

# Little Acorns Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 318602  
**Inspection date** 25/08/2009  
**Inspector** Julie Morrison

**Setting address** c/o ASDA Distribution Centre, Staithes Road, Pattison Industrial Estate, District 8, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE38 8NW  
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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 Nursery is one of 10 provisions run by a private organisation. It opened in 1998 and operates from purpose built premises in Washington. The nursery is open each week day from 7.30am until 6pm for 52 weeks of the year. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 98 children under eight years, of whom no more than 27 may be under two years at any one time. They currently have 116 children on roll in the early age range. The nursery employs 19 staff. All of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. The nursery kitchen is currently being refurbished and consequently the premises are not consistently secure. This is a breach of the specific legal requirements and does not effectively safeguard children. All children and their families are warmly welcomed into the setting by friendly and approachable staff. Staff know children well and suitable procedures are in place to observe individual children to inform future planning. This is combined with a wide range of activities to ensure that children are making appropriate progress towards the early learning goals. Effective procedures are in place to assess the care and education provided, resulting in the continual improvement of the setting.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

## 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:

- consider entry to the premises during refurbishments to ensure that the premises remain safe and secure and intruders are unable to enter the building. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register)

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To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- consider the organisation of daily routines in order to meet the differing and competing needs of every child
- further develop staff's understanding of when and how to engage children's interests and extend learning to ensure that opportunities to further develop learning are not missed
- make sufficient time for staff to reflect on what has been observed about children to ensure that planning and observations are up-to-date and clearly

linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage

- help children seek to do things for themselves, such as serving their own food, in order to support the development of independence skills.

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

All staff at the setting are appropriately qualified and robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. This is complemented by effective monitoring of staff's ongoing suitability, for example, by ensuring that all Criminal Records Bureau checks are updated every three years. Staff meetings, appraisals and regular training play an integral part in the effective organisation of the nursery and promoting outcomes for children. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear about procedures to follow should they have any concerns. All documentation required to promote the effective management of the setting is in place, up-to-date and regularly reviewed, such as accident forms and policies. Detailed risk assessments are in place covering all aspects of the provision including the current refurbishment of the kitchen. However, during this period of refurbishment a door directly into the nursery entrance is not consistently locked. This means that the premises are not secure. This does not effectively safeguard children and is a breach of the legal requirements.

The manager and staff have worked hard to address the recommendations raised at the previous inspection. For example, procedures for planning have been further developed to take into account the needs of the individual child and improved procedures are in place for hand washing. This has a positive impact on the outcomes for children. All staff have a clear understanding of areas for development at the setting. The manager liaises well with their head office, other organisations, staff and parents to gather feedback about the setting in order to assess the care and education provided.

Very good relationships have been built with parents. Staff speak to them on a daily basis and show a good understanding of issues specific to individual children. For example, enquiring how medical appointments have gone or birthday parties. This is complemented by daily written information, easy access to children's individual development files, parents evenings and newsletters to ensure that parents are fully up-to-date with their child's care and progress. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, for example, adding 'star moments' information to their individual files or coming into the setting to talk about what they do. Feedback from parents is very positive about the care and learning that their children receive.

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

Staff at the setting have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a result of attending relevant training. Space is effectively organised to enable children to move around freely and to independently access a wide range of

resources. Children benefit from key workers who know them well and plan for the individual child and cover all areas of learning. Staff complete individual files for the children, which include written observations, photographs and examples of their learning. However, due to factors such as time constraints or staff holidays, some planning and files are not up-to-date or consistently linked to the EYFS. As a result, up-to-date planning is not in place for some children. A suitable balance of child-led and adult-centred activities take place. Babies enjoy crawling around and exploring different textured materials, while staff support them as they take early steps. All children have regular opportunities to be creative, for example, painting, making hand prints and exploring play dough. They show an interest in books as even young children select them independently and all enjoy joining in with favourite stories and action rhymes with staff. Communication skills are well developed, children confidently approach visitors and proudly show what they have done. Planned activities such as celebrating the Chinese New Year and Diwali help children to begin to learn about different cultures. They also have opportunities to learn about the natural world as they visit nature reserves and follow the lifecycle of a caterpillar. Children are encouraged to look at the cocoons and discuss what will happen as they place them into butterfly nets. This activity is effectively reinforced as staff then read a story about a butterfly to the children. This has an obvious impact on some of the children as they run outside pretending to be butterflies or crawl along the floor as caterpillars. Most staff extend children's learning well, for example, responding to children's interest in photographs by providing a camera to make their own photograph album. However, some staff miss opportunities to further extend learning and some of the daily routines, such as moving younger children into older rooms while others sleep, are not consistently managed effectively. This results, in some children not being fully engaged or supported in activities, or appropriately supervised.

Children have formed good relationships with the staff and their peers. Staff clearly know them well, recognising when they are tired or unsettled and responding to them with one to one time and lots of cuddles. Children's health is promoted well at the nursery and this is supported by receiving a recent healthy nurseries award. They have good access to the outdoor play area where they are able to climb, run around and ride on bikes. This is complemented with local walks and trips to the farm. A healthy and balanced menu, along with snacks of fresh fruit further promotes children's good health. However, there are no opportunities for children to self-serve their food in order to further develop their independence. Planned activities, such as dental hygiene and visits from the red cross, further support children to learn about keeping healthy. Regular fire drills, practicing road safety and visits from the local police promotes children understanding of the importance of keeping themselves safe. This is reinforced by gentle reminders from staff for children to be careful while running around and not to climb on furniture. Effective behaviour management techniques help children to begin to learn right from wrong and to respect each other. As a result, children share well and show care and concern for one another. For example, asking other children why they are upset and holding their hands. Colourful displays of their work help children to feel a sense of belonging to the setting and values their contributions. Children are happy and settled at the nursery.

## 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?	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>	4
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>	3
<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?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
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?	3

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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. (CR5.3) 25/08/2009

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. (CR5.3) 25/08/2009