

# Inspection of Acorns Pre-School

The Old Police House, Little Market Place, Masham, North Yorkshire HG4 4DY

---

Inspection date: 13 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 Inadequate

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

### **The provision is good**

Children are happy to attend the pre-school. They form good relationships with staff and their peers. Staff offer children excellent settling-in procedures. They arrange the number of initial visits around each child's individual needs. As a result, even the newest children are very settled and secure in the pre-school. Staff know all children well and plan a curriculum around children's next steps for learning that also takes account of their interests. As a result, children are always fully engaged in and enjoy the learning experiences that are available. The curriculum is well implemented, and children make good progress in most areas of their learning. However, staff do not plan as effectively for children's literacy skills.

Staff have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. Children are well behaved. Staff promote lots of fun and laughter during the day. Children giggle when staff ask questions around whether feet, with different colour socks, belong to the same person. Staff-to-child ratios are often above minimum recommendations. This results in children receiving very good adult support and attention. Children who require additional support have designated one-to-one and small-group times with their key person throughout the week. This helps children to make good progress, particularly in relation to their language skills.

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

- Staff place a strong focus on promoting children's language and communication skills and their personal, social and emotional development. Children enjoy small- and large-group activities, such as circle-time discussions and lots of singing and story times. However, staff do not consistently support children to choose books independently and do not present books in an inviting manner to encourage children's interest.
- Staff ensure that mealtimes and snack times are sociable occasions. They use these times effectively to extend children's learning about being healthy and caring for their bodies and their teeth. Children enjoy playing in the role-play area, pretending to be dentists. They also enthusiastically engage in other activities that help them to learn about oral hygiene. Children know what food and drinks are good or bad for their teeth and for their overall health.
- Staff help children to learn about the world around them. Children discuss the weather and know how this impacts on what they need to wear to play outdoors. Staff also promote children's independence throughout the daily routine. For instance, children dress themselves in appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.
- Children's early mathematics skills are well promoted by staff. When choosing which boots to wear, children talk about size, numbers and the next size up or down. They also compare the soles of their boots with the sole of their feet.

- Staff ensure that they constantly promote children's large physical skills and fine motor skills with regular and different activities. For example, children build large constructions outdoors and use small magnetic sticks indoors, to make shapes and patterns. They also solve problems, such as how to make sure that the windows and doors in their constructions open and close.
- Although children are well behaved, staff also help them to learn about fairness, waiting and turn taking. They use a timer effectively so that children have a visual indicator that also helps them to learn about time. Children follow the rules in the pre-school well and tidy away together when requested.
- The pre-school works well in partnership with other professionals and settings. For example, speech and language therapists visit the pre-school to advise staff on how to support some children further. Staff also work closely with a local primary school and help children with their transitions on to school.
- Staff work well in partnership with parents and carers. However, the procedures for keeping parents informed about what children are learning and how they might support their child's learning at home are inconsistent.
- Leaders have ensured relevant improvements since the last inspection. They have improved the procedure and timeliness for obtaining suitability checks for all staff who work directly with children and relevant records are available for inspection. They now have effective and half-termly supervision procedures in place for staff. There is also a mentoring support programme for new staff. As a result, all staff feel well supported in their role.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection issues. They keep their knowledge up to date by completing regular online training and development courses. Staff are fully aware of different aspects that can affect a child's life and of how to put appropriate procedures in place to safeguard children. Since the last inspection, staff have also completed additional training around food hygiene, inclusion and health and safety. The premises and outdoor play area are safe and secure. Children also learn about personal safety and wear high-visibility clothing when on walks in the local community.

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

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

- promote children's interest in choosing books independently, to support their early literacy skills further
- implement the procedure for informing parents about their child's development and progress and how they might extend their child's learning at home more consistently.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY266330
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10305237
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 9
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	23
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Acorns Childcare Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP521549
<b>Telephone number</b>	01765 689111
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 July 2023

## Information about this early years setting

Acorns Pre-School registered in 2002 and is located in Masham, North Yorkshire. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 7.30am to 4.30pm. Outside of term time, there is a holiday club that runs from 7.30am to 4.30pm, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Elaine McDonnell

## 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 pre-school.
- The inspector viewed the pre-school and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises and outdoor play area.
- The manager talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at the pre-school.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with registered individual about the leadership and management of the pre-school.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity.
- The inspector spoke to several 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 pre-school.

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023