff share stories about

feelings to help children understand their emotions. Younger children explore how shapes can fit together to make pictures, and older children enjoy exploring numbers and counting. However, at times, some staff do not consider how they can offer children more challenge in their learning during their delivery of some of these activities.

- Staff promote healthy lifestyles and support children to learn what it is to be healthy. For instance, during mealtimes, children confidently talk about needing to have five portions of fruit or vegetables daily. Staff support this well as they talk to children about what ingredients are in their lunch, and children eagerly look to see which of the ingredients they can find.
- Parents say that they are happy with the nursery and feel that their children are well cared for and receive good support with their development. Parents report that staff help their children to feel secure as they transition to different age groups within the nursery. Parents say that they have lots of communication with the staff caring for their children and their children's key person.
- Leaders have started to introduce some resources into the nursery to reflect diversity. However, they do not consider how they can celebrate the diverse lives of the children attending the nursery and use these opportunities to teach children about the diverse lives of people close to them. This would help children learn about the wider world in a more age-appropriate way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe. Leaders ensure that staff understand the procedures in place to act on and report any concerns they have about children's welfare. Staff are fully aware of the signs and indicators that could mean a child is at risk of harm or abuse. Staff carry out risk assessments and deploy themselves well to closely supervise children in the nursery.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to build on good teaching to consistently challenge children further and help them make even better progress
- use the opportunities that arise to teach children about different cultures and learn about other people's lives, to support their understanding of the world further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY414936
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10291164
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	115
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Little Acorns (South West) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP904196
Telephone number	01454 418788
Date of previous inspection	4 April 2023

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns (Thornbury) registered in 2010. It is located in Thornbury, South Gloucestershire, and it is part of the Just Childcare chain of nurseries. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm, on weekdays throughout the year, with the exception of bank holidays and three further days at Christmas. There are 20 members of staff working with the children. One member of staff holds a qualification at level 6, one at level 5, one at level 4 and seven staff hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3. One staff member holds a relevant qualification at level 2, and the other staff are unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Nicolson

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of care and education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's well-being and learning.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector talked to staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors spoke with the manager and representatives from the management team, looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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