

Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Janice Linsdell

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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 is a nursery and out of school club that registered in 2000. It is one of three settings run by a limited company and operates from designated areas within Summerhill School in Maghull, Liverpool. Children are cared for in the nursery room and club room, and have access to secure outdoor play areas. The setting operates for 51 weeks of the year and serves children from the local community. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm. The out of school club is open each weekday from 3pm to 6pm during term time and 8am to 6pm during school holidays.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 48 children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting takes children from two years of age and also offers care to children up to 11 years of age. There are currently 95 children on roll. Of these, 64 are under eight years and of these, 31 are within the early years age range. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs eight members of staff including the managers. Of these, two hold qualifications at level 5 in early years and both have Early Years Professional Status. Six staff hold qualifications at level 3 in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting is fully inclusive, with high priority given to making sure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive exceptional support. Successful engagement with parents and carers ensure children's welfare and learning needs are well met. Partnership working with other professionals is mostly effective. Required documents to promote children's safety are well maintained. Effective systems to evaluate the quality of the setting are in place, with clearly identified targets for the future. As a result, the setting shows a strong capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the arrangements for maintaining a regular two-way flow of information with other providers, for example childminders and schools.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust vetting procedures ensure all staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. All staff have attended safeguarding training and clearly understand their responsibilities to keep children safe from harm. Comprehensive policies, procedures and required documents are all well organised and accurately maintained. Risk assessments for the premises and outings are thorough and help to ensure children's safety.

Managers are enthusiastic and committed to achieving high standards. The self-evaluation form accurately reflects the quality of the setting and development plans clearly identify targets for further improvement. All staff are well qualified and attend regular training to enhance their knowledge and skills. The setting's commitment to promoting equality and diversity is excellent. Staff are highly successful in working with parents, carers and other agencies to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities exceptionally well. This enables children to participate fully in all aspects of the provision.

Good quality indoor and outdoor learning environments are well equipped and offer a variety of stimulating activities for the children to enjoy. Staff engage well with parents and carers and regularly discuss children's ongoing progress. Parents and carers use the comment slips to contribute their views and the 'news tree' encourages them to share meaningful moments about their children's achievements at home. Parents and carers are very complementary about the staff and the support they give to the children. Where children attend other settings, such as childminders or different schools, effective links are not fully established to ensure continuity in children's care and learning.

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

Staff have a good understanding of how to successfully support children's learning. The continuous provision of resources means children are always busy and engaged in their play. Effective systems for planning, observing and assessing children's progress enables staff to organise a wide range of activities to help children achieve as well as they can. Children's learning journeys are informative and demonstrate their good progress across all areas of learning.

Staff are good role models and establish very caring and supportive relationships with the children, which enables them to feel safe and secure. Children show good awareness of safety issues, such as how to carry the scissors safely. They develop healthy lifestyles, for example, by eating nutritious meals and enjoying independent access to the garden. Older children take part in a lot of exciting topics, such as 'our favourite people', where they delight in receiving autographed pictures and letters from the Queen or their favourite footballer. These are proudly displayed in the club room.

Children's understanding of the world is developing very well and this positively encourages their future skills. They enjoy taking part in charitable fund raising events and planting vegetables in the garden. They learn about recycling and use a variety of resources, such as laptops and cameras, to support their understanding of technology. Children's behaviour is exemplary; they are extremely confident, inquisitive and well mannered. Their ideas are very much valued and they have many opportunities to contribute positively to the setting. For example, the 'jobs board' shows children's involvement in carrying out small tasks.

Children's communication skills develop well because staff engage them in lively and interesting conversations. They listen intently to stories read by staff, such as one about visiting the dentist. They also enjoy counting the number of worms they find under the logs. Plentiful mark making opportunities encourage children's writing skills, such as drawing or chalking on the path. Children play harmoniously alongside children with disabilities, which significantly enhances the learning experiences for all children and helps them to value, appreciate and embrace each other's differences.

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	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