

Inspection of Thorn Grove Little Acorns Limited

Thorn Grove Primary School, Thorn Grove, Bishops Stortford CM23 5LD

Inspection date: 17 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
----------------------------------------------	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff have high expectations of children to help broaden their vocabulary. They teach new words in this language-rich environment. For example, during story time, children hear the words 'shrink' and 'locomotive' and explore their meaning with staff. Children get excited as they say that they have learned a 'new big word'.

Staff provide a range of activities to promote children's physical skills. During a dance and movement session, children learn to move their bodies in a range of ways. They use ribbons to stretch up high and down low. Children explore the changes to their bodies during exercise as they explore why they feel hot after moving around, which deepens their understanding. Children learn to follow instructions as they march like 'scary dinosaurs'. Staff are very enthusiastic and provide great encouragement and excitement to children. Children laugh as they stomp around with each other.

Children learn good social skills through positive role modelling from staff. They share well and enjoy playing and sharing stories together. Staff model taking turns and how to respect each other. They praise 'good waiting' and how to give each other personal space during larger-group activities. They build towers together and laugh as they fall down. Children learn to add 'one more', which enhances their mathematical skills. They have formed great relationships with staff and go to them if they want a story, need help or a cuddle, or would like to play with them.

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

- Children take the setting's teddy 'Jasper the Frog' on adventures outside the pre-school. Children share with their peers what Jasper has been doing, which develops their confidence. This has had a positive impact on children's communication and social skills.
- Staff use visual prompts to help children's understanding. For example, they use the visual timetable to prepare children for what is happening next, such as nappy changing time. Children then happily go to have their nappy changed. This particularly helps children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.
- Staff help children to be ready for school. They help children to learn self-regulation and social skills through discussing feelings and practising taking turns with their peers. Children have good independence skills as they wash their hands and look in the mirror to wash their faces before snack. However, the structured routines limit children's opportunities to play freely. Additionally, some staff do not always follow children's emerging interests. For example, staff discourage children when they want to mix the sand with water, which has an impact on children's ability to explore and investigate.

- Staff work closely with families to create a child-centred settling-in process that is adapted to meet their needs, until they feel secure in the setting. They send home a welcome pack for parents to share with their children that includes photos of the room and staff and details of their routines, so children can prepare for life in the pre-school setting. This has had a positive impact on children, as they settle quickly and say to staff 'you're in my book'.
- Staff work with the parents of children who are entitled to early years pupil premium funding to identify children's needs and bridge any gaps in learning.
- Parents say that the dedicated and passionate staff put love and effort into everything that they do. They say that staff create special memories for the children in this special and unique setting. Staff communicate well with parents regarding what their children are learning and share tips on how to continue their learning at home. Staff provide parents with advice, for example, about behaviour management at home.
- Staff say that they feel supported by the manager. The manager reviews staff's practice and supports their well-being. Staff are offered a range of training to develop their professional development. Staff have regular supervision meetings with management to share their goals for the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of how to keep children safe. They understand the signs and symptoms of abuse, including neglect and physical abuse, and how to report any concerns. Management refresh staff's knowledge about safeguarding through staff and supervision meetings. Staff understand safeguarding concerns, such as domestic abuse, honour based abuse, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation. Staff understand the procedure that they would follow if they had a concern about a member of staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to understand and review the use of daily routines to ensure that children have more opportunities to build on their own learning and interests.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY495142
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10301007
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Thorn Grove Little Acorns Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP906697
Telephone number	01279653233
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Thorn Grove Little Acorns Limited registered in 2015. The provider employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and five at level 3. The setting opens from Monday to Friday, 8am until 3.30pm, during school term time. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stef Montgomery

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 provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together to discuss the areas of learning, their curriculum, and what they want children to learn inside and outside.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Children spoke about what they were doing at the setting.
- Parents spoke to the inspector, who took account of their views of the setting.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the suitability records and first-aid certificates of staff members.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023