

Little Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY257929
Inspection date	18/09/2008
Inspector	Judith Rayner and Melanie Arnold
Setting address	High Oakham Primary School, Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 4SH
Telephone number	07749 047107
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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Little Acorns Pre-School opened in their current premises in 2003. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years compulsory and voluntary childcare register. It operates in an annexe building at the rear of High Oakham Primary School, on the outskirts of Mansfield, north Nottinghamshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Entrance to the pre-school is via a front door into a corridor and there are no issues which may hinder access. The pre-school serves children from the local and wider community. A maximum of 24 children can attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term-times. Sessions are varied from morning sessions 9.00-11.45, afternoon sessions are 12.45-15.30, lunch club is 11.45-12.45. Children have the option to stay throughout the day from 09:00 to 15:30.

There are currently 48 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The pre-school currently supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff. There are six staff whom hold a recognised childcare qualification relevant to their post. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

All children are included in all activities whilst mostly taking into consideration their individual needs and interests. However, the systems in place to support children with English as an additional language is not fully effective. The setting recognises the importance of working effectively with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure children have an enjoyable time at the setting. Exciting and stimulating activities provided by the skilled staff ensure children are fully engaged in their play and behave very well because they are not bored. Sufficient improvements have been made since the last inspection because the manager recognises the importance and value of developing the service to support children's welfare, care and learning. There are good systems in place to identify the settings strengths and weaknesses and action effectively taken to address these areas.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the systems in place and staff understanding to fully support children with English as an additional language
- review the systems in place for the planning and assessments of children's development and their next steps of learning
- continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues and what should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective systems in place for the recruitment and selection of staff ensures children are safeguarded. Most staff are knowledgeable of child protection procedures, however not all staff are as familiar with what do to should an allegation be made against a member of staff. New staff are supported well to ensure they are up to speed with policies and procedures and legal requirements.

Improvements have been made in creating a welcoming environment such as re-decorating the rooms where children play and organising specific play areas to support children in feeling secure. Regular appraisals and reviewing of the settings strengths and weaknesses are key to evaluating the service offered to children and their families. Most staff hold a recognised childcare qualification and actively undertake training to continue to improve their skills and knowledge, thus creating an effective learning environment for children.

Staff work well with parents and carers and outside agencies to meet the overall needs of children. Parents and carers views and wishes are respected and are encouraged to support their children's learning at home. A wealth of information supports the daily discussions in how their child is cared for and what learning and development they have achieved.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are happy stimulated and engaged in their play. They make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Staff are mindful of children's individual needs and interests and flexibly plan play to incorporate children's wishes. For example, children choose what they would like to play with for outside play such as balls, hoops and ribbons. Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation stage. They effectively use space, time and resources whilst providing good opportunities for children to experience new, interesting and challenging activities. However, the systems for recording observations and assessments is less clear, therefore some children's next steps have the potential to not be clearly identified.

Staff support children very well during activities. For example, thought provoking questions are skilfully asked, expanding on children's vocabulary and thoughts and problem solving. Children talk about how the ice feels in their hand, how ice is made and how and why it melts. Children eagerly and enthusiastically engage in activities. For example, a worm was found outside and children excitedly ran to group round the worm, wanting to pick it up and touch it. This was extended further because they had the opportunity to look at it more closely under a magnifying glass. Children confidently make writing their full name on paper. They enjoy stories and actively participate because they know the story well and know what is coming next in the story of the 'Hungry caterpillar'. The movement to music is a favourite. Children eagerly participate jumping, hopping clapping playing musical instruments and cooperatively sit together imaginatively rowing a boat to the song.

Children's behaviour is excellent. Their self-esteem is high. They are praised on their achievements and thrive in the consentient and calm atmosphere promoted by staff. Children learn to keep themselves and others safe. They sweep up the sand from the floor so others do not slip. Children are encouraged to dress themselves such as putting their own coats on before they go outside. They learn about their peers needs and wishes as they sensitively choose various food for snack time for the rest of the children whilst taking into consideration their likes and dislikes. As children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, they learn to understand the importance of washing away germs and how this stops the spread of infection. Staff support this further because they effectively adhere to written policies and procedures and are good role models.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

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 B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

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 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.