

Inspection of Little Acorns Pre-School

Mawdesley C of E School, Hurst Green, Mawdesley, Ormskirk, Lancashire L40 2QT

Inspection date: 4 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happily at this warm and nurturing pre-school. The compassionate and kind staff extend an enthusiastic welcome to them. Staff pay close attention to the emotional requirements of the children. When children need comfort and reassurance, they provide it to them. All children benefit from this as they adjust and feel safe. Children behave well when they are engaged in purposeful activities.

Outdoors, staff plan and provide a rich and varied range of activities and experiences that captures children's interests and supports them to make good progress in their learning. Children delight in playing outdoors. They immerse themselves in the natural world around them. They take charge of planting and making the environment their own. Children make paint from chalks. They explore what happens when they mix the chalk with water. They make 'blackberry sauce' to feed to the toy dinosaurs that live outside in the small-world area.

Staff have creatively thought of ways for children to become independent in carrying out tasks for themselves. The ambition for children to become independent continues inside, where they change their shoes as they enter the indoor area. They access resources of their choosing in the creative area. Including squeezing paint and selecting the type of scissors that they need. As a result, children develop independence and decision-making skills.

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

- Children behave well when they are engaged in interesting learning opportunities. On occasion, older and most-able children's interest can wane when the curriculum is not ambitious enough to keep them focused. As a result, their behaviour can become disruptive, and play is not purposeful.
- Unwanted behaviour is dealt with swiftly by some staff. They support the children by modelling how to talk to their friends kindly. However, these high expectations are not demonstrated consistently by all staff all of the time. This leads to children not always showing high levels of respect for their friends.
- Leaders and managers are fully committed to giving every child the very best education. The curriculum prioritises supporting children's progress across all areas of learning. Staff deliver the curriculum in fun and innovative ways so that children develop positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good levels of support. Staff identify gaps in children's learning and liaise with parents and other professionals. Bespoke learning plans are implemented effectively for children with SEND so that key persons can provide the necessary support for them to make progress in their learning.
- The pre-school maintains close partnerships with parents. Parents describe the

pre-school as a home from home with a warm, family feel. Parents and staff work closely to ensure that there is a smooth transition to school by going to visit settings together. This secures the best next step for all children.

- Children are exposed to a lovely range of vocabulary. Adults model new words to children during their play and frequently sing songs alongside them. Staff ask children lots of questions about what they are doing. Children are given enough opportunities to talk and share their own ideas so that they build on their ability to hold a two-way conversation.
- There is a wealth of opportunities to develop large-muscle control with larger equipment. Children are responsible for getting bikes out and putting them away. They understand to collect a helmet first to keep them safe. Developing independence and self-help skills such as these helps children to prepare for the next stage of their learning journey.

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:

- support staff to provide a consistent approach to behaviour management to better help children understand how their actions impact others
- encourage older and most-able children to take part in activities that match their interests and skills, helping them stay engaged and focused on meaningful tasks.

Setting details

Unique reference number	309767
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10335233
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	14
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	Little Acorns Mawdesley Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518503
Telephone number	01704 822657
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Pre-School registered in 1998. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. The manager has achieved early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term-time only. Sessions are from 9am to 3.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three-, and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Denise Barnes

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the staff and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk. She talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what the setting wants the children to learn.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.

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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