

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-School

Little Acorns Pre-school, Kingsnorth Recreation Centre, Field View, Kingsnorth,
Ashford TN23 3NZ

Inspection date: 4 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive at this inviting and welcoming nursery. They separate from their parents well and show enthusiasm as they enter and choose from a variety of engaging activities. Staff build strong relationships with the children they care for. For example, they encourage children to say good morning to each other. They show children the effect that their words and actions can have on one another. They model how to be kind and considerate. This supports children to learn to share, take turns and begin to identify how others may be feeling.

Staff provide activities that consider interesting themes and topics. For example, they set up activities to explore planets and link these to various aspects of learning. Children are creative with collage materials and learn to cut and join these to their paper. In addition, they draw rockets and are encouraged to copy the numerals to count backwards from 10. The curriculum is ambitious and has a strong focus on literacy. For example, staff read familiar stories to children with expression and vibrancy. They encourage children to repeat words and phrases, which supports children with learning new vocabulary.

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

- Staff interact well with children during their child-led play. They model the correct use of language and join in with role play. For example, children are invited to the pretend petrol station, where they can refuel their cars. Staff help them guide the cars through the carwash and support them to wash their vehicles with warm, soapy water. Children giggle as staff promote confidence and collaborative play.
- Staff plan interesting activities for the daily, adult-led group times. Children enjoy listening to stories and take part in the session by holding the corresponding animal puppet from the text. However, staff do not always use this time to ensure that the learning is purposeful and tailored to meet all children's needs at varying stages of their development.
- The special educational needs coordinator is highly skilled and works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that the individual needs of children are fully met. The nursery benefits from a small sensory room, which is used regularly for intervention sessions. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards closing any gaps in learning. For example, staff use targeted strategies to help children with an identified speech delay to make good steps to improve while they wait for external support from a speech and language therapist.
- Children take part in a variety of different activities in the large outdoor space. They are physically active as they run, cycle, balance and climb. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle as they discuss the benefits of making balanced and nutritious

choices about food, during mealtimes.

- Staff take responsibility for specific areas of the provision and help to ensure that resources are appealing and renewed. This supports children to engage in valuable experiences during free-play times. However, these activities are less reflective of the wider world, or their own and others' varying backgrounds. This has an impact on how well children's differences and backgrounds are promoted.
- Parents share their praise for the leaders and staff at the nursery. They say they feel reassured that the staff know their children well and appreciate the regular updates on their children's progress. Parents are grateful for the advice given to them to support important aspects of their children's learning at home, such as language development. This means that children receive a consistent approach towards making the best possible progress.
- Staff work well as a team. They are respectful of each other and the responsibility to contribute to the high-quality experiences that children receive. This helps to ensure that children's needs are met by kind and attentive staff. Staff share that they feel valued and know that they can approach leaders to support with improving their own professional development. For example, they access further training regularly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All practitioners know and understand their role and responsibility to safeguard children. They demonstrate the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child or the conduct of a member of staff. Practitioners can identify signs and indicators of children who might be at risk, such as of female genital mutilation or radicalisation. All staff know how to report their concerns outside of the nursery management if they felt that they were not being listened to about important aspects of child protection. Risk assessments are effective in ensuring that the premises are safe, clean and fit for purpose.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve the organisation of group times, to ensure that children engage in purposeful learning experiences that suit their age and stage of development
- strengthen opportunities for children to learn about the lives and backgrounds of others, to enhance their understanding and appreciation of what makes them unique.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2690269
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10310438
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Little Acorns Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	2690266
Telephone number	01233 503843
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-School re-registered in 2022. It is situated in Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent. The pre-school is open from 8.45am to 3pm, Monday to Friday during term time. The pre-school employs 13 members of staff, nine of whom hold relevant qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Williams

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- 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 carried out joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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