



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 502621

DfES Number: 541569

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	20/09/2004
Inspector Name	Rita Cruddos

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Little Acorns
Setting Address	The Oaks Centre Stocks Lane Penketh Warrington WA5 2QS

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Mrs Deborah Jean Byford
Address	43 Castle Green Westbrook Warrington Cheshire WA5 7XB

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery opened in the year 2000. It operates from two rooms in the Oaks Community Centre, which is situated in Stocks Lane, Penketh. The day nursery also has occasional access to the main hall of the centre and the playing field of the adjoining school. The day nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 72 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 37 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00.

There are ten full-time and four part-time staff working with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. There are two members of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

Little Acorns Day Nursery provides good quality care for children. A well motivated staff team provides a warm and welcoming environment for children and organise space and resources effectively. All staff have good practical skills in caring for children and undertake regular training to improve and build on these. Documentation is in place and mostly accurate.

The provider has an awareness of safety and takes positive steps to promote safety and prevent accidents. This includes frequent risk assessments and daily checks of the premises. Many of the staff have undertaken appropriate first aid training. Good hygiene practices are encouraged and healthy, nutritious meals and snacks are provided. Staff are aware of child protection issues and can put the procedures into practice. The children's dignity and privacy is not always endured when the changing

area in the classroom is used.

The nursery offers a very good range of activities indoors and outdoors which help children progress in all areas of their development. Children are well stimulated and interested in all that the nursery provides. Resources that reflect positive images are provided throughout the setting thus giving children a balanced view of the world around them. Staff interact with the children very well, they talk and listen to them and ask appropriate questions which challenges their thinking and enable them to make decisions. The staff team manage behaviour well with consistent use of praise and encouragement. The setting is proactive in ensuring appropriate care is provided for children who have special needs.

Staff have good relationships with parents. Children are cared for according to parent's wishes and parents are kept well informed about daily activities. A prospectus and Parent's Handbook is provided. Parent's views are regularly sought and there is a working group of staff and parents.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The organisation and deployment of the committed staff team is effective. Staff training needs are identified and there is a commitment to enable staff increase their knowledge and skills through further training.
- Regular checks and risk assessments are completed ensuring children can play safely. Staff are aware of and can implement Health and Safety requirements.
- Good use is made of space with clearly defined areas for play. A wide range of toys, equipment and activities are available within the nursery.
- Children have many opportunities to explore and express themselves through music. They sing songs and use musical instruments enthusiastically.
- The setting is committed to providing appropriate care for children who have special needs. There are extra staff in post over and above the standard requirements. This ensures that the setting is able to offer good care and staff can attend appropriate training courses and meetings in order to meet identified needs.
- Good relationships are maintained with parents. They have a comprehensive set of policies and procedures given to them at registration. They also have regular meetings with nursery staff regarding their child's progress and have opportunities to discuss or suggest any changes through the Parent and Staff Working Group.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the changing area in the classroom in order to respect the children's privacy and dignity
- the information and contact details in the policies and procedures file.

### Outcome of the inspection

Good

### CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

#### The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
3	Ensure the children's privacy and dignity are respected when the changing area in the classroom is used.
14	Ensure policies and procedures are consistent and contain the required information.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

Little Acorns offers good quality provision which helps children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative and physical development is very good. Knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a good understanding of the early learning goals and plan an interesting and stimulating range of activities which cover all the areas of children's learning. Staff support, encourage and challenge children's learning and thinking using good questioning techniques and good intervention. They ask children to recall events in their home and nursery lives. Staff are very good at reinforcing the children's listening skills and use resources effectively. Relationships between staff and children are very good. Staff know the children very well, they are sensitive towards children's individual needs and meet their needs successfully. The assessment system for children enables key workers to plan for the children's individual learning needs.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are welcome in the setting and their views are clearly valued. They receive good-quality information about the setting and staff communicate well with parents through daily discussions, open evenings, letters and the use of notice boards. Parents are informed about the nursery education and the progress their children are making. Parents take an active role in the setting through the parent/staff working group.

The leadership and management of the setting is very good. The manager and staff team are committed to the development of the setting and to attending further training. Staff work well together as a team, they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and communicate well with each other. Good leadership supports a good working environment.

### What is being done well?

- Children are happy, secure and motivated independent learners. They concentrate on tasks well and express their thoughts and ideas confidently. Good relationships are formed throughout the setting.
- The children work well together, they are kind and considerate and show concern for each other. Children's behaviour is good, they are aware of behavioural expectations and remind each other of these.
- Opportunities to sing and explore music is a strength of the setting. Children participate enthusiastically in daily music sessions and are able to name and recognise the sounds of a variety of musical instruments from around the world. They enjoy singing and adapt songs and rhymes by using their own

words.

- Children have a positive self-image, they show an interest and enjoyment as they learn about their own culture and those of others. The nursery has built strong links with the local community. Staff take children on visits to a variety of settings in the community. The children are encouraged to support and respect others. This enhances the children's understanding of equal opportunities.
- Children are confident and fluent speakers, they listen to each other well taking account of each others views. Children link sounds to letters very well as they write, hear and say the initial sounds in words, they are able to recognise and name letters of the alphabet.
- Staff plan a range of stimulating activities for children covering the early learning goals, they support children's learning well and use frequent praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour and children's self esteem. Staff know children well and meet their individual needs successfully.
- The staff team work well together and have a strong commitment to developing the care and education for all children who attend.

<b>What needs to be improved?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● the opportunities for children to freely explore their environment and consolidate learning experiences for themselves through the provision of non-directed play using sensory and investigative resources.</li></ul>



<b>What has improved since the last inspection?</b>
Not applicable.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and happy in their environment. They are well motivated and operate independently, selecting available resources for themselves and expressing their needs and feelings confidently. Children's behaviour is very good, they concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate, take turns and share fairly. Children work well together, they are kind, considerate and respectful to each other. Children have a positive self-image, they learn about their own and different cultures.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children sustain attentive listening throughout group times, enjoying and responding to stories and songs. They enjoy learning new words such as diggeridoo and dinosaur. They understand that print carries meaning and recognise their own names. Some children write their name and others ascribe meanings to marks. They have opportunities to mark make in planned activities and practise mark making when signing their work and taking orders in the café.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count and solve mathematical problems in planned and everyday activities. Children recognise and count confidently and reliably up to 10 and beyond, they say with confidence the number that is one more than the given number. A child chooses a rectangle and semi-circle to make ice-cream cone from magnetic blocks. He names the shapes and moves on. Children draw and record mathematical activities with numbers, use animal shapes and a variety of counting and recording aids.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore and investigate a wide range of objects, materials and living things using their senses during planned activities. However opportunities for non-directed exploration and investigation are less frequent. Children learn about a sense of time and place as they talk about past and present events in their lives and those of their families. They learn about the roles of people in their community. Through topics the children are learning about cultures and beliefs.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move around the environment, confidently and with good control. They show a very good awareness of space, themselves and others and manoeuvre wheeled vehicles around obstacles skilfully. During physical play sessions children learn to move in a variety of ways and have opportunities to develop large physical skills both in and out of doors. Children use a wide variety of tools, construction and malleable materials safely, independently and with good control.

<b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore colour, shape, smell and texture using their senses in everyday activities. They sing songs with enthusiasm and show a great interest in the music that is played for them each day. The children name and recognise the sounds various musical instruments make. They put their own words to songs and rhymes. Children engage in imaginative play through art, role play and stories. They write orders, make meals and snacks and serve each other in the cafe.	
<b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>	



## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- increase the opportunities for children to investigate objects and materials in non directed play using all senses as appropriate.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*