

Little Acorns Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Alison Weaver

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Type of setting 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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery opened in 2008. It operates from a purpose built unit in a building owned by the Elim Family Centre near the centre of Eastbourne. The nursery has access to a large playroom, a smaller room for children under two years, a toilet area, kitchen, office and staffroom on the first floor of the building. There is a lift for access. A maximum of 46 children may attend at any one time. The group opens five days a week for 51 weeks of the year. Opening hours are from 07.45 until 18.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 51 children from birth to under five years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and also currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs five staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety, health and emotional well-being are satisfactorily met. They make satisfactory progress in their learning and development in relation to their starting points. The setting adequately promotes inclusion to enable all children to achieve. The leadership of the setting has plans that are likely to continue to improve outcomes for children. However, there are currently very few systems for reflective practice within the whole staff team that will help identify strengths and weaknesses in the setting; parents also have limited opportunities to be meaningfully involved in the evaluation process.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 09/09/2009

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

- ensure that identified individual learning priorities are used effectively in the planning and children's progress is clearly tracked
- promote equality of opportunity and diversity by ensuring that every child's background is acknowledged and opportunities are provided for children to

- develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- continue to develop links with parents and other providers in order to ensure continuity and coherence of care and education
- develop ways to effectively evaluate the organisation of the setting and the systems, involving staff and parents, to continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children
- improve the availability of programmable toys and technological resources in order to support children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has satisfactory procedures for safeguarding children. Staff are aware of their responsibility to report any concerns they have about a child. There are appropriate recruitment procedures in place and all permanent staff have a relevant qualification. However, the setting is in breach of the welfare requirements as it is failing to ensure that there is a member of staff with a current first aid certificate present at all times and this puts children at risk. Adequate risk assessments are carried out to minimise hazards for children. The setting is kept secure by the use of security entry codes on the main door. Other doors are not always kept closed to prevent access to children but staff supervise them in the area beyond the play room. The required documentation is in place and generally appropriately maintained.

Overall, resources are used appropriately to support and promote children's development. The premises are generally organised well to meet children's needs. They are made colourful and attractive for the children although not all displays are at an appropriate level for children to see and interact with. Staffing ratios are being met but due to the lack of an established full staff team there is a heavy reliance on the use of bank staff that impacts on the ability to build a sense of security with the children.

There are a number of children in the setting with English as an additional language. Some steps are taken to engage with these families to ensure children's needs are met and their backgrounds acknowledged and respected. However, there are weaknesses in staff's knowledge of how to ensure these children are fully included and their home languages recognised so that they reach their full potential in their learning and development.

The partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection. Parents receive a variety of helpful information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and the planned activities. There are more opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's assessment. Some of the setting's new initiatives to develop partnerships have been taken up by a few parents. For example, evidence can be seen in the learning journeys of where some parents have contributed observations of what a child has achieved at home. There has been limited success with the open days where parents can see the children's records and discuss their progress with the key person. Staff have made some links with other providers and agencies to help support individual children although these are not fully developed.

Daily care diaries are used with parents and other providers to share information about a child with each other.

The leaders and managers are keen to seek further improvement in the setting. Ongoing staff training is encouraged and appraisals are carried out regularly to help develop their skills. Advice is sought from professionals and support workers to help move the setting forward. Development plans are implemented and the actions taken have a positive impact on the care of children. However, they are not used well as all staff are not made aware of them and their contributions are not sought and valued. Some evaluation of the activities is carried out by all permanent staff but there are few other ways in which they can contribute to the monitoring of the provision. The considerable changes in staff within the setting has added to the problems of building a sense of vision within the staff team.

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

Staff plan and provide activities for the children that cover all areas of learning. The opportunities for older children to develop skills for the future are slightly limited by the fact there is less access to a varied range of simple technology. Staff regularly observe and record children's achievements. The identification and use of the next steps for individual children's learning in the planning process is not always fully effective. The quality of interaction of the staff to promote children's learning is varied. Some are more skilled than others at helping children extend their understanding and express their ideas.

Staff are caring and friendly and this results in the majority of children settling easily. However, the high staff turnover has had a negative impact on the key person system. It has resulted in some children having had several changes of key person and this makes it more difficult for them to form strong emotional attachments to one special adult. In general, children are appropriately occupied throughout the day and help themselves to toys from the easily accessible low storage. They enjoy playing with a good range of safe and suitable resources. They play well together and learn to share their toys. Several children are seen showing concern for another child and calling a friend over to play.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe when they go on outings and cross roads. Planned activities with fire officers and lifeguards enable children to find out about people who help them stay safe. Very young children and babies are helped to develop a sense of security as staff follow their individual home routines and give them access to familiar comforters. However, activities are not always effectively planned in advance to ensure that safety issues with young children have been fully thought through.

Children develop a satisfactory awareness of the need for good personal hygiene through the daily routines. Staff maintain an acceptable level of cleanliness in the setting. Children eat healthily and learn about what is good to eat through some planned activities such as making fruit salad and a play food shop. Visits from a nurse and dentist also help them develop an understanding of the importance of

looking after their bodies. They have daily opportunities to enjoy the fresh air and to exercise in the interesting and fun outdoor learning environment. This area includes opportunities for children to make marks and explore water and sand. They like to make sounds by banging on the hanging saucepans and pipes with wooden spoons. Children show good coordination as they play on the slide, rocker and scooters. They throw and catch the balls with increasing skill.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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