

# Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

102824

**Inspection date**

12/06/2009

**Inspector**

Ronald Hall

**Setting address**

Penponds County Primary School, Higher Penponds,  
Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0QN

**Telephone number**

01209 718 990

**Email**

littleacorns2004@btconnect.com

**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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 first registered in 1992 and is managed by a committee of parents and community members. This well established setting is registered to provide sessional care for 24 children aged from two-years to eight-years-old. It operates in a purpose-built unit in the grounds of Penponds County Primary School, with access to toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 38 children on roll, all within the Early Years Foundation Stage age range and all are in receipt of educational funding. Sessions run from 08.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday term time only. There are no children attending who speak English as an additional language. The provision has access for those with disabilities. There are six staff members employed to work with the children, all have suitable early years and first aid qualifications. The group is in a Sure Start area, is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the Local Authority.

This provider is on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of Little Acorns is good and is an improving provision. The stimulating environment, good facilities and well trained staff members combine to create an environment which is informative, enjoyable and sustains learning. The provision meets the needs of all children, as it has disabled access and is also fully inclusive. There is 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:

- ensure 'next steps for learning' are generated as outcomes rather than actions
- ensure staff engage children in extended conversations to enhance and further develop learning

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

Although self-evaluation is in its infancy, the very good leadership and management team are effectively driving this forward. This has resulted in the leadership team having an accurate view of the provision overall. Regular staff and management committee meetings are used to evaluate the work of the provision, make changes for improvement and disseminate good practice. The management committee is kept fully-informed about all aspects of the provision. The formal and informal monitoring by its members and vision of and for the provision is driving up standards. They have very effectively dealt with the issues in their previous

report and have made good progress.

All staff members have a good understanding of the children's skills and abilities through each phase of their learning. The leadership and management team involve parents prior to entry, by making initial assessments and in developing a positive attitude to learning. Planning is thorough and individualised, adapting to the needs of each child as they progress.

All statutory documentation and procedures are in place and fully implemented. The children's welfare and safety are paramount resulting in systems which ensure the children are kept safe, with all doors secure and good external and internal systems in place to monitor all children at all times. All fire drill logs and registers are kept up-to-date and children know how to respond appropriately. All staff members are fully trained in child protection procedures. Risk assessments are robust and staff members and parents are fully aware of emergency procedures.

Parents are fully supportive and feel the provision provides an excellent standard of learning. The friendly and approachable staff members build excellent relationships with the children, which engenders happiness and a feeling of being safe. One parent stated; 'I think its brilliant. The staff are so friendly and care for the children.' Parents feel fully informed of their child's progress through regular formal and informal meetings.

The leadership and management team use the close links with the school's early years provision to inform their practice, as well as giving the children in both establishments the opportunities to work together on a regular basis throughout the year. The transition arrangements are excellent and this helps children settle into their new provision well.

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

The provision is an interesting, informative and stimulating environment from the moment the children enter, with a warm welcome being given to every child. A wide range of resources and activities, which cover all the early years programme, are well planned and available for them. Children clearly demonstrate their enjoyment and the excellent relationships created with the staff members encourage the children to strive for their best.

The outdoor area mirrors and extends the indoor areas, with a wide range of large and small play equipment available. Children particularly enjoyed replanting their plants, even though it was raining. One child grinned and exclaimed, 'I'm wet because it's raining, but the plants need the rain to grow.' The skills they are gaining are helping to prepare them well for the future. They enjoy mark-making in a variety of ways, happily discussing the shapes and letters they create. Children use a range of toys and costumes to develop their imaginations. Staff members utilise their knowledge of the children's interests to engage in conversations with them. However, these conversations are not always sufficiently broad and far ranging to fully move the children forward. The home corner encourages imaginative skills, with children happily creating and having a picnic. One child,

handing the provision leader an imaginary sandwich, looked up and sadly stated, 'I'm sorry that's the last ham sandwich, we don't have any more.' They also explained the need to carefully wash up after making the food to stop germs.

Outside children happily played together, pushing each other around in the cars available. A little boy shouted with glee, 'I'm doing a wheelie on my scooter, just like my brother on his bike.'

Excellent planning, assessment and recording systems ensure the needs of all children are met, as well as covering all the areas of the early years programme. Planning ensures excellent coverage of the Every Child Matters agenda, with enjoyment and developing a feeling of safety being high priorities. Careful and regular assessments are used to create the planning and devise the next steps forward. However, these are often expressed in terms of provision rather than the skills, knowledge and understanding the child needs to progress.

Staff members take pride in knowing their children well and regular team meetings ensure all staff members are fully aware of the needs of all children. They use every opportunity to develop language skills, promote social development and encourage independence and confidence in the children. Those with special needs are very well supported both by the Little Acorns staff and a range of external specialists that the provision utilises.

The imaginative way in which the staff organise all indoor and outside areas of the provision, provides challenge and interest to the children's learning. The grounds are used to enhance learning of the wider world.

Snack times provide a social occasion to develop interpersonal skills, as well as reinforce healthy eating, hygiene and safety issues. The children happily explain why some foods are healthy. The manners and attitude of the children towards both each other and staff is good, with the majority of children always being polite and caring in their approach and attitude.

## 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>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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](http://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