

# Little Acorns Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY286027  
**Inspection date** 23/02/2010  
**Inspector** Vicky Turner

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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*.

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 Day Nursery opened in 2004 and operates from four rooms in a purpose built modular building situated within the grounds of St Andrews School, Cobham in Surrey. A maximum of 52 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 90 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 33 children receive funding for early years education. The setting serves the local community and currently supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are currently training for a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. Eight members of staff hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 3, four hold National Vocational Qualification at level 2 and one is working towards the Early Years Professional Status. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The setting receives support from an early learning advisor from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

It is an inclusive setting where children and babies play, learn and develop in a stimulating, vibrant and secure environment. Excellent relationships with parents, the school and external agencies means that children are well supported and make good progress. The rigorous self-evaluation process means managers understand their strengths and know what needs to be done to improve. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed reflecting the setting's 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:

- develop systems for monitoring and analysing children's progress in order to gain an overview of progress and identify where provision could be better
- provide more opportunities to develop children's phonic skills.

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

The provider, managers and staff share a clear vision for the setting and are committed to providing high quality care and education for children in their care.

Staff collectively review and update policies which are followed consistently. They are encouraged to update their training and improve their skills. The thorough self-evaluation process has enabled the staff to build on their strengths and drive improvement. These include further developing the outdoor play areas to allow children to choose and move more freely across a range of activities and to create a more multi-cultural home corner. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Effective policies, procedures and records are in place to ensure that the children are kept safe. Staff are fully trained in child protection issues and understand procedures to be followed if there are concerns about a child. The premises are very well secured with an intercom entry system. The garden is secured by fencing and locked gates. Daily risk assessments of toys, kitchen and the garden ensure that the children are kept safe at all times. Regular fire drills help children learn how to vacate the building safely.

The setting is exceptionally well resourced with attractive age-appropriate resources in all the rooms. Resources meet safety standards and are accessible to all the children. All staff are well trained in Early Years Foundation Stage provision and are effectively deployed to ensure the children and babies receive the attention and support that they need.

The adults provide an inclusive setting which ensures that all children have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of daily routines. Learning activities are planned to meet the individual needs of children and this means that all children are equally included. Positive images of different cultures and disabilities, dolls, dressing up clothes, and music from different cultures help children learn about differences and to value diversity. Children participate in interesting activities to celebrate different festivals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported.

The setting works particularly well with the school which means that the pre-school children get the opportunity to use the school's library once a week and join in with ballet classes once a week. The setting is supported by the school's head teacher who advises on pre-school development matters and by a member of the local authority's Physical and Sensory Support Team who supports any children with hearing impairment. The setting also visits other early years settings to observe good practice and share ideas.

Parents are very well informed, for example, through monthly newsletters, parents' notice board, questionnaires, the website and verbally, including at parents' evenings. Staff complete daily contact books to inform parents of their children's activities during the day. Parents are invited and are advised on how to support their children's learning and development at home. Parents are invited to express their views and are 'delighted with the standard of care and feel that 'staff are always happy, helpful and courteous'.

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

Children and babies are settled and happy and make good progress across a wide range of stimulating play activities in a secure environment. Key persons support the small group of children allocated to them and plan appropriate learning experiences. 'Learning Journeys' record children's progress effectively and plan the next steps in the children's learning. Adults know their children well, but systems for monitoring and analysing progress as a whole are not yet developed. Children observed eggs hatch in an incubator, watched caterpillars hatch into butterflies and frog spawns turn into frogs. They plant different vegetables in the vegetable patch and look after the Guinea pigs. Children enjoy music and movement session following instructions on television. The spacious outdoor area is very well resourced and provides excellent opportunities for developing their physical skills, but without a covered area, access to outdoor play can be restricted in bad weather. Visitors to the setting such as a dancer, a hairdresser, a pilot, fire and police officers also help the children to enjoy their time in the setting and make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children are encouraged to behave in ways which prevent them from hurting each other and themselves. Children's questionnaires indicate that children feel very safe because the adults make them feel safe. Daily and weekly safety checks on toys and equipment help to fully safeguard children's welfare

Children very readily adopt very healthy lifestyles and make excellent contributions to their learning. Healthy lunches ensure that children experience and learn about a wide variety of different tastes and food textures. Children make healthy choices from the snack bar. The setting caters fully for children's differing needs, including for babies during their different stages of weaning. Children respond very positively to the guidance about hygiene that they receive and all children over the age of two are encouraged to brush their teeth each day after lunch. A rigorous nappy changing policy ensures that nappies are disposed of appropriately.

Children and babies share positive and trusting relationships with their adults. As a result, children behave exceptionally well. Simple routines help children understand what is expected of them. They are encouraged to join in with group activities and children contribute really well by selecting their own activities and helping to tidy up equipment at the end of each session. Children also contribute to the wider community by raising funds for 'Children in Need' and 'Red Nose Day'

Children make good progress in developing communication, language and literacy skills. They visit the school library, choose books, listen to stories and 'talk' with their adults and their friends throughout the day. The children recognise letters in their names, but opportunities for developing their phonic skills are restricted. Problem-solving and numeracy skills are developed well through counting, number puzzles and computer programs. French lessons for the pre-school children and a good range of electronic and computer resources, for example, programmable toys, help children to develop good skills for the future.

## 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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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