

# Little Acorns at Our Lady & St Oswald's Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY232143
<b>Inspection date</b>	25/06/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	David Shepherd
<b>Setting address</b>	Upper Brook Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 2TG
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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).

## Description of the setting

Little Acorns at St Oswald's Pre-School opened in 2002. It is located in the grounds of Our Lady and St Oswald's Primary School, Oswestry. It operates from one room and includes an adjacent outside area that has yet to be developed. The pre-school uses the outside area located by the reception class in the school as well as the school playground and field. There are plans to place a ramp by the external doors to facilitate disabled access but at present disabled access is difficult. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.30 to 15.30, term time only. There are currently 32 children aged two to five years on roll, all of whom are of Early Years Foundation Stage age. Children attend from the local area. The pre-school supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Four staff, who are appropriately qualified, work in the pre-school. Links with the school are good. The pre-school receives support from the teacher/mentor from the local authority's Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership. The pre-school is on the Early Years register.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Little Acorns at Our Lady and St Oswald's is a good pre-school. It meets children's individual welfare and learning development needs well. Relationships between staff and children are very good and children respond willingly to what they are asked to do. A wide variety of interesting indoor and outdoor activities are provided that reflect all aspects of Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Links with parents are good. The manager and staff continually review their practice and have a good capacity to improve provision further.

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

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

- ensure parents have access to the key policies, such as the complaints procedure
- be more reflective and evaluative about areas to improve.

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff have developed useful policies and established procedures that ensure the safe and efficient management of Early Years Foundation Stage provision. However, parents do not have easy access to these, including the complaints policy and procedures. The staff are appropriately qualified to meet the children's needs. Three staff are suitably qualified with the fourth staff member currently working towards a suitable qualification. All hold suitable first aid certification and have been CRB checked. Staff attend regular training to improve provision further.

Staff discuss informally on a daily basis to review their provision. They take turns in planning the next week's provision based on the assessment of children's interests and needs. Planning for the following week is specific and of good quality, clearly identifying what children will learn. The needs of all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are met well. Children are safe and well cared for.

Staff are deployed effectively. Key workers know their children very well. They compile a useful portfolio of children's achievements. Portfolios include photographs, samples of children's work, observations by staff and outstandingly parent's comments about their children's developments. These are passed on to the school as a record of children's progress in the pre-school as are the records of children's progress using the local authority's Foundation Stage Profile. All this is excellent practice.

All staff meet monthly to discuss wider issues of provision. A few useful points for improvement are noted from this review, but overall, the points made are too descriptive and not evaluative enough to improve provision further. The overall quality of self-reflection indicates that the capacity to make improvements is good.

Links with parents are good, easy to read newsletters are sent out monthly, included in these newsletters parents are asked if they can contribute to the learning in any way. For example, the following is an extract from a newsletter, 'If anyone knows anyone who would like to come and talk about their professions please feel free to talk to a member of staff'. Letters are translated if necessary. Parents attend sports days and parents' evenings.

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

Staff look after the welfare needs of children well. They ensure that the children are safe. The premises are secure. Risk assessments are carried out for inside and outdoor activities and for off-site visits. Daily checks are made to identify any damage to equipment, toys and furniture. Children are closely supervised at all times. They are protected from the sun and suitable provision is made for wet weather activities.

Children eat healthily in the pre-school. Good guidance is given to parents about what to include in their children's lunch boxes. Snacks include options like wholemeal toast, crackers, cheese, vegetables, fruit and milk. Water is available for children at any time.

Children's achievement and learning is outstanding. They enjoy playing with toys, equipment and materials. They behave well and respond eagerly when asked to carry out activities. During the inspection, children chatted enthusiastically to a member of staff about their bumps and scratches. At group time, they busily engage in creative activities using scissors, glue, waste materials, crayons and pencils for cutting out shapes developing their physical and creative skills. Evidence on the wall and other displays indicates that children practice their number skills,

work out puzzles and jigsaws, make collages, paint, grow plants and flowers from seed, learn about keeping safe on the road and visit the police station. One popular aspect of this visit was going inside a police cell. Luckily, all the children were let out and returned safely to the pre-school. On the warm summer day of the inspection, children played outside on the school field. The atmosphere on the field was a buzz of happy children enjoying what was being provided for them.

Children make a good contribution to the smooth running of the pre-school. For example, some helped to tidy up after the cutting and sticking activities had taken place. They walk around the limited space in the room sensibly and play well together. They are good early learners and prepared for the next stage in their schooling.

The balance and range of inside and outside activities are appropriate. This is in spite of the pre-school not being able to implement free flow of activities because of the restrictions of the accommodation. Outside activities take place each session. Children have good opportunities to choose their own activities as well as being directed by staff to carry out tasks together. Provision is varied and this keeps the children interested and involved in what is on offer.

## 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?	1
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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