



## Little Acorns Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY104025
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Janette Elizabeth Owen
<b>Setting Address</b>	Cooks Lane, Kingstone, Hereford, HR2 9EY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Rebecca Verry & Elaine Campbell
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Acorns Nursery was registered in 2002 and operates from a building in the village of Kingstone in Herefordshire. A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time which includes a maximum of 16 children in the out of school club. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 throughout the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from 3 months to 8 years on roll. Of these 22

children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 staff, 13 of the staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a Foundation degree in Early Years. The nursery receives support from a mentor teacher and is part of the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and holds a Quality Assurance Award at Bronze level and is currently working towards a Silver Award.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted because practitioners follow current and appropriate health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. The children begin to learn through daily routines, simple good health and hygiene practices and the importance of personal hygiene. They develop a high level of independence and take responsibility for their own self-care needs such as toileting and hand washing.

Freshly prepared meals and snacks are provided throughout the day, ensuring children are well nourished. All children receive a hot cooked meal at lunchtimes. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and the information is used to ensure their needs are met appropriately. Meal times are a sociable occasion, where all children are able to develop their social skills and independence.

Regular physical activity is used effectively to enable the children to be active and develop their muscles and co-ordination. They have access to a well equipped, safe outside play area and are also taken on walks where they can develop their stamina and get to know their local environment. The staff demonstrate a very good understanding of the children's developmental needs and abilities. They provided a wide range of activities and experiences and a high level of support to enable the children to achieve new skills. They are actively involved in the children's play, modelling safe ways to use equipment and encouraging children to get enjoyment and benefit from the variety of physical activities.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. The premises are welcoming to children, being well maintained, bright, with stimulating displays of children's work. The environment is very well organised allowing children to be grouped according to age, although there are very effective arrangements for enabling children to move between groups and become familiar with new children and staff. This is beneficial in helping the children to move on through the nursery with very little unsettling or interruption to their development.

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are safe and appropriate for the age and developmental needs of the children. Child sized furniture and equipment enables the children to be safe and comfortable when participating in activities, at mealtimes and when at rest. The rooms are well set out enabling the children to develop their independence as they move safely around the rooms selecting activities and toys from the good range which is of very good quality.

Positive steps are taken to ensure the safety of the children. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in regard to maintaining the safety and welfare of all the children, they follow written procedures and guidelines which are reviewed and updated. Staffing levels are good ensuring a high level of supervision and support for all children. Risk assessments are regularly carried out and are used to identify any potential hazards to children. However, the organisation and use of the computer work station is not assessed to ensure children are developing good practices when using the computer and the temperature in the pre-school room is not monitored.

The nursery follows local Area Child Protection Committee procedures for managing any concerns regarding child protection. Staff have attended training and have a clear understanding of the nurseries policies and procedures and how to protect children. Written policies have been reviewed and updated to meet current regulations.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are making good developmental progress because they are very happy, settled and have their individual needs well met by experienced and caring staff. Effective use is made of early years guidance, such as 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum to provide good quality care and education for all children.

The nursery has effective arrangements in place to enable children to make steady progress as they progress through the nursery. Opportunities for younger children to mix with their peer groups for some activities and at meal times are beneficial as the children are able to learn new skills through the good interaction and involvement with the older children. Their personal, social and emotional development is well fostered. Staff encourage children to begin to develop their independence from an early age through every day routines such as meal times. They are well supported by caring staff and are becoming confident and self-reliant. All children are able to participate in a wide and varied range of play and learning opportunities as they explore and investigate the world around them using well structured activities and good quality resources which contribute to the stimulating learning environment of the nursery.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children demonstrate a good attitude to learning, they are attentive, showing an interest in the activities and responding well to the methods the staff use to help them learn new skills. The

children are very confident and show a good level of independence as they choose activities and initiate their own play. Their independence and self-care skills are developed through every day routines, mealtimes, toileting and getting ready for outside play. Children are well behaved, they respond very well to the staff who are good role models for the children. The children show care and consideration for others, and are willing to help other children or staff with tasks and activities. Staff use effective strategies for promoting children's self-esteem such as choosing a child to be the "special" helper for the day. Children are rewarded with star stickers for good behaviour and achievements; this promotes the child's self-worth and shows their achievements are valued. The interaction between children and adults is very good. They are developing their communication skills as the staff involve them in conversation. Very good use is made of questioning, children are asked to think about what they see and hear. They consider what they know and provide an answer based on their own experience and knowledge or their own ideas. Good use is made of activities which enable children to recognise letter sounds and widen their vocabulary. Children's record books and displays of children's work show a clear progression towards writing. They use writing materials in role play as they begin to link mark making with writing for a purpose such as making a list in the "toy shop". Most children have developed a very good understanding of numbers for counting and as labels; they confidently recognise numbers up to ten and are able to link the number of objects to the written number. They are fully engaged in the daily counting activity using the number line. Staff have captured the children's interest in a visually interesting way which has enabled the children to understand the concept of numbers well. They learn mathematical concepts and use mathematical language in a variety of practical activities as well as through games and construction. Opportunities for children to explore and investigate the world around them are provided through access to their surrounding outside environment where they can observe the changing seasons and use their natural curiosity to watch wildlife and insects. Outings and visitors to the nursery enable the children to learn about jobs people have and to be involved in their community. A varied range of activities are offered which enables the children to develop their dexterity and co-ordination. Their physical development is improved using a variety of experiences including nature walks and structured exercise. They use craft and construction activities to design and make models and have access to a good range of media and materials which they are able to use to create their own art work and displays. Children have good opportunities to develop their imagination in their own way with out being adult led. Staff have a good understanding of when to offer support and when to allow children to develop their own ideas, using the good range of resources provided.

The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use effective and imaginative teaching methods to capture the children's interest and promote learning. Children are encouraged to take the initiative and develop their own ideas; their natural curiosity is channelled toward learning new ideas and concepts. The planned activities cover the six areas of learning and provide a balanced curriculum for the children which also has links to the approach used by the younger children in the nursery. Staff use their knowledge of individual children's progress to adapt activities to meet their developmental needs. However, this information is not included in the planning to ensure all staff has a clear understanding of how to provide further challenges for older or more able children.

Staff observe and assess children's progress in relation to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum, this information is used to keep parents informed about the progress their child is making but is used less effectively in informing future curriculum plans.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements in place for obtaining information on the needs of each child. Staff use this information to provide care for the children in accordance with parent's wishes. Children are treated as individuals by staff who know each child well, as many children have attended the nursery since babies. Staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific educational needs are understood, and learning opportunities which meet their identified needs are provided.

Children's awareness of the world around them is raised through topic work and activities. They have access to a range of multicultural resources which are used to support their understanding of other cultures and beliefs. Children are involved in community activities, have strong links with the local school and good use is made of visitors to the setting who share their knowledge and expertise with the children, widening their understanding of the community in which they live. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Strategies for managing children's behaviour are good, they are age appropriate and used consistently by staff throughout the nursery. Staff are very good role models for the children encouraging them to be caring, helpful and have respect for others. The children are happy and settled. Their self-esteem is raised through praise and acknowledgement of good behaviour and helpfulness. Each day a "Star" child is selected as the special helper for the day, raising the child's self-esteem and confidence. Children take pride in helping with tasks such as tidying away and helping other children, they are developing a responsible attitude to behaviour.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good relationship staff have built with parents. They are kept well informed about the provision and their child's routines and development through formal and informal exchanges of information. Information such as parent packs, newsletters and curriculum information are well presented and provide clear information to parents. Written policies are available for parents, keeping them informed of the procedures the nursery uses to maintain children's welfare. However, the complaints policy does not contain up to date information concerning new regulations.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the very well organised provision and consistent staff group. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust, ensuring children are well protected

and cared for by staff who are knowledgeable and suitably qualified. Staff have specific roles and responsibilities within the nursery; they work well as a team and make children and parents welcome. There is a positive atmosphere throughout the nursery which is conducive to a happy settled environment for all the children.

The leadership and management of the provision is very good. The managers ensure the provision is very well organised and they are committed to improving the provision for the benefit of the children through review of practice and effective strategies for motivating staff. The management values the commitment of the staff to training, and has good arrangements in place to support staff training and development, which in turn positively supports children's care learning and play and contributes to the positive relationship with children and parents.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous care and nursery education inspections recommended that the nursery further developed staff knowledge of how writing can be used to communicate using everyday activities, and routines and to use concepts of addition and subtraction. Also to ensure that the child protection policy included procedures to be followed in event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Children have been provided with more regular access to writing materials in the role play area where they can further develop their writing skills as a form of communication in a meaningful way. Displays of children's work show that children are beginning to label their own work. Effective teaching strategies capture the children's interest in number work enabling them to further develop their understanding of concepts of addition and subtraction. The child protection policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect regulations and clearly identifies procedures to be followed. The improved understanding of the child protection procedures and the good use of effective teaching strategies has improved children's care, well-being and development.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- conduct a risk assessment relating to children's use of computer
- review systems for monitoring the temperature in all areas of the building
- update complaints policy.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop further the planned programme for learning to take into account children's strengths and weaknesses identified through observation and assessment in order to provide sufficient challenges for all children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)