

Little Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector ISP Inspection

Setting address Highfield Church Centre, Highfield Lane, SOUTHAMPTON,
SO17 1RL
Telephone number 02380 554 829
Email carol.romilly@btinternet.com
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 Pre-school registered in 2007. The group is privately owned and operates from a room in a church centre in Highfield, Southampton. Children have use of a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 17 children aged from two years at any one time. There are currently 31 children aged from two to five years on roll. It is the policy of the group to accept children aged from two years and nine months. The setting is in receipt of funding for early education. The pre-school is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Sessions are from 9.15am to 11.45am each day and from 12.30pm to 3pm on Monday and Wednesday. The group opens weekdays during the school terms. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are five members of staff working with children, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. The preschool supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The good organisation of the pre-school and effective implementation of systems, policies and procedures ensure the safe and smooth running of the setting. The extremely strong commitment to promoting equality and diversity, and working with parents and others involved in children's care are key strengths of the setting. They are significant in making sure all children's needs are met, particularly those with English as an additional language (EAL). A well developed knowledge of each child ensures staff promote most aspects of their learning and development well. Effective systems for self-evaluation ensure priorities for development are identified and acted on resulting in continuous improved outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase opportunities for children to develop skills in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) and to recognise their names.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded as a robust vetting and employment procedure is followed and all staff are trained in child protection. Risk assessments are used effectively throughout the premises and for outings so that possible hazards are identified and dealt with. Staff and students are informed about policies and procedures regarding all aspects of safety as part of their induction, through on-going appraisals and team meetings.

An extremely high emphasis is placed on promoting equality and diversity and providing a fully inclusive setting. Staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals involved in children's care to ensure their individual needs are met at all times. The pre-school welcomes children with English as an additional language and has developed very effective systems to help them to settle and communicate. For example, staff have attended training in supporting children whose first language is not English, and although already using some hand signs to communicate, have applied for Makaton training to aid this further. Key words in the child's home language are obtained from parents that staff learn and use. Parents are fully involved and some join in at story time. As a member of staff reads a book to children a parent will read the same book but in their native language. These methods ensure children feel respected and valued, and learn about others in the world. Parents enthuse about how they value the friendly and caring attitude of the practitioners. They feel totally included in their child's care and education. Parents enjoy having free access to their child's development records and being kept well informed of what they do each day. The setting has excellent procedures for liaising closely with other early years settings children attend, and with the schools they go on to, recognising the benefits of continuity of care. Staff are trained and experienced in helping children who may need extra help making very good use of external agencies, such as speech therapists, so they can provide consistent support for the children who need it.

The owner/manager provides good leadership to a team of enthusiastic staff and continuously drives improvement. Staff are committed to continuously improving their skills. Children benefit from the hard work of staff as they set up an inclusive, attractive environment each day. Staff and parents are included in the monitoring and evaluation systems which include staff meetings and questionnaires. Support is welcomed from the local authority to help the team identify areas for further development. This demonstrates a strong capacity to continuously strive to improve outcomes for children.

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

Children are happy at the setting where they are fully supported and actively encouraged to achieve and enjoy. They are engaged in a good range of interesting activities that promote most areas of learning both in and outdoors. Resources are

readily accessible with picture labels on boxes to ensure all children can take part. For example, easy grip paint brushes and a varied range of wheeled and pedal toys to meet their different development levels. However, equipment to help children develop skills in ICT is not always freely accessible throughout each session. Many resources and some planned activities help children learn about all people in society and in particular, those relevant to children in the pre-school. For example, they celebrate Korean New Year and Thanksgiving as Korean and Canadian children attend. Good use is made of posters, books and resources such as puzzles and dual language books help children learn about diversity. A good range of adult led activities are planned for each session to promote children's progress in certain areas. For example, as part of the Christmas topic children decorate cards. This encourages children to develop skills in using scissors. Staff use opportunities as they arise effectively to help children learn and solve problems, asking questions to challenge them further. For example, when preparing the tables for snack time, children count the children and then work out how many cups and plates are needed. When children say they need more cups for both tables, they are asked to work out how many. This results in children confidently counting and adding the numbers together. Children benefit from regular time spent outdoors where all areas of learning are promoted. Chalk is available to make marks on the brick wall and binoculars allow children to investigate what is in the tree. Although the area is small, pots are used to grow plants allowing children to learn about caring for them.

A calm atmosphere fills the room as children play. Many show high levels of concentration and sit for prolonged periods building and playing with a road track or threading buttons, naming the shapes as they do so. Children enjoy listening to stories; some sit on the staff members lap as she reads, others continue to experiment with balance scales. They happily take part in singing and joining in with clapping hands, laughing as they clap faster and slower. Strong emphasis is placed on ensuring children develop high self-esteem and learn to respect themselves and others. They show great confidence as they happily talk and make suggestions of activities to their peers and staff which respond to well to incorporate their ideas. Children respond well to the effective and positive way good behaviour is encouraged. Staff have reasonable expectations of children and allow them to join group activities when they want to. Children are learning good skills in managing their feelings and use effective learnt strategies to help them. For example, when needing to take turns with the computer, children use the sand timer to make sure they each get a turn. As a result, children feel safe and secure at the pre-school. They develop confidence and independence as they pour their drinks and put their coats on. However, opportunities to recognise their own name are limited to when they self-register on arrival. Some are encouraged to write their names on art work. Children are becoming aware of the routines of the setting and know the procedures in place to keep themselves safe. For example, they take part in emergency evacuation procedures. They adopt good habits for keeping healthy as they know they need to wash their hands before coming to the snack table to get rid of germs that can make them unwell. Good use is made of the social event of snack time to discuss what foods are good for them to eat.

The small team of staff know the children well in this small setting. They provide appropriate challenges to ensure they all make good progress in relation to their

starting points including those with EAL. Development records are maintained well showing the progress children make. Parents enjoy receiving a written account of their child's progress at the end of each term and what the planned next steps are for some areas of learning.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

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