

# Little Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY392763
<b>Inspection date</b>	19/11/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Hazel Farrant

<b>Setting address</b>	St John's Church, Church Road, St Johns, Woking, Surrey, GU21 7QN
<b>Telephone number</b>	07947145710
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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).

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.

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## Description of the setting

Little Acorns Pre-School opened under its current owner in 2009. The pre-school is set in a residential area close to three local schools. The pre-school is easily accessible and has its own premises in the grounds of St John's Church, St John's, Woking. Children enjoy access to a secure outside play area which is used solely by the setting. Facilities available include toilets in the entrance hall and a kitchenette area within the pre-school room. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 26 children under eight years. Currently there are 37 children from two to under five years on roll, of which, 19 children receive funding for early education. The setting is open for 38 weeks of the year, weekday mornings from 09.15 to 12.15. It serves families from the local community and surrounding villages. There are 11 members of staff currently work with the children, four of whom hold a recognised early years qualification with three members of staff currently on training programmes. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those children who speak English as an additional language. The setting receives support from the Early Years Childcare Service.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are valued as unique individuals and they make good progress within their individual learning journey. The setting's stimulating and challenging environment enables children to develop independent, active learning as they have fun. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well. The provision recognises that the systems for observations and assessments and the further development and completion of self-evaluation are areas which will bring about continued improvement.

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

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

- further develop methods of observation and assessment to ensure that children's next steps are being clearly identified and used in leading future planning
- further develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children
- improve equality of opportunity for all children by seeking relevant information about their backgrounds, culture and religion to ensure individual needs of all children will be met effectively

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

The safety and welfare of children are given a high priority throughout the provision and staff know the procedures to follow if they have any child protection concerns. Management are in the process of booking relevant courses for the staff team to ensure they remain updated with current safeguarding procedures. The manager ensures her staff do not work in isolation, which further promotes children's safety. The setting has recently changed ownership. The manager has been associated with the setting for nine years and her staff team has remained the same, thus providing a seamless transition for children and their families. Policies and procedures are accessible to staff, parents and carers at all times and are currently being reviewed and updated. Parents complete a registration form in readiness for their child starting at the setting. However, they are not asked about the child's culture or religion and therefore the needs of children may not be fully known. Daily risk assessments are completed on the inside and outside environment which further protects children. A formal record of risk assessment is also in place. Management fully support the staff in all aspects, to ensure positive outcomes for children in their learning and development. Staff are deployed effectively and work extremely well together as a team. They understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment for all children. They undertake regular evacuation practice and remind children how to keep safe. For example, staff remind children to walk in the hall and not to run.

The management and staff are committed towards providing the best possible care and education for children. Methods of self-evaluation are yet to be fully in place. Therefore improvements are not prioritised to ensure improved outcomes for all children. Areas and resources are well organised and used very effectively. For example, there are designated areas for each area of learning where children engage in stimulating activities. There is an efficient key person system in place; staff know the children very well. Children are regularly observed to ensure they are progressing in all six areas of learning. However, their next steps are not clearly documented in order to inform and provide clarity for future planning, which will ensure that all children reach their full potential. Staff are well qualified and experienced, and they are supported if future training needs are identified. They strive to provide an inclusive and welcoming service and work effectively as a team because they feel valued and involved within the setting.

Recruitment, employment and induction procedures are in place to protect children. Parents value the friendly, informal relationships they share with staff and feel involved and included in the pre-school. Regular newsletters and notices ensure that parents are kept informed about changes and improvements within the setting. Daily verbal exchanges and the use of 'home diaries' ensure children's current interests and achievements are shared. Parents are invited into the setting on a personal one-to-one basis with staff to discuss progress in their child's learning. Staff have links with other providers within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to promote the integration of education and any extended services.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children enjoy their learning immensely and achieve very well in relation to their starting points. This is because the nurturing and enabling environment provides children with great opportunities to choose play materials and follow their individual learning styles. Children are eager to attend and relish their time in the setting. Most children are very confident and benefit from a staff team who are kind and caring towards their needs. The environment is set out well and prepared prior to the children's arrival, offering them access to excellent activities and opportunities which are supported by an extensive range of resources and equipment. A parents' notice board with detailed information and posters displayed creates a welcoming atmosphere for all. Children benefit from a good amount of space indoors, which is arranged effectively to provide them with good levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff support children's play with great skill, weaving in each of the areas of learning. They genuinely act on children's expressed interests and carry these out on the same day or next day. For example, children choose to play 'What's the time Mr Wolf' in the outside area.

Children have free access to a wide range of resources that supports an excellent programme of themes and activities. Equipment is of a high standard and checked regularly for safety and hygiene, ensuring children are safe at all times. Children are independent as they make choices and self-select toys and equipment for themselves. They initiate their own play and use imagination well; as they become holiday makers utilising the empty wheeled suitcase to pack their clothes in. Others become cleaners and set about using a range of resources to clean, polish and vacuum the home corner. They build their own monsters, using recycled materials, along with a range of craft items which they help themselves to. They expertly roll out dough and make 'jam tarts' and 'gingerbread men' and offer them to the staff. Dried pasta is used creatively by the children as they make patterns in the dough. They learn about healthy eating as they make 'The Gruffalo's' apple crumble. Children measure and weigh the ingredients which provides them with good opportunities to develop mathematical concepts in a practical way.

Children are able to use their writing skills well as they draw and write letters and lists, freely accessing the wide choice of writing materials. Some children are able to write their own name and staff are attentive to encourage their skills. They use language well as they talk about events in their lives, places they have visited and talk about their families. Children freely enjoy looking at books and discussing and sharing them with their friends. They have a good understanding of numbers as they play a fishing game and name the number written on the fish they have caught. Children understand the concept of big and small, and less and more than, through practical activities such as when they are helping to prepare the morning snack. This instigates conversations between children and adults about how to use utensils safely. Children are developing excellent skills for the future. They are independent to tackle problems and do things for themselves, such as when they select a costume and put it on for themselves. They are becoming confident to use the computer mouse and the selection of mobile phones that are available.

Children's health and welfare requirements are met very well. They enjoy healthy snacks during the session through a 'rolling snack time' and have constant access to drinks to keep them hydrated. They have daily opportunities to use their physical skills through the equipped outdoor play area, using the climbing and balancing equipment with skill. Good hygiene routines are encouraged and any sickness or injuries are managed well. Appropriate praise and attention from the staff ensures children behave well and they learn to respect each other and the environment. Children's social skills are very good because they are respected and given real choice and time to finish what they are doing. Balanced with this are clear and realistic expectations that they will share, take turns, help one another and be kind and responsible in an age appropriate way. All children are included in all games and activities and each individual is made to feel special and their qualities encouraged. Space and easy access to safe and suitable toys and equipment enable children to choose what they want to play with, and enjoy freedom of movement due to the free-flow environment.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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

Met