

Little Acorns Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY305237
Inspection date 15/01/2009
Inspector Helene Anne Terry

Setting address 29 Reform Street, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire,
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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 was registered in 2005 and is one of a chain of nurseries owned by The Dan Leisure Group Limited. It operates from three rooms in a single story building in Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire. Children have access to secure outdoor play areas. The setting serves both the local and wider community. Access to the setting is via the front entrance. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the early years register.

A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 throughout the year. There are currently 62 children aged from seven months to four years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 13 staff, of whom the majority hold appropriate Early Years qualifications. There are currently five staff doing a Foundation Degree in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority. It holds the Investors in People Award and is currently working towards quality assurance with the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place to support the safety and welfare of children, staff demonstrate secure understanding of how to use these effectively. Managers and staff pay careful attention to recognise the individuality of every child having clear regard for cultural diversity, health and learning needs. They work in close partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure that all children are fully supported and enabled to benefit from their time at this nursery. The setting uses some self evaluation methods well which means that most areas for improvement are recognised and appropriate actions are taken.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that over the lunch time period there is sufficient staff working directly with the children to meet their individual needs
- ensure that all staff consistently complete children's assessment records to enable children to meet their full potential.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected well owing to the very effective recruitment and vetting procedures that are in place to ensure that all staff, volunteers and students are

suitable to work with children. A high proportion of staff hold childcare qualifications, which includes five members of staff who are currently working towards a Foundation Degree in early years. Thorough staff induction and appraisals systems ensure that all adults working in the setting are fully informed and prepared for their responsibilities and work efficiently in the setting.

All required policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective. A Safeguarding policy and procedure is comprehensive and supports the setting well. Staff are clear about their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children.

The nursery successfully uses a variety of monitoring and evaluation systems to recognise strengths, identify weaknesses and establish how they perform. Staff and parents are effectively involved in this process through questionnaires and a parent's comments board. There are a number of improvements ongoing within the setting including the outdoor play areas that have recently been resurfaced. Management have effectively addressed the recommendations for improvement made at the last inspection, as result systems in place to protect and enhance children's welfare have been enhanced. The deployment of staff within the setting on the whole is good, staff have their base rooms and adult child ratios are maintained throughout most of the day. However, over the lunch time period, owing to staff taking lunch breaks, there was a shortage of staff working directly with the children in the baby and toddler room, this impacts on staff's ability to address the individual needs of the children, especially babies.

The setting has a very good relationship with parents built on good communication and lots of good quality information. Parents are respected and children are cared for in line with parent's wishes. Parents are effectively involved in their children's learning because they freely access their child's development records and individual learning plans. They are encouraged to talk about their child's interests and add comments via the 'Star moments' sheets, which are added to development records. This helps children receive continuity of care and parents are made aware they are always important. Partnerships with other agencies are well established and effective and they fully understand that liaising with others is integral to children who may need additional support.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare, learning and development are effectively promoted. The nursery is inviting with displays of children's work, and illustrations to support their learning and behaviour. The environment is arranged creatively to offer stimulating play and learning opportunities and resources are kept within easy reach at child height to promote independent choice and child led activities. The arrangement of the furniture ensures that children with disabilities can move around freely and access the resources. A well resourced secure outside play area provides opportunities for children to learn and develop in the fresh air. The children delight in building constructions from the crates, balancing and climbing on the apparatus, sitting in the den and they access the umbrellas when they play out in the rain. The good risk assessments that are in place ensure that the environment is safe

and risks are minimised. Children also learn to keep themselves safe as they take part in the regular fire drills and learn how to cross roads safely during activities. Health and hygiene practices are good and children enjoy a healthy balanced diet freshly prepared on the premises by the cook. Older children enjoy being independent at meal times when they serve their own food and prepare their own crackers using butter, cheese and ham at tea time.

Staff are developing good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage with the help of internal and external support and training. They effectively plan activities and opportunities for children to progress in all areas of learning including keeping safe and being healthy. However, some staff do not consistently complete children's development records, which affects their ability to ensure children achieve their full potential. However, good systems are in place to observe, check and record children's learning and parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress by discussion and records.

Staff know the children well, they have positive relationships and encourage them to be confident and interested in their play thus developing good attitudes towards learning. Older children enter the playrooms confidently and eagerly settle into the daily routines, anticipating their indoor and outdoor activities with interest and enthusiasm. Children are confident to ask for help and support or a favourite story which they enjoy sharing and adding their own contributions. Staff use good methods to engage children in the activities. For example, props are used at story time, which involve children in the story. Children enjoyed taking fruit in and out of the basket, as a member of staff, read 'Handa's surprise'. They extended their vocabulary as they named fruit, such as mango and passion fruit.

Babies and toddlers receive good levels of support as staff tempt and encourage them with carefully placed toys to promote rolling, stretching and crawling or prompt them to explore and experiment with messy play, such as oat flakes and shaving foam. Their smiles and giggles signal their pleasure as they experience such early learning opportunities. Any frustration or distress is soothed by gentle support from staff always ready to nurture or help.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted because a wide range of festivals is actively celebrated as staff talk to them about their own and other cultures. They have access to toys and resources reflecting diverse lifestyles, abilities and customs. Children behave very well they are cooperative and learn to share and take turns. They are also learning to show concern and care for others through the use of empathy dolls.

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

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

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.