

Inspection of Little Acorns (Newbiggin) Limited

The Old Police Station, Woodlea, Newbiggin By The Sea NE64 6HN

Inspection date: 8 January 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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

There is a wonderful atmosphere at this warm and friendly nursery. Staff get to know children very well from the outset, which leads to strong emotional attachments. Children reach out for cuddles when they need them and use staff as a strong supportive base as they play and learn. Leaders strive for excellence and are working towards an atmosphere of tranquillity or 'zen' throughout the nursery. They communicate this vision to the staff team and, overall, this contributes to a lovely feeling throughout the nursery.

Leaders and staff implement a clear well-thought-out curriculum that focuses on the key skills that children need to learn in preparation for the next stage in their learning journey, including school. Overall, there is clear progression for children to develop key skills and knowledge as they progress through the nursery. Staff have a strong understanding of what they want children to learn and implement this effectively, both indoors and outdoors.

Children behave well. Leaders and staff have clear expectations and implement age-appropriate boundaries that children respond well to. Children show good levels of respect towards one another as they play and learn together. For instance, older children respect each other's space when they sit around a table to make play dough.

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

- Superb arrangements ensure that children settle quickly into the nursery. Highly experienced staff get to know children well from the outset, which helps to establish strong relationships. Children develop independence and develop as confident resilient learners, which prepares them well for their future lives.
- There is a strong curriculum focus on developing children's communication skills. Staff skilfully encourage children to express themselves through the inviting experiences available. This is illustrated when younger children excitedly say the word 'ball' as staff roll one towards them on bamboo guttering. Older children show enthusiasm and talk about the moving pictures shown on the wall from a projector.
- Children are curious, excited learners, who explore their environment with great interest. Staff plan the learning environment effectively with exciting resources that entice children to explore. For example, coloured crystals hanging in the windows create shadows on the floor when the sun is shining. Children try to place their hands on the shadows and are perplexed when they are unable to touch what they perceive as an object.
- Leaders use funding appropriately to narrow gaps in children's learning. For instance, an attractive lending library in the entrance hall has been enhanced

with books to encourage parents to read at home with their children.

- Leaders recognise the importance of professional development and provide strong opportunities for staff to improve their ongoing skills. This includes joint training with other nurseries in the chain to enable staff to share good practice. The current focus on establishing a curriculum that prioritises children's creativity and curiosity is developing well. Staff describe how this is impacting on learning as children are beginning to use their imaginations and leading their own learning more.
- Support for new staff and apprentices is superb. They receive excellent modelling from senior staff, particularly those working with the youngest children. This means staff very quickly understand policies and procedures and they are able to meet children's needs in a highly effective way. This is particularly evident in how quickly new staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff plan well, overall, to support children's early writing skills in readiness for their move to school. They demonstrate this when they set up large-scale painting on the floor. Children thoroughly enjoy using paintbrushes as well as their hands and feet to make marks on the paper. However, staff do not fully understand the reason behind such activities and how this contributes towards children's development, to extend this good practice even further.
- Strong evaluation procedures are in place. Leaders maintain a good overview of the nursery and strive for continuous improvement. The current focus of creating a calm, 'zen' atmosphere is developing well, overall. Although there are occasions when staff working with the older children do not plan the curriculum well enough, such as after lunchtime, to maintain children's engagement.
- Leaders acknowledge they have not provided Ofsted with required information about the nursery within the required timescale. As soon as they realised their error, they acted swiftly and rectified this situation. This does not impact on the care and education provided to children.

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:

- strengthen staff's understanding of the developmental stages children go through to extend their early writing skills further
- review practice for older children to sustain greater levels of engagement and create a more consistent flow throughout the day.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2702122
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10376300
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 3
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Little Acorns (Newbiggin) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2702121
Telephone number	01670 852518
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns (Newbiggin) Limited registered in 2022. The nursery is situated in Newbiggin, Northumberland. Sessions times are 7.30am until 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nicola Jones

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The provider and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to and communicated with 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, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the provider.
- Parents shared their written views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The provider showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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