

# Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY378325

**Inspection date**

20/05/2009

**Inspector**

Rebecca Johnson

**Setting address**

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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 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 is one of the two privately owned settings run by the provider. It opened in 2008 and is located within Corbett C E primary school in Bobbington, Stourbridge. The nursery has use of the large classroom, main school hall and a secure enclosed outdoor play area. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 16 children aged two years to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 18 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 during school term times. Before and after school provision operates between 07.45 - 09.00 and 15.30 - 18.00. The nursery employs three members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. Children make limited progress in their learning because they do not access a wide range of activities which meet their interests and observation and assessments are not used to ensure that planning meets each child's individual developmental and learning needs. Practitioners are not fostering good partnerships with parents and other outside agencies to ensure that the individual needs of all the children are appropriately met. The registered person has yet to implement systems to effectively monitor and evaluate the setting and discord amongst the staff team impacts on the quality of the care and learning offered to children. Strategies for inclusion are not effective.

Overall, the early years provision requires immediate action. Ofsted will take enforcement measures to ensure children's safety and compliance with the welfare, learning and development requirements or will cancel registration.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure all children are supported in their progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning by making systematic observations and assessments and using these to plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child (Learning and development 1) 01/10/2009
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they provide children with an educational programme that will 01/10/2009

- enable them to make progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning (Learning and development 2)
- implement an effective safeguarding policy which includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and ensure that all members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedure (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (Also applies to compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 17/06/2009
  - develop effective partnership with parents and engage with and provide the following information to parents relating to staffing, daily routines and the complaints procedure (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 25/06/2009
  - keep written records of all medication administered to children and obtain prior written permission for each and every medicine from parents before any medication is given (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (Also applies to compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 25/06/2009
  - ensure that written permission is requested for all children to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 25/06/2009
  - ensure that children's behaviour is managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and their particular individual needs (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (Also applies to compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 25/06/2009
  - make sure that a risk assessment is in place which identifies aspects of the environment that need to be checked on regular basis and maintain a record of these particular aspects and when and by whom they have been checked (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)(Also applies to compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 25/06/2009
  - plan and organise systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs including a balance of adult-led and freely-chosen or child-initiated activities delivered through indoor and outdoor play and systems to evaluate and monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the provision (Organisation) 23/07/2009

Ofsted will take enforcement measures to ensure children's safety and compliance with the welfare, learning and development requirements or may take action to prosecute or cancel your registration.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding policies and procedures are not in place. Although the newly appointed manager demonstrates a good working knowledge of child protection procedures this is not reflected in other members of staff to ensure that children are fully protected. Procedures for vetting and assessing the suitability of staff are appropriately implemented; however, systems are not in place to ensure that new staff are fully inducted into the setting. Premises are secure and there are some procedures in place to ensure children's safety within the setting. However, risk assessments to ensure that children are able to move freely and safely within the setting are minimal, not used effectively and some identified risks are not pertinent to the setting, for example, the use of stairs. There are no systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision or to identify areas for improvement and development. Although the new manager has a number of ideas about how to make the necessary changes, the leadership and management of the setting is somewhat intransigent. The registered provider fails to recognise the weaknesses and appears reluctant to change current practice in order to ensure that the setting meets the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the early years provision is in place. However, it is not always pertinent to this setting and the provider has not met a number of requirements. These include: a complaints procedure and consent to seek emergency medical treatment. Appropriate medical records are not available. As result children's safety and well-being is severely compromised.

Practitioners do not work well in partnership with parents in order to develop a consistent approach in meeting children's needs. Although the new manager attempts to build relationships with parents this is not always supported or encouraged. Parents are not informed of significant changes within the setting, for example, some parents did not know that a new manager was in place. They are not encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. Although some notices and information relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage is displayed parents are not encouraged to come into the setting when collecting their children, therefore opportunities to obtain this information is limited.

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

Children's capacity for making progress in all areas of learning is hindered through the lack of some staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although the new manager is well qualified and knowledgeable regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage, other staff have a limited understanding of what areas of learning activities cover as they have yet to access relevant training. Observation and assessment is not used effectively and does not link to children's individual planning to ensure that all children move forward at a

pace suitable to their individual needs. Children are not able to select from the resources available or initiate choices about where and with what they wish to play. Children's learning is hindered as they are not encouraged to explore or develop their own initiatives by playing freely in all areas. For example, they are not allowed to take indoor equipment outside and the outdoor area is not seen as an extension to the indoors.

Children look at books and listen to their favourite stories. Some can make the sound of the letter their name begins and ends with, however, opportunities to access mark making is limited. Resources are not always readily available, for example, chalks for outside blackboards and the mark making table, and children are not encouraged to write their names on pictures. They are beginning to use mathematical language such as tall and small but this is not always spontaneously extended throughout the day. Children enjoy participating in French lessons, yoga, dance and football training which is provided regularly by outside professionals. Some staff lack an understanding and knowledge of the need to provide children with a range of opportunities to enable them to make progress, for example, experiences for messy play and crafts are limited and some displays of children's work are formal and regimented with each picture identical to the next. As a result this does not promote children's creative experiences or allow them to develop imaginative skills.

Children understand the importance of following simple hygiene routines as they wash their hands at appropriate times during the day. They are well cared for if they become sick or have an accident and there are procedures in place to protect them from infection. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks which consist of a variety of fresh fruit and freshly cooked meals which are prepared by the school. However, although drinks are offered at set times during the day opportunities for children to independently access fresh drinking water are not in place, as a result there is the potential for young children to become dehydrated. Some strategies have recently been implemented to encourage positive behaviour. However, this is not always consistently applied by all staff which leaves children confused and does not promote children's self-esteem. Children's welfare and safety is compromised due to gaps in the settings documentation and some staff's lack of understanding in respect of safeguarding.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	4
How well are children safeguarded?	4

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	4
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	4
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	4

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## Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Arrangements for Safeguarding Children) 17/06/2009
- make the following information available to parents: information about the activities that children will undertake and copies of the written statements of safeguarding procedures and complaints procedure (Providing information to parents) (Also applies to the Voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and Safety of Premises) 25/06/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Arrangements for Safeguarding Children) 17/06/2009
- take action as specified in the compulsory part of the childcare register section of the report (Providing information to parents) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised) 25/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and Safety of Premises) 25/06/2009