

Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY314555

Inspection date

08/11/2010

Inspector

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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 opened in 2005 and operates from a large hall. It is situated in a residential area in the London borough of Barnet, and serves families from all areas of the local community.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 12.15, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time aged between two to the end of the early years age group. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 20 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The children are cared for by a team of six members of staff, who all hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally well organised and inclusive environment, where utmost attention is given to meet children's individual needs. This ensures that the setting promotes all aspects of children's learning and welfare with immense success and recognises and values their uniqueness. The highly effective management and staff team is a clear strength of the setting and they are constantly evaluating all areas of their provision to ensure continual improvement and high standards. The wonderfully resourced and stimulating environment is highly effective in promoting outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop the robust links with other partnerships in order to maintain consistency of care for the children who attend the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff's organisation and management of the setting is thorough. Staff have an assured grasp of their responsibility in safeguarding procedures, which are robust. All staff are fully aware of their responsibility to protect children from abuse or neglect and have undergone training in child protection. Staff have great enthusiasm for continuous improvement and they have a thorough working knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The records, policies and procedures are very well organised and are highly effective in supporting the

service. The focus is always upon promoting children's welfare and helping all children to make excellent progress. For example, staff use daily risk assessments and safety checklists to ensure that the environment is always safe, clean and fit for use. Each child has their own key person who works closely with parents and carers. They keep daily records of children's progress and make detailed topic and activity plans to ensure that all areas of learning are provided in stimulating and varied ways. As a result, children's interest is captivated and they are quickly learning how to be healthy, safe, positive, considerate people with a desire to participate and achieve.

Staff ensure their knowledge and understanding of individual children's needs are met. The setting also has procedures and resources in place for supporting children with specific needs. Staff update resources, activity ideas, inputs, policies and procedures accordingly. Staff regularly evaluate the outcomes for the children they are caring for to ensure that the service continues to effectively improve. The staff organise the space, resources and outdoor experiences with great skill and keep all areas immaculately clean and accessible. This ensures that children receive an extremely rich and stimulating play experience, with a well balanced mix of adult led and child initiated play.

The managers are actively involved within the nursery and are keen to achieve high standards for the playgroup. The whole staff team is highly motivated towards providing good quality care and education for children. Staff are committed towards their involvement in the self-evaluation process in order to bring about continued improvement. They have identified areas for improvement and strive to implement them. Staff are well qualified and experienced and annual appraisal systems are in place to support staff and identify future training needs. Staff meetings are held on a regular basis to further enhance professional development and their roles and responsibilities have been clearly established. Consequently, staff work effectively as a team because they feel valued and involved within the setting.

Partnership with parents are excellent as staff discuss every aspect of their child's learning and development with them. Children's artwork and informative portfolios are clearly displayed so that parents are informed about the high quality care and education that is offered. Parents are able to access their child's learning records at any time. In addition, parents are given their own copies of the setting's policies and procedures. Staff work very effectively with other carers, such as local primary schools and nurseries and outside agencies by exchanging information about the children in their care. In addition the setting have actions plans in place to work more closely with childminders and other carers; and involve them in their communication with other partnerships, in order ensure children receive continuity of care and education; so that all people who use their service are always warmly welcomed and included in what their child is doing and are encouraged to continue and contribute to children's development.

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

All children in the setting are very happy, settled and confident. They are highly motivated and eager to learn due to the stimulating and child-orientated environment, which is rich in signs, symbols, letters, numbers and pictures. Children benefit greatly from the thoughtfully resourced, well organised areas both indoors and outside. The exceptionally wide range of top quality, age appropriate toys and equipment are easily and safely accessible to all children. As a result, children make independent choices and develop and extend their own interests and ideas. Staff use their skill and expertise as they interact with the children, encouraging children's thinking and learning in the supportive and challenging environment.

The setting has an excellent variety of opportunities for children to participate in outdoor play and, for those who do not wish to go out, the outdoor is brought inside. For example, children take pictures with a camera of bird prints in the snow and investigate life outside in the winter; whilst others who are not so confident, will stay indoors, where staff have brought the snow inside and display it on large builder's tray for children to investigate it's texture and have bundles of fun learning, regardless of their ability and confidence.

Children are able to select from a wide range of enriching outdoor activities, such as mark making, water play, an area for children to play with mini beasts hidden in mud, twigs and leaves, They also build their own car tracks, tunnels and frames from plastic guttering and tubes, adhesive tape, scissors and rope, along and through which they run small cars to extend their problem solving skills.

Children develop excellent communication skills through the well planned small group sessions. As staff read them well known stories, children talk confidently about the pictures in the book and relate them to events at home and respond eagerly to the staff's open ended questions and general discussions. Staff promote children's phonic understanding through fun and meaningful activities. They recognise their own name card and use it as part of the self registration system. They have extensive and innovative opportunities to make marks in all areas of the setting. For example, they draw with their fingers in the sand and use the different paint brushes to paint the outside walls with water. All areas of play have wonderfully planned investigative resources to further skills for the future and mirror everyday life. For example, children weigh objects and make shopping lists in the home corner; at the same time as others type furiously in the office on a key board, whilst others use magnets and measure tapes and compare different sized wheels of their cars as they look at reference books which are very accessible for children to further learning.

Children learn about the wider world, diversity and cultures other than their own. Children develop their understanding of how others live and are compassionate to those who require help. For example, the setting have adopted a child from Ghana, and the children are extremely involved in the exchange of information as they write and draw pictures to the family of the child and revel in receiving a reply. They learn about the differences and celebrate their similarities. The children

are also part of a scheme where they have adopted animals that need rescuing. They are very aware of the needs of others and how to make a positive contribution in society. This is a very effective way of promoting inclusion, enabling all children to learn about the world around them. Children understand about keeping themselves safe as they independently clear away before snack time; and are very conscious of others who have allergies and how to ensure they all stay safe in the setting. Children independently follow the excellent hygiene routines, washing their hands before eating and after attending to personal care needs. They benefit from the very healthy, nutritious and wholesome snacks, which are all freshly prepared on site. Great care and effective procedures ensure children's individual dietary needs are fully met and provided for, regardless of culture and medical dietary needs.

Parents have access to all policies and procedures, they are provided with a welcome pack and invited to open days. The robust key person system ensures that staff build positive relationships with children and support them to gain confidence and feel secure. Parents are required to fill in forms to provide staff with detailed information about their child's starting points; which are heavily focused on in planning for the staff. Staff plan a highly flexible, child led planning system, which includes a balance of adult-led and child-led activities. They observe children as they play and transfer their written observations in individual child files. Children's next steps are identified and recorded and planning identifies for more or less able children in the setting. Consequently, all children's individual needs are fully met. Parents contribute to their child's learning and are involved in their life at the setting, as they have strong links with their key workers who plan for their individual needs. Children lead the planning at this setting as staff support their learning by providing them with extremely exciting and wonderful ways to see the world through the activities they provide.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1

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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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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