

Inspection of Little Acorns Day Nursery (Springfield)

Throstlenest Avenue, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 7AS

Inspection date:

2 May 2025

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Leaders have a clear vision to provide good-quality care and education, however, the quality of staff interactions and teaching is variable. Leaders and staff create a curriculum for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, weaknesses in the effective deployment of staff, particularly for older children, mean that on occasion, some children are not supported well enough to make consistently good progress.

Leaders are reflective and have made some changes to the organisation of the nursery. They acknowledge the journey they are on to improve the provision. However, at times leaders lack oversight, with particular regard to ensuring that staff are following the policies and procedures for carrying out and recording risk assessments. Consequently, risk assessments are not always informing staff practice.

Staff welcome children with a smile as they enter the nursery. Children confidently wave goodbye to their parents. They form positive bonds with their key person and other staff and show they feel safe and secure in their environment. Children develop skills to support their independence. For instance, they hang up their belongings on their coat peg. This also supports children's sense of belonging.

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

- Leaders do not always ensure that staff are deployed effectively. This means that some children are not supported well during some parts of the day. For example, at times, staff have their attention drawn to more confident children, meaning quieter children receive less quality interaction. As a result, some children do not engage in meaningful learning experiences as staff become distracted and do not focus their attention to meet all children's learning needs.
- Leaders have some systems in place to monitor risk assessments, however, these are not always effective. For example, staff do not always identify and remove all hazards and risks in the environment. Therefore, at times children's safety is compromised. However, staff do complete visual safety checks of both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. This reduces the impact on children.
- Staff have a good knowledge of their key children's learning and development needs, especially for children with SEND. However, staff interactions with children are not always effective in meeting children's individual needs. Not all staff understand how to promote children's learning through different experiences. This does not support children to engage in their learning and to make consistent progress.
- Leaders ensure staff access training to support their professional development,

such as recent SEND training. They ensure mandatory training, such as safeguarding and paediatric first aid, is updated regularly. All staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe.

- Children enjoy listening to stories and singing songs, which helps to develop their communication skills. Children enjoy learning about a 'book of the week'. They also select books to look at independently, turning the pages one by one and looking at the pictures with interest. This begins to increase children's love for reading.
- There is an effective key-person system in place. Staff form strong attachments and bonds with children. Children enjoy daily fresh air and outdoor play. Hygiene routines are embedded into practice. Children know to wash their hands before mealtimes and after coming in from outside. Staff encourage independence and praise hard work. This supports the children's overall good health and well-being.
- Staff build partnerships with parents and external professionals that work with children. They keep parents informed of their children's progress and invite them into the setting for key events to celebrate children's achievements. Staff share information with parents and make suggestions for how to support children's learning at home. As a result, parents can support learning at home.
- Staff support children's mathematical skills throughout the nursery. For example, younger children repeat numbers they hear in songs, as older children accurately count the spots on the ladybirds. This enables children to use mathematical language in their play confidently.

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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
review and improve the deployment of staff to ensure that children's learning needs are met more consistently across all rooms in the nursery	23/05/2025
ensure risk assessments are robust and effective at identifying and minimising potential risk to children.	23/05/2025

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

- continue to support staff to meet the individual needs of the children and support their engagement.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2519737
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10390128
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Mercer, Annette
Registered person unique reference number	RP907929
Telephone number	01942 565029
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2022

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Day Nursey (Springfield) registered in 2019 and is situated in Wigan. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The centre employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 6, four hold qualifications at level 3. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jason Holmes

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 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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