

Little Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY304771
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Inspector Lynne Elizabeth Lewington

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Little Acorns re-registered under new ownership in 2005. It operates from the village hall in Eversley, near Hook. The large hall, an annex room and a secure garden are used for play. There is level access to the premises and toilet facilities on the ground floor.

A maximum of 26 children between two and five years may attend at any one time. The pre-school is currently open between 09.00 and 12.00 each weekday; they offer a lunch club until 12.50 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. From January to July the setting also operates from 12.15 to 14.45 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The setting is open school term times only. They are registered on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 46 children on roll, of these 39 receive funding for nursery education. Most children live in the local area. The setting supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs nine staff. The staff team, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications including the Diploma in pre-school practice, nursing and teaching certificates.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are safe, happy, confident and industrious in this busy, interesting environment where they have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. The keen enthusiastic staff team ensure they understand the children's individual needs well through good communication with parents and their own observations enabling them to offer appropriate activities and experiences. Children and parents are greeted warmly each session making everyone feel welcome and important. The staff clearly indicate good prospects of maintaining continuous improvement because they reflect on their work and take positive steps to resolve problems.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve snack time to ensure valuable time is used to best advantage and all children benefit from the experience
- ensure less confident children are supported and have opportunities to contribute and participate, particularly when the group undertakes whole group activity
- further develop the environment to enable children to access the outdoors independently throughout the session

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The management and staff team are proactive at looking at the service they provide to parents and their children and seek ways to constantly improve. The comprehensive self-evaluation indicates clearly a good understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. As a team they discuss problems and seek ways to resolve them. Regular team meetings, annual appraisals and a comprehensive induction for new staff help to build a strong staff team who work enthusiastically for the young children in their care. Staff are keen to undertake training opportunities to enhance their abilities to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Staff value good relationships with parents and offer a variety of opportunities for parents to participate in their children's learning. Parents can comment in the children's 'special books', help in the setting, attend 'stay and play' sessions, and share their comments and views either directly with staff or through the letterbox, which is available each day. Children take books home to share and parents are informed of the current curriculum through a curriculum newsletter. Parents are invited to visit and to share any skills or knowledge that may benefit the children.

Children are safeguarded appropriately as staff demonstrate an awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the action they would take if they were concerned about a child in the setting. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken in addition to daily checks to ensure that the children play and learn in a safe environment where risks are minimised. Children learn about safe behaviour through activities, books and experiences. For example, they learned about road safety using a large road set, parents were informed and encouraged to continue their child's learning of road safety on outings.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are happy, confident and industrious in this busy, interesting environment. They have good opportunities to follow their own interests, make discoveries and accept challenges. All areas of learning are covered by the range of resources they access within the session. Children use the resources well, both indoors and out, and show clearly how they are developing their independence and abilities to make choices and problem solve. The majority of children enjoy the large group activities, however, less confident children do not participate as eagerly in this noisier activity.

Children use the outdoor equipment enthusiastically and imaginatively as they dig, paint with water, sweep leaves and participate in imaginary play. Children enjoy action songs and stories, listening and participating with keen interest. Good quality books are easily available and used throughout the setting to support the children's learning. Children show awareness of the written word; some recognise and can write their names. They use pencils and paper throughout the setting, encouraging their emergent writing skills. Children have many opportunities to sort and match as they play, they show awareness of position, size and shape as they

play with the dough, making 'chocolates' to fit in the chocolate box. They count and are beginning to recognise numbers. Children confidently use the laptop computer, moving the mouse and undertaking the age appropriate activities provided. Opportunities to use the outdoor environment enable the children to learn about the changing seasons and mini-beasts. Whilst children have opportunities to play outside each day a free flow system enabling outside play throughout the session is not currently available. Physical development is encouraged in all that the children do. For example, children skilfully use paint brushes, glitter pots, scissors and tools in the dough. They use spades and brooms in the garden, fill large and small buckets, ride tricycles, kick balls and try to use a hoola hoop, all providing suitable challenges to their developing physical skills. The attractive art work throughout the setting indicates the children's independent creativity.

Children frequently seek and receive cuddles from the staff as they play. Consequently staff build warm, caring and nurturing relationships with children. The planning is flexible but comprehensive, enabling staff to build on the children's interests. Staff undertake observations of the children and discuss their findings. These observations inform their future planning and ensure children have sufficient challenges available to them. Time at the end of each session is used effectively to reflect on the children's activity and record observations, ensuring that accurate assessments of children's progress are available.

The clean and suitably maintained premises promotes children's health and safety. Children show an awareness of good hygiene routines as they independently use tissues and dispose of them appropriately to prevent the spread of germs. Children independently access drinks throughout the session to prevent dehydration. They enjoy healthy snacks of fruit and drinks of milk or water at snack time, ensuring they have sufficient energy to enjoy their play. Snack times, however, are lengthy occasions when children sit for lengthy periods of time and do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration or the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.