

Inspection of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Rushbury Primary School, Rushbury, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 7EB

Inspection date:

23 September 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff provide a wonderfully warm and cheerful welcome as children and parents arrive at this small, family-focused nursery. Children eagerly find their name tags and place belongings on their pegs. They begin to recognise their names and understand that print carries meaning. This fosters children's security, independence and confidence, so they are enabled to engage in purposeful activity from the start of the day.

The well-resourced environment and thoughtfully provided play activities promote independence and consistently high levels of engagement. Staff observe and support children without interrupting their play. For example, when children are engrossed in a building activity, staff offer help when a structure collapses. They respond to children's observations and link learning to real life, such as when they describe the structure as looking like 'The Shard'. Other children confidently count to 20, identify two-dimensional shapes and problem solve by combining two triangles to make a square. This supports children's confidence, independence and early mathematical understanding.

Staff are aware that behaviour reflects children's developmental stages. They set simple, appropriate expectations, such as using 'kind hands', and model these consistently. Gentle reminders help children to make positive choices. Children are polite and considerate. They demonstrate exceptional behaviour from a very young age.

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

- Staff promote language and communication exceptionally well, listening carefully to children and using comments about home life to spark meaningful discussions. Effective questions, such as 'Why was Daddy out baling this morning?' encourages confident, detailed responses. When children are getting changed, staff introduce and model vocabulary associated with clothing, such as 'gilet' helping children become confident communicators with a broad vocabulary.
- The nursery benefits enormously from its rural location. Staff ensure daily access to opportunities, including forest school, further enrich learning through everyday moments, such as comparing leaves to identify tree species and observing wildlife. Children notice familiar and new objects, such as conkers and fir cones, and confidently discuss squirrels living in trees and storing acorns. These experiences mean that children develop curiosity and a growing understanding of the natural world.
- Staff promote children's physical development superbly through a range of engaging activities. Children confidently explore the outdoor environment, using

rope swings and climbing tyres. They delight in balancing on bouncy beams and becoming 'speckled frogs' while singing counting rhymes. Peg board activities strengthen hand–eye coordination, fine motor skills and colour recognition, while providing opportunities to explore patterns and numbers.

- Staff promote children's wider personal development by giving them responsibilities, such as the 'star helper' role. They organise regular trips in the local community and further afield, to the library, care home and museums. Staff use activities such as making Chinese New Year dragons, to raise children's awareness of other cultures. This helps children to develop a growing sense of their place in the local community and an understanding of the wider world.
- Staff promote positive behaviour and attitudes through well-embedded routines. Children are invited to take turns to choose music to tidy up to each week. Staff encourage all children to take responsibility for helping, which they do eagerly. Staff model sharing and turn-taking, supporting children to resolve any minor disagreements. They notice and praise collaborative language, such as 'We are sharing this together.' Children develop cooperation and consideration for others, and a strong sense of responsibility.
- Leadership is strong. Managers drive improvement through ambitious vision and investment in staff training. Staff feel valued, confident and are highly skilled. Partnerships with parents are superb. Families describe the nursery as warm, friendly and family like, where staff know each child as an individual. They note that children settle quickly and that staff are attentive, keeping them well informed. This enables all children to truly thrive in a nurturing, ambitious and inclusive environment, where their individual needs are exceptionally well met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Setting details

Unique reference number	224129
Local authority	Shropshire Council
Inspection number	10410510
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	10
Number of children on roll	11
Name of registered person	Little Acorns of Rushbury Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523085
Telephone number	01694771677
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2020

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns of Rushbury registered in 1999 and is based on the site of Rushbury C of E Primary School in Shropshire. The nursery employs three members of childcare staff. All staff hold suitable qualifications. Of these, two hold level 6 qualifications, one holds a level 5 qualification, and one holds a level 3 qualification. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Dukes

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Families shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- 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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