

Little Acorns Pre-School - Oakthorpe

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 226232
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Inspector Aileen L King

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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 1998 and uses premises in the grounds of Oakthorpe Primary School. A maximum of 24 children, aged from two to under five years, may attend the provision at any one time. The pre-school opens each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00 and the children share access to the school's outdoor play area. Access to the pre-school is up some steps. There are currently 25 children on roll and at present no children are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities or learning English as an additional language. There are five members of staff, two of whom hold an early years qualification and one who is working towards a qualification. Four members of staff have been trained in paediatric first aid. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

In Little Acorns Pre-school the children are settled, happy and keen to attend. The pre-school offers children good experiences to develop their skills in beginning to write, recognise words and letters and to think about mathematical ideas. The staff make every effort to ensure all children are engaged with the activities and because they know the children well they can adapt their questioning and conversation to meet the children's different needs. Based on recent training, the pre-school supervisors have considered how assessment can be developed. They have identified what needs to be done to maintain improvement and that observations of children's involvement in activities are not presently providing an ongoing summary of the progress they make. There are already plans in place to address this and the setting has good capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement plans to provide a summary record of children's individual progress
- undertake an audit of resources to ensure these are all complete and suitable for the age range and abilities of the children in the group

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is clear sense of direction of what children are to achieve. The staff have created a personalised approach to dealing with the children and their parents and have accurately evaluated what they need to do to maintain improvement. Checks are made to ensure that the children are kept safe and free from harm and any incidents are noted and the course of action logged. There is clear information about any specific needs the children might have. Staff offer a good range of activities which means the children can access a variety of different experiences

and re-visit those they have particularly enjoyed. Resources are used well, but some equipment is incomplete, for example puzzles which have pieces missing. Policies and procedures are in place and ensure that the children's welfare is maintained. The staff work well together as a team and, as they know the routines so well, can support each other and the children during the session. The staff work well with parents and carers who appreciate the good communication links and the way the staff greet their children and look after them. Parents speak very highly about the work of the pre-school and are pleased with the progress their children make. 'Fantastic' and 'absolutely fantastic' were some of the parents' comments. The pre-school is well organised on a daily basis and the staff are committed to including children in the life of the pre-school. Self evaluation is good, the staff are aware of what needs to be done and the next steps towards improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children feel secure in the pre-school because they know they can approach adults for help and share their ideas. Even at this young age they are developing an awareness of what keeps them healthy, for example that exercise to music is good for them and they can select their drinks at snack time from healthy options. Making bread helps them to understand how food is made and they are reminded of the necessity to wash their hands before they handle ingredients. The pre-school has a sensitive and caring approach to dealing with children and any anxieties they may have, and encourages them to be interested and active in the learning process. This is achieved by staff being involved in the children's play and also directing their learning either through daily routines or in planned activities. For instance, that they can form mathematical shapes when moulding bread dough, that they can recognise their own names and find their place at the table at snack time and that they can count the number of children present at the beginning of the session. The children respond particularly well when adults take part in their play and they develop their ideas and share their thinking. There is shared access to the outdoor space which is used well to promote children's physical development, and the staff ensure that the area is made safe for the children.

Activities are well planned to ensure the children have a range of experiences and the good ratio of adults to children means that there is good support for the children's language development. The children's creativity is valued in the pre-school and they have opportunities to explore a range of media such as paint, glitter or create imaginative drawings using a 'paint' technique at the computer. However, sometimes artistic work is not open-ended enough for the children, especially the older ones, to express their own ideas. Nevertheless, in singing, music and movement, their capacity for enjoyment and to be creative are fulfilled and they move energetically, explore sound and use their voices expressively. Staff carry out observations of the children at play and observe what they do at the activities. These notes are yet to be collated to provide an ongoing record of the progress each child makes, although staff produce detailed and personalised reports for parents and carers when the children eventually leave the pre-school. These reports are very well received by the parents, who respond very positively to the comments in their child's report.

Staff are clear about what they need to do to ensure the learning environment is safe and welcoming. They make sure that children are warmly received when they come into the pre-school and take the trouble to personalise their comments as they greet children. Children making a positive contribution is very much part of the pre-school's ethos. At snack time, children take turns to act as monitors, take the orders for what their playmates would like and collect the required number of drinks. They are also involved in an adoption project for the care of Emily Kate, an elephant in Kenya, which helps develop children's knowledge and cultural understanding.

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 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.