Little Acorns Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number: EY305577
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Inspector: Anne Bennett

Setting address: Knowle Lane, Meltham, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 4HL
Telephone number: 01484 850983
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Type of setting: Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 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 Day Nursery was registered in 2005 and operates from four ground floor rooms in a purpose built building in Meltham. The setting is accessed via a ramp at the front and offers enclosed outdoor play provision for children of all ages. Opening hours are from 07.30 until 18.00 each weekday, all year round with the exception of Christmas week.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 44 children at any one time. There are currently 75 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting employs a cook and 17 members of staff; all of whom hold recognised early years qualifications. Two members of staff hold Qualified Teacher status; one of whom holds Early Years Professional status. The provision is in receipt of nursery funding for three and four year olds and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The overall quality of provision is good. A regular and comprehensive two way flow of information between parents and the provider creates robust and extremely supportive partnership arrangements. An inclusive learning environment and a strong emphasis on children's interests and preferences ensures that children are highly valued and their individual needs are met very effectively. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development, supported by enthusiastic staff who are firmly committed to reflective practice and sustained continuous improvement. The setting has very successfully identified well targeted priorities for improvement including future plans for staff monitoring systems to ensure consistency and the sharing of good practice. The setting has successfully addressed the recommendations set at their last inspection and is developing links with other early years providers. As a result outcomes for children remain consistently high.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review current systems to ensure staffing arrangements are effectively managed in the event of staff absence

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The management has established a clear and well coordinated approach to raising standards and improving outcomes for children. Roles and responsibilities are effectively delegated and staff are supported to develop and extend their skills through an established appraisal process. Well-documented policies and procedures are openly available for reference inside the setting and staff
knowledge and understanding of these is prioritised. As a result they are effectively implemented in practice.

Children’s safety and well being is given extremely high priority. Access to the setting is strictly monitored and environmental prompts remind parents and visitors to close the door in order to maintain the safety and security of the children that attend. Clear and robust recruitment procedures ensure all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and receive thorough training on child protection, health and safety and fire safety as part of the induction process. Awareness raising and training is an ongoing process. Focused fire practises and records take account of a range of possible scenarios; successfully raising children’s awareness of danger and how to stay safe in the event of a fire. Risks are effectively assessed and routinely reviewed on a six monthly basis. Although detailed systems are in place to cover staff absence, at inspection these arrangements were not wholly effective.

Staff are reflective practitioners and systems for evaluating their practice are established and form the basis of the settings very well targeted quality improvement processes. The views and opinions of parents are gathered through the use of questionnaires and the setting actively seeks to implement any suggestions made. Parents are warmly greeted on arrival and receive regular detailed information and updates through monthly newsletters, progress reports, open evenings, daily diaries and frequent exchanges with staff at the beginning and end of sessions. Links with other early years providers are developing, supported by very effective partnerships with parents and carers. This ensures that children’s needs are met consistently.

The provision promotes positive attitudes to diversity and difference. Every child is included and not disadvantaged in any way. Individual children’s needs are properly recognised and met through a very successful key person system, partnership with parents and sensitive observations and assessments. The observations and assessments are used to plan for the next steps in individual children’s learning and development.

**The quality and standards of the early years provision**

The setting has worked incredibly hard to develop a consistent and focused approach to observation and assessment by encouraging staff reflection. Individual record folders track progress and include spontaneous and planned observations addressing children’s levels of involvement, the six areas of learning and the next steps for children in order to sustain and extend interest. Planning and assessment systems are continually developing and the nursery is committed to further extending their approach to individualised learning by working with the local authority. Each individual key person is allocated based on children’s needs and preferences and has a good knowledge of each child’s developmental stage and individuality. Flexible settling in procedures enable parents and children to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
Children are able to move around the nursery independently and access a wide range of self selection opportunities from good quality toys and resources. Photographs displayed at their level encourage them to talk about past activities and experiences. A strong emphasis is placed on individual children's interests and enthusiastic, responsive staff work flexibly within the learning environment, adapting to observed interests of children. For example, staff notice that children are using fabric to cover themselves and support them to make a den and explore it using torches, encouraging them to develop and extend their own play. Children clearly enjoy singing songs, such as 'row, row, row the boat', joining in repetitive sections and enthusiastically shouting 'again' at the end of the song. The flower shop displays prompts reminding children of the cost of different coloured flowers as they successfully extend, practice and refine their understanding of early reading, writing and number in meaningful contexts. The nursery has incorporated comfy areas into each of the rooms, where children can choose to rest and relax. Babies identify familiar objects and animals in books, feeling various textures and watching the different reflections as the book moves and catches the light. The different animals positioned in the water tray become the topic of animated conversation and children discuss the different types, noises and identify features that they recognise. Children confidently connect different funnels and containers, exploring how they fit together and how water overflows at the edges. Staff actively listen to children and respond exceptionally well to them.

The setting has a very positive attitude to outdoor play and recognises its importance in children's development. Separate enclosed outdoor play areas and outings in the local area including the adjacent wood offer children of all ages daily outdoor play opportunities. Children learn about different seasons and weather, splashing in puddles and jumping on and off logs as they play outside in the rain in all in one suits and Wellington boots. The setting is planning to further extend the provision for outdoor play by offering shaded areas, and additional opportunities for physical challenge. There are plans to extend the already established digging and planting areas in the pre-school and tweenies into other areas of the nursery.

A good range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks, made from locally sourced produce are provided for children in the setting. Meals are carefully planned and flexible to cater for children's individual needs including specific dietary requirements, allergies and preferences. Mealtimes are social occasions where children can engage in conversations with others and feed themselves independently. Children's awareness of danger and how to stay safe is reinforced through daily routine and they are actively involved in putting together rules for the setting. Observant staff talk to children about how to use scissors safely and why they are wiping up water from the floor around the water tray. Children can access ICT opportunities in the pre-school room and the setting is looking to extend this provision to other areas.

Adults ensure all children have the opportunity to join in and have fun in an extensive range of activities that challenge them in developing across the areas of learning. Children talk about and draw pictures of special people, and parents are encouraged to bring in photographs from home to contribute to a display in the nursery. Parents are invited to share information through 'All about me sheets', learning and development records and home school diaries which communicate activities, events and experiences from home.
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 |

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This inspection was carried out under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006