

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-school

Brancliffe Lane, Shireoaks, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 8PW

Inspection date:

13 May 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are extremely happy and settled. Staff are highly responsive and skilfully adapt children's play activities to ensure each child's individual learning needs are fully met. As a result, even the youngest children are highly motivated and eager to take part in the well-considered activities which staff have provided. Staff know exactly when to interact with children to enhance their learning and to teach them new skills. For example, children are full of wonder as they learn to use foam rocket launchers. Staff explain to children how to use their foot to push down the pedal, which in turn will push air into the pipe and launch the rocket. Children excitedly share this new information with their friends. Staff help children safely aim the rockets and children exclaim 'wow' as their rockets fly in the air. This helps children to learn cause and effect.

Children behave exceptionally well. Staff are excellent role models and interact with kindness, care and respect. This includes encouraging children to notice when others need help. For example, when helping staff tidy away outdoor resources, children notice that some children are struggling to brush the sand off their feet. Children gently sit their friends down, helping them brush the sand away and they help them put their socks and shoes back on. Staff thank children for their kindness which sees children beam with pride.

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

- Managers and staff are dedicated to their roles, working tirelessly to provide children with the very best care and education. Staff skilfully adapt activities, ensuring all children are fully included. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, receive exceptional support. Staff are proactive, working closely with children, parents and other professionals to ensure that additional funding is best spent to help children thrive. This sees children make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Staff expertly use assessment and observation to identify and support each child's next steps. Children eagerly take part in planned small-group times which sharply focus on the skills each child is developing. Staff are fully aware of each child's level of ability and groups are adapted accordingly. For example, to support early mathematics, children throw dice and are helped to count the dots. Other children work with staff to undertake simple addition and subtraction problems. This ensures each child consistently builds on what they already know and can do.
- Staff organise activities that help children develop their independence skills. The environment is carefully planned, enabling children to make decisions to extend their play. Children prepare snack, pour their own milk and enthusiastically chop

fruit. Staff model how to use knives safely, which children readily copy. Children know the routine well. They freely put their left-over fruit in the bin and take turns to wash their dirty plates in the sink. This encourages children to do as much for themselves as possible.

- Staff provide an abundance of activities to help develop children's small-muscle skills. This supports their readiness for early writing. Children enthusiastically use scissors to cut up herbs to mix into their potions. Staff gently help children reposition their fingers, helping them to use scissors more effectively. Children enjoy creative activities which staff provide access to around the setting. Some children work at easels dipping chunky brushes into paint pots to paint lines and swirls onto paper, while other children chose finer brushes and use water colour palettes to paint their pictures. This enables all children to fully engage and join in with activities.
- Children's speech and language skills are extremely well supported. They benefit from being immersed in a language-rich environment, and children are becoming confident communicators who are developing excellent speech and language skills. Staff use effective strategies, such as repeating words clearly, correcting common mispronunciations and they use new words during children's play. In addition, staff use excellent questioning skills to prompt children's thinking.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care their children receive. They say their children have flourished since attending the setting, and have developed their communication, confidence and socialisation skills. Parents say their children are ready for the next stage in their education.

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	253063
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10388236
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	26
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Little Acorns, Shireoaks Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP901851
Telephone number	01909 506 666
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-school is based in Worksop, Nottinghamshire. It registered in 1984. The pre-school employs ten members of childcare staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions run from 8.30am to 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Susan Hyatt

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- 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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