

# Little Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	301790
<b>Inspection date</b>	15/02/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Anthea Errington

<b>Setting address</b>	South Charlton Village Hall, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 2JU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01665 579 295
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Little Acorns Pre-School was registered in 2000 and is situated in the rural village of South Charlton, Northumberland. It operates from the village hall and surrounding woodland and gardens. The setting is evolving as an outdoor learning pre-school with most of the session time being spent outdoors. Opening hours are Tuesdays and Fridays 9am until 12.45pm term time only. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children in the early years age range; there are currently nine children on roll. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting provides an extremely caring and supportive relationship with the children, and as a result children make excellent progress in their overall learning and development. Staff demonstrate a clear knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and robust systems to observe and assess children are in place, which ensures their next steps of learning are skilfully planned for. The setting is consistently committed to providing an inclusive environment where all children have their individual needs very well met. In addition strong, purposeful links have been developed with parents as well as other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- providing further detail in fire evacuation log book by recording the number of children present.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Staff members have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children in their care. Thorough risk assessments are in place for all aspects of the care which reduces the risk to children. Staff support children well to keep themselves safe and have worked with them in developing their own risk assessment. For example, children are able to identify possible risks in the outdoor environment through their own system called 'danger detectives'. This helps children to feel safe, confident and secure. There are well-maintained systems in place to record attendance, as well as the effective recording systems for medication administration and accidents. As well as this, children take part in regular fire drills to ensure their safety further. Staff record all practices; however, full details are not always included.

Documentation is very well organised, readily available for inspection and stored securely to protect confidentiality. All essential records and well-written policies are in place of which parents receive copies. The setting fully recognises the importance of continuous improvement and has completed a comprehensive self-evaluation document. This fully supports them in continuing to improve outcomes for children and has a significant positive impact on the high quality of care and education provided. The quality of the environment both indoors and outdoors provides children with increasing independence and optimal challenges. For example, the superb outdoor area provides them with real opportunities and freedom to explore, investigate and learn. The setting displays an extremely positive attitude towards equality and diversity and works very hard to provide an enabling and inclusive environment which makes parents and children feel welcome. Highly innovative topics support children's understanding of the wider world. They explain in great detail information they have learned about the country of China. They describe how rice is farmed in the fields and discuss the costumes people wear.

Parents provide extremely positive feedback and comment on the very good care provided. The partnerships with parents are outstanding and they have access to a first class range of information including clearly written-policies and procedures. Children's learning journals, as well as daily diaries, keep them fully informed of their children's progress. Consequently, parents can contribute towards their children's learning at home from the clear and detailed information made available to them. Very good links are made with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage who have regular opportunities to visit the setting and discuss progress children make. This further supports and ensures children's continuity of learning.

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

Children feel extremely secure and very welcome. Staff clearly know the children in their care very well and confidently describe their needs and stages of development. Detailed plans and well-written observations and assessments of children's development linked effectively to the six areas of learning, fully inform of the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Staff are highly motivated and use these purposefully to plan for children's next steps of learning, whilst being responsive to the needs of individual children.

Children are extremely confident to express themselves and address their own personal care. They skilfully dress themselves in their outdoor clothing and boots in preparation for outdoor play. Children learn of their own local community as they visit the local church and invite residents of the local village to share lunch with them. This provides children with a positive identity and real sense of belonging. Children make excellent progress in their communication and language skills. They use a full range of descriptive language whilst initiating their own play ideas. They recognise that print in the stories they share brings meaning. They

have lovely opportunities to practise their mark-making skills in the sand area outdoors using their hands as well as the twigs they find in the woodland area. In addition, they skilfully recognise letters and numbers displayed on the plaque in front of the tree. They enthusiastically exclaim 'look that's an A for Angus and that is a number 2'. Children display great pride in their achievements and glow with pride. Children are extremely active learners, creative and think critically. For example, they discover they can make patterns in the sand using their hands and feet and then make them disappear using the sweeping brushes. They expertly construct with the small rocks, and using mathematical language, explain that they can fit the small rocks together to make a big wall. Children have fantastic opportunities to discover the natural world as they have access to the superb woodland area daily. They collect shells and washed down pieces of glass and marvel at the colours and patterns they discover on them as they wash them down with water. Children are becoming aware of weather patterns and discuss the effect the wind has on the weather sock they see in the distance. Children are provided with an inspiring range of resources to develop their information and technology skills. For example, they confidently use digital cameras outdoors to capture images of wildlife, which they then transfer to the laptop indoors to discuss their findings. In addition, they collect a range of natural resources to examine under the microscopes. This fully supports children and highly motivates them in their overall learning.

Children have excellent opportunities to enjoy exercise and fresh air. They are extremely confident and self-assured of their physical skills as they run around, jump and climb outdoors. Children are physically challenged and display the skills and strategies to play safely in this environment. This contributes towards their very good health as they gain increasing control over their bodies. Staff are highly skilled in their supervision and ensure children's safety is maintained at all times. Children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks and meals that fully comply with their dietary requirements. They thoroughly enjoy the snack of fresh fruit, hot cross buns and hot chocolate they share whilst outdoors. They learn about keeping themselves healthy and understand they must wash their hands before snack time and meals. Children behave very well and respond positively towards staff members. They have realistic expectations in accordance with children's ages and stages of development and are very good role models to them. The first class experiences and optimal challenges children gain help them to develop significant skills for future success.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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