

Inspection of Acton Playgroup

Acton Primary School, Lambert Drive, Acton, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0US

Inspection date:

16 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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The extremely skilled staff are passionate about creating a nurturing, child-centred environment where all children are supported to flourish. Children are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners. They spend long periods engaged in activities, for example exploring shadows in the sun, planting tomatoes in the gardening area or writing their own stories.

Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in the activities that are provided for them and use resources and tools on offer to extend their own learning. The language-rich environment that is created by the staff supports all children to acquire and use language, and they are excellent communicators. Children are confident to express their own ideas, needs and interests, and these are listened to and responded to by the staff. Staff know exactly when it is not appropriate to interrupt children's flow of thoughts and ideas.

Children are expert problem solvers, develop excellent physical skills and learn to assess risks from an early age. They work out how to prop up the ladder so they can climb safely to the top and use wheelbarrows to manoeuvre items from one area of the garden to another.

Staff are highly experienced and exceptional role models, so children are extremely well behaved. Children know to share resources and use a sand timer independently to negotiate with their friends when it is time for someone else to have a turn. They help look after their environment and respond when they hear the tidy-up-time music, helping to put materials away where they belong.

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

- Leaders and managers are ambitious and passionate about the setting. They are highly reflective and insightful regarding their own, and staff's, practice. They have a really thorough oversight of planning, assessment, safeguarding and other aspects of the setting. Leaders and managers expect the best from staff and give them great support to reach their full potential. Clear recruitment, induction and training procedures ensure that staff are suitable, highly knowledgeable and skilled for their roles. Staff morale is extremely high, and as a result, the team are thoroughly committed to their pursuit for excellence in all areas of the setting.
- The key-person system is highly effective in practice. Staff know children extremely well, what children have already learned and what they need to know next. Staff use this to build on existing skills, and all children make very good progress from their starting points. Staff thoroughly understand each child's needs and ensure that all children's needs are met. Staff understand how to

keep children safe, and they ensure that children are safely supervised and well supported at all times.

- Children enjoy an extensive range of experiences. For example, they take train trips to the local museum, go on buses to visit the elderly at the day centre and use the local shop to buy ingredients for their cooking activities. These experiences help to shape children's understanding of the community in which they live.
- Staff ensure that equality and inclusion are at the heart of everything they do with the children. They have a positive approach to diversity and support children to develop a positive sense of themselves. Children are highly valued as individuals. They are confident, resilient and independent.
- Children's communication and language skills are promoted exceptionally well. Staff implement highly effective strategies to support children's language development. Staff model vocabulary and comment on children's actions. Children quickly learn and repeat new vocabulary, such as 'twirling' and 'wriggling', as they explore materials and enthusiastically join staff for stories and songs.
- Partnerships with parents are exemplary. Parents speak very highly of the setting and staff. Parents describe how grateful they are for the dedicated staff who genuinely care about their whole family. They are delighted with how well their children settle and the amount of progress they make. They feel informed about their children's learning and development and know what they are working on and how they can support them at home.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exceptional support. Staff work in close partnership with parents and external agencies to ensure a comprehensive package of support and interventions is highly effective. Children with SEND make truly inspiring progress over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that's puts children's interest first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251395
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10388654
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	24
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Acton Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523728
Telephone number	01787 464270
Date of previous inspection	22 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Acton Playgroup registered in 2000. The playgroup employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications or are working towards a qualification at levels 2, 3, 4 or 5. The playgroup also employs one administration manager. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday, during school term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.30pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Weston

Inspection activities

- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- 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, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager carried out joint observations of activities.
- 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 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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