

Inspection of Little Acorns Nursery and Preschool

382 London Road, Leicester, Leicester City LE2 2PN

Inspection date: 1 November 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children confidently build on what they know and can do, as staff support them with opportunities to practise their developing social skills. For example, younger babies sit close to staff and watch as they enthusiastically play hide and seek with scarves and props. Staff encourage babies to join in and to feel the different textures of the scarves as they pull them out of a box. Older babies develop social skills as they confidently sit and join in the actions of familiar songs with others. Older children are supported to develop physical skills as they join in parachute games. They listen to staff's instructions and learn to wait for their turn. Children laugh together as they balance, wobble and move from side to side while holding onto the parachute. Staff teach children the skills they need to make friends and to get along well with others.

Children learn about the world around them and develop their small-muscle skills. Staff focus on children's developing interests to engage them in activities. For example, children notice the wind is blowing the leaves off the trees, and staff explain that a storm is coming. Children join in conversations with staff about what a storm is and what else might get blown about in the wind. Staff support children in researching how to make a kite. Children follow staff instructions as they learn to fold paper into triangle shapes for their kites. Children learn to hold a hole puncher to make holes for the strings. Children happily run around the garden, watching their kites blow up and down in the wind.

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

- Staff plan a varied curriculum. For example, staff teach younger children to count animals in the water. Older children learn mathematical language, as staff encourage them to add one more as they play games. They learn about different sizes as staff encourage them to take little, tiny and big steps as they join games in the garden, taking steps towards a pretend wolf.
- Staff support children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to develop communication and language skills. For example, staff sing with children and use sign language to help babies understand first words. Staff work closely with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to help support children who need extra help. Older children listen intently to stories and develop their communication skills as they act out stories using props, such as sticks and bricks, to build a house.
- Staff support children as they practise their small-muscle skills and strengthen their hands before they learn to write. For example, toddlers slot ramps and pegs into position and use their fingers to roll pine cones down the ramps. Older children practise squeezing and aiming bottles as they squirt paint and water down ramps in the garden.

- Staff plan activities to support children with their emotional development. For example, staff use mirrors and props to encourage children to recognise and talk about expressions and different feelings. However, staff do not consistently adapt activities to engage children of different abilities. As a result, some children lose interest and do not always benefit from purposeful play and learning.
- Staff teach children how to keep healthy and become independent, ready for when they move on to school. Older children practise putting on their coats and shoes. Staff remind toddlers to roll their sleeves up before washing their hands, and staff explain why it is important to keep their hands clean.
- Staff support children's understanding of behaviour expectations. For example, they remind children to use 'kind hands' and encourage them to share, take turns and work together. Staff provide additional targeted support for children who need extra help. Children confidently listen and follow instructions to help tidy away.
- Parents speak of the warm family feel of the nursery. They state that staff help their children with potty training and appreciate the healthy meals they provide. However, staff do not always share information with parents about their child's learning or what is expected of their children when they eventually move to school.
- Leaders provide support for staff through regular supervision and training to help them improve their practice. They plan staff meetings and share information to keep staff up to date. Leaders enhance the environment to help support children's learning. Staff state that they feel supported by the leaders and managers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff attend regular training to help them understand their duties in relation to safeguarding. They know the signs and symptoms which suggest a child is at risk of harm. Staff know the reporting procedures they should follow if they are concerned about a child's safety. They understand what to do if they have a concern about a colleague's conduct. Staff receive appropriate first-aid training so they can respond in the event of an accident or medical emergency. They complete regular risk assessments and are vigilant in their supervision of children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the information shared with parents, so that they are clear about the progress their children are making and what they need to learn next
- strengthen staff's planning of activities to ensure all children are fully engaged

and supported to join in.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2637831
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10295703
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	93
Name of registered person	The Childcare Corporation Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902737
Telephone number	0116 270 5086
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Nursery and Preschool registered in 2021 and is situated in Leicester. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery employs 18 childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Caroline Winterton

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 the evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises with the manager.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to the staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and the children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector 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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