

# Inspection of Little Thetford Acorns Pre-School and Children's Club

Oak Field, The Wyches, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 3HG

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Inspection date: 14 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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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 are happy at pre-school, and they thrive in the spacious learning environment provided. Staff secure warm relationships with both children and parents. Children are socially active with their peers, and staff help nurture friendships. Staff are positive role models, and this has a positive impact on children's development. Staff show children how to wipe their own noses, and children quickly learn to independently use a tissue, put it in the bin and wash their hands.

Children display a real buzz of creativity and have a wealth of resources to support their early mark making. They use paint to make lines and shapes for their own interpretation of the real flowers on display. Staff skilfully extend children's interests from planting seeds and gardening to build on their experiences. Staff support children to use scissors effectively, modelling how to hold them correctly. Children demonstrate focus and attention. They happily play independently and with others. Staff support children to make choices and help explain what is on offer. Children talk about emotions, and supportive staff help them to manage their behaviour. Staff have embedded expectations, and regular reminders are shared to promote positive behaviour.

The staff team members embrace each other's well-being, and this is evident in their attitude to their roles. They enjoy their jobs and work hard to provide a positive environment. Children make good progress from their starting points, and information gathered from families supports their growth and life experiences. Staff recognise the individual needs of children, quickly supporting them to receive early help if needed. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported by the knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), who implements individualised plans of support.

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

- Children develop their physical skills, exploring the spacious outdoor area. They run, climb and balance, moving their bodies and building core strength. Children explore the nature area as they plant seeds and watch them grow. They explore the willow yurt and make unique spaces to play and be imaginative. The mud kitchen and wheeled toys add opportunities for further challenging play. Children make up their own games and use counting as part of play. They talk about adding more, and they count by rote.
- Children enjoy putting the toy cars through the 'car wash' water tray. They mix bubbles and use various tools to clean the cars. Staff engage in play with the children, adding to some of their conversations. However, when staff ask questions, they do not always give children sufficient time to respond with their

own ideas. Children have fun splashing in the bubble puddles they make on the floor. They squeal and laugh as they show their excitement. They put on and take off their wellie boots and can identify if they are too big or too small.

- The curriculum is ambitious, and leaders are clear about what they want children to learn. Staff follow children's interests and plan for their next steps in learning effectively. Children have access to a range of books, which helps them to learn about the world and the environment. They enjoy opportunities to join in with rhymes and stories. They join in with actions to known songs and use instruments to make their own musical beats. Children choose books and ask staff to read to them, which helps promote an early love of reading. Staff engage with children through stories. They bring characters to life and encourage children to join in. However, on occasions, these activities do not help children to build on their learning, communication and vocabulary.
- Children are independent when using the toilet and when handwashing. The snack routine is embedded, and children are eager to help with all aspects. They enjoy pushing the trolley with all the lunchboxes on and setting up the drinking bottles area. Children make healthy choices about foods, and playing games helps support this understanding about what is healthy or not healthy.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Communication is strong, and parents receive regular updates on how their children are progressing. Home visits and information gathered when children start support partnership working effectively. Trusting relationships are formed and built in the best interests of the children. Settling in and transitions are well supported, helping children to feel safe and secure. Parents praise the staff on the care their children receive and their nurturing attitude. They are reassured their children are well cared for at pre-school. Parents believe their children receive a good foundation as they move on to their next stages of education.

## **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:**

- build on the already good practice of staff to develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of why and how to extend children's learning further with a focus on communication and language.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY405040
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344356
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	25
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Thetford Acorns
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP529498
<b>Telephone number</b>	01353 649234
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 September 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Little Thetford Acorns Pre-School and Children's Club registered in 2010. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school is a committee-run group and receives funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, four hold an early years qualification at level 3.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Helen Clutterham

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children 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 SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- 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 a group time.
- Parents and carers shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working at the pre-school.

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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