

# Inspection of Acorn Childcare Centre

MALCOLM SARGENT PRIMARY SCHOOL, Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SR

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Inspection date: 22 March 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children's voices are heard and respected in this inviting nursery. For example, in the toddler room, children are asked to vote for which book they want staff to read to them. In the baby room, when children point to paints, staff provide them with craft activities to explore these. Staff support children to understand routines, including those children who speak English as an additional language. For example, they use images, such as photos of outside and nappies, to help children know what is happening next.

Children show that they thoroughly enjoy playing in the garden. They ask staff to use chalk to draw around their bodies and they draw images themselves, showing their early literacy skills. Staff supervise children closely when they ride on balance bikes and toys, removing any broken ones, to help promote their safety. In the toddler room, children are physically active when they copy staff as they wave scarves and move their bodies to music. Staff ask them to wave their scarves up high and down low, helping children to begin to understand language that describes position.

Children are happy to help staff. For example, in the toddler room, they follow staff to carry wooden blocks into the garden. Children in the pre-school room receive stickers from staff to praise them for helping to tidy away toys, contributing to raising their self-esteem.

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

- Since the last inspection, the management team have made changes to the outdoor areas that all children access. This is to provide them with opportunities to play outdoors in all weathers and to help them learn about nature.
- The manager and staff focus the curriculum on promoting children's interests and using these to extend and build on children's learning. For example, staff support children to use scissors to cut tape so they can stick craft items to boxes to make pretend robots. Children show a sense of achievement when they snip the tape, smiling at staff.
- The management team and staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well. They work closely with other professionals to provide equipment to meet children's developing needs. The manager uses additional funding that some children receive effectively. For example, this includes purchasing equipment to help children from becoming overwhelmed with noises.
- The management team and staff work closely with the host school. This partnership working helps to prepare children emotionally for their move on to school. For instance, teachers are invited to read stories to children. Staff take

children to use the school's facilities.

- Children learn skills in preparation for their move on to school, such as to be independent. For example, in the baby room, staff ask children to serve themselves cereal at breakfast time. In the toddler room, staff encourage children to use knives and forks to eat their lunch. In the pre-school room, children lay their coats on the floor and flick them over their heads, managing to put these on by themselves.
- Overall, staff support children's behaviour in the nursery well. Children listen and follow staff's instructions, such as when it is time to tidy away toys in the toddler room. However, occasionally in the pre-school room, staff are not consistent in helping children to understand all of the rules and boundaries that are in place. For example, children tell visitors that they wear a band when they want to play in the garden. However, staff do not ensure all children wear a band, which may be confusing for them.
- Staff support children to make connections between their home and the nursery. For example, in the toddler room they are invited to take home 'Freddy the bear' and his bag of books. This is to encourage parents to read to their children at home and to take photos of their children with the bear. Children share these photos with their friends during group times, helping to develop their confidence and speaking skills.
- Overall, staff help children to develop their communication skills well. However, occasionally in the baby room, staff do not adapt their interactions to support children's early communication skills. For example, occasionally, they do not use care routines to communicate with children. Sometimes, they ask children questions they are unable to answer.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

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

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

- support staff in the pre-school room to help children understand all of the rules and boundaries that are in place
- help staff to strengthen their interactions with children in the baby room to support their early communication skills.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY466379
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10316760
<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>	0 to 11
<b>Total number of places</b>	92
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	736
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Acorn Childcare Centre Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP532860
<b>Telephone number</b>	01780766493
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Acorn Childcare Centre registered in 2013. It is situated in the grounds of Malcolm Sargent Primary School, Stamford, Lincolnshire and is independently run from the school. The nursery employs 39 members of childcare staff. Of these, 24 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Hayley Ruane

## 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 the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed how the manager implements the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She reviewed relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents shared their views on the nursery with the inspector.

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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