



Little Acorns Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY305237 |
| Inspection date | 12 September 2005 |
| Inspector | Angela Margaret Ellis |
| Setting Address | 29 Reform Street, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, BD19 4JX |
| Telephone number | |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Dan Leisure Group Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | Full day care, Out of School care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Acorns was registered in 2005 and is owned by a company called Dan Leisure. The premises have been registered as a nursery since 1988. It is located in the Gomersal area of Kirklees. The setting serves both the local and wider community. There are 10 staff working at the nursery on a full and part time basis, including two staff who work in the before and after school and holiday club.

The setting operates from a purpose built ground floor nursery building. There are three playrooms in the nursery, one area for under two year olds and two areas for the children aged two to five years. There is a separate area for the before and after

school club. There are two kitchen's and a bathroom plus nappy changing facilities. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is registered for 43 children from birth to under eight years of these a maximum of nine children may be under two years. At present there are 59 children on roll. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year.

The before and after school club and holiday club operates from Monday to Friday 07:30 to 08:30 and 15:00 to 18:00. The scheme also runs during school holidays from 07:30 to 18:00.

There are nine staff who have a level three qualification. Most of the other staff are working towards achieving this level of qualification.

There are no children for whom English is an additional language and there are systems in place to support children with special needs. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment, where they are helped and encouraged to develop sound personal hygiene practices. Most learn about hand washing before and after snack and after creative play. Although good hygiene policies and procedures are inconsistently implemented, in particular in the baby room.

Children are developing an understanding of a healthy diet. Staff talk to them about healthy eating as part of the daily routine to help children understand what foods are good for them. Meal times are a pleasant social occasion where children sit together with staff and good manners are promoted. Staff take into account children's individual preferences and dietary needs and plan accordingly.

Children enjoy a range of activities that contribute to them being healthy and sufficiently develop their physical skills. They control their bodies well and enjoy using equipment such as the parachute to build confidence and learn new skills. The outdoor area is used well to broaden the children's imaginative experiences and provision from indoors is brought out. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a sound, safe environment where many policies and procedures are in place to protect children. However, management do not ensure

that the risk assessments are rigorously completed in all areas, to identify and minimise all risks to children. Children use a wide range of safe and developmentally appropriate toys and resources. The toys and resources are well-presented on low shelving units and in low drawer trays to encourage safe and independent access.

Staff are good role models for children and skilfully use spontaneous play to help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Sensitive interactions from staff remind children that cooked food is hot and has to be cooled down before eaten. Children are learning the procedures for emergency evacuation, because staff regularly practice the procedure with them as part of their good attention to fire safety and protecting children.

Children's welfare is promoted appropriately; several staff hold a first aid qualification and the designated person for child protection has attended relevant training. A sound understanding is held of the responsibilities within the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. Details of the designated persons for first aid are clearly displayed in each room alerting all staff to appropriately skilled members of staff and this contributes to the safeguarding of children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies are content and settled in the baby room. They are developing an awareness of self, because mirrors are provided to help them explore what they look like and who they are. They use their developing physical skills to independently move around the playroom to explore their environment. Staff ensure there is good levels of communication and say 'who is it?' smiling back at babies and encouraging them to be sociable and effective communicators. Babies experiment with sound and show great interest in the noises that they make with equipment, developing their creative skills.

Staff have attended training in the Birth to three matters framework. However, they are not secure in their knowledge and are not fully implementing the framework to offer very young children consistency of care. As a consequence, there are differences between the effective implementation of key person system offered to the younger children and those provided for the older children.

Older children have access to many natural resources which they use to make sense of the world, for example, a snail was brought indoors for the children to observe. Children are encouraged to choose their activities and develop their decision making skills. For example, children become engrossed in their chosen activity and delight in experimenting with resources. They realise that water can be brushed onto the fence outdoors to make a creative result. Staff actively encourage this hands-on discovery and do not restrict the learning by imposing adult direction.

Staff know the children very well and use this knowledge to motivate children and encourage their communication. For instance, children put great detail into their creative work and staff use their knowledge of children to ask open ended questions, which encourage them to think about and describe their art work. Children use their

initiative in completing tasks and experience high self-esteem from staff who give meaningful praise for children's achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

A broad and meaningful range of activities and resources promote a positive view of the wider world and are starting to increase children's awareness of diversity. For example, topics allow children to create art work using accurate skin tone paints. Children with specific needs, such as dietary, health or language needs are well supported, which ensures they are able to take part in all aspects of nursery life. However, the key person system for younger children is not securely embedded to fully promote their emotional well-being.

Relationships between the children are good and they are learning agreed codes of behaviour. Staff set clear boundaries which they consistently apply. For example, behaviour such as hurting each others feelings is swiftly stopped and clear explanations are given as to why this is unacceptable. This effective behaviour management helps children to learn right from wrong and to understand the consequences of their actions. Staff give children gentle reminders to help children learn respect for each other and encourage them to ask politely for things instead of snatching.

The partnership with parents is generally satisfactory. Parents are provided with reasonable information regarding the setting and accessibility of policies and procedures is insufficient. The system for recording complaints is absent. Parents are sufficiently encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and staff ensure that parents of younger children are informed about their child's time in the nursery daily and parents of older children receive good information about how their child is progressing and developing. This is essential for continuity and consistency of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's needs are met through the generally effective organisation and most staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of current childcare practice. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place, but not all are effectively implemented to fully protect children. The operational plan is insufficiently updated and lacks some of the elements. All the legally required documentation is in place and maintained confidentially.

Staff are well-deployed within the nursery and most staff use their time efficiently to meet the individual needs of children in relation to meals, activities and resting. Older children benefit from the good organisation of their base rooms which gives them the confidence to initiate their own play and learning. A positive level of commitment to training and continual development is maintained and courses are regularly attended, of which most contribute to the health, safety and well-being of children. Overall, the

provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- monitor hygiene procedures to ensure consistency between staff
- review and monitor the effectiveness of the risk assessments in particular at the beginning of the day
- monitor the effectiveness of the key person system to ensure that it is consistently implemented according to the birth to three matters framework
- ensure that parents have access to the policies and procedures at all times and that a record of complaints is maintained
- review the operational plan to ensure that it is up to date and includes all the required elements.

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