

Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 27/01/2011
Inspector Yvonne Campbell

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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 Nursery is one of six nurseries in Bristol and South Gloucestershire owned by a group of private individuals. It opened in 2010 and operates from a self contained nursery school building located close to Gillingstool Primary School. The nursery is within walking distance of another nursery of the same name located at Oakleaze Road and both are managed by the same management team. Children attend the nursery from the age of two to under five years. Children under two attend the Oakleaze Road setting.

A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time (Early Years Register). However, that number is reduced at the present time as a large base room is being refurbished. Opening times are Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.00pm. There are currently 36 children on roll. Of these, 32 have funding for early years education. The nursery opens for 51 weeks all year round except for the Christmas and New Year break period. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

All staff working with the children have Level 3 qualifications. This includes the manager who also has a Level 4 qualification. There is also a trained teacher on staff,

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are motivated to learn and display high levels of involvement in all activities. Staff have created a welcoming environment where each child is valued and develop a strong sense of belonging to the group regardless of their background. Children's individual needs are met very well as staff in close partnership with parents and skilfully evaluate the learning which takes place each day in order to assess if the provision is effective and children are making progress. Children are kept safe and secure through a system of secure measures and ongoing risk assessment of the environment. There is regular self-evaluation by the owners, nursery manager and staff and, when required changes are quickly implemented to improve the service offered to children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a thorough understanding of the safeguarding children procedure. All adults working with children have completed criminal record checks to ensure they have no record of offences against children, The written policy is clearly set out so staff know what to do if they see any signs and symptoms of abuse. This includes recording details of all existing injuries and making enquires about the source of accidental injuries children sustain away from nursery. The policy is accessible to parents so they are aware of staff's duties and responsibilities. Staff update their safeguarding training regularly. The manager has also completed Common Assessment Framework training so if necessary she is able to work in collaboration with other care professional to monitor and protect children who may be at risk of abuse.

Continuous improvement is maintained by the owners passion and desire to provide care of the highest quality for children in the community. They have a stable and experienced staff group who share their vision. Since transferring to new premises, many changes have been put into place. For example, the layout of the resources in the smaller room enables children to access toys and play material which support learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff display a plan of where resources may be found so children know where to look if they want to play with certain items. The new mezzanine floor provides additional space at a raised level so children have a quiet area to relax and to read books. Self-evaluation of the provision is ongoing. Areas identified for improvement includes completing the work on the largest nursery room, so children under two can join their peers in the same building. Plans are also in place to further develop the garden to provide increased play and learning opportunities for children outdoors.

Staff have an extremely positive view of equality and diversity and are highly creative when developing activities to help children embrace similarities and differences in others. All children have the opportunity to bring and show special items. Children celebrating special festivals wear national costumes and staff explain so children know why this is done. Children show a sense of pride as aspects of their culture is recognised and talked about by others in the group. An effective key worker system is established. This means very good communication with parents who willing share material such as bilingual stories and DVD which all children listen to and learn from.

Staff work closely with parents and ensure they are well informed and kept up-to-date about the progress their children are making. Children's learning records are accessible to parents. These contain assessments and summaries of assessment. Staff organise regular term time parents evening and from time to time they seek the views and opinion of parents by providing questionnaires for them to complete Staff have established working relationship with a nearby children centre and the local school so they will be able to share information when children transfer to the reception class.

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

Children form good relationships with adults and with their peers and they are very alert to events happening around them. They notice all who arrive in the room and are very friendly and welcoming. Staff introduce new people who come into the room and no child leaves unnoticed as children are told when others leave at various collection times and say good bye to them. The available space is used well to provide a wide range of learning experiences for children and the organisation of resources is well thought through. For example, construction material is stored around a sizable area of floor space. Children are able to spread the toys across the floor as they build. Other toys for problem solving are displayed on raised surfaces so children explore touching and handling them.

Children social skills are very advanced and they show a willingness to link up with others during play to enhance and extend their play. Such as, a group of boys playing with construction toys decide to play firemen. They extend their play by introducing a scenario for role play and use their language to progress their shared idea. The boys also use toys creatively and create 'fire engines' by making rectangular shapes out of construction material.

Staff are very knowledgeable about how children learn. They recognise when spontaneous learning opportunities arise and are confident in allowing child-led learning to take place. Staff support children's ideas by asking appropriate questions and by getting them to problem solve. Children become totally absorbed in these activity and have sustained play over a period of time, both indoors and outdoors following the same theme of firemen.

Children explore the properties of various materials. They enjoy playing with sand and cover and retrieve items. On one occasion a child explores whether sand is attracted to a magnet. Younger children enjoy the sensory experience of playing soft material such as foam and the feeling of thick paint as they brush or allow it to trickle onto paper. Children are making good progress in developing skills which will aid them when they commence formal education. These include problem solving and communication skills. A computer is accessible and children are learning to control the mouse to complete age appropriate learning such as counting and colour recognition.

A comfortable book corner is available and children enjoy listening to stories. Children are learning that print has meaning as various learning areas have labels. Children also recognise their names on their draws. However, more opportunities could be provided for children to link letter sounds to familiar words as this will support children's early reading skills at a later stage in their education.

Children are aware of the need to have good hygiene. Staff remind them to wash their hands before lunch and they know the towels must be placed in the bin and not on the floor. Children enjoy nutritious freshly prepared meals delivered to nursery each day. Staff are aware of children dietary needs and they ensure children do not have food which is harmful to them. Children make choices about what they eat and supervised by staff they help themselves to the amount they want to eat. Water is accessible and children help themselves to drink. Children

behave very well and respond positively to adult instruction. They know the sign for stopping play is putting their hands on their heads. Staff make it fun by asking children to touch other parts of their bodies such as their knees.

Children are learning how to stay safe. They show a lot of interest in the fire drill and ask staff why they need to do this. Children have further opportunities to learn about people who help to keep us safe. Staff organised for the police to visit the nursery and talk to children about their work. Children had a very enjoyable time as they were allowed to sit in the police car and see the equipment.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	2
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