

Little Acorns Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Little Acorns nursery is privately owned and was registered in 2006. It operates from the ground floor of business premises situated in Dronfield, Derbyshire. The nursery serves families who live or work in the local area. The nursery is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery is open every weekday throughout the year, between 7.30am and 6pm, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 64 children attending who are within the Early Years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of child care staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2. In addition, there is one level 2 apprentice and the nursery also has a part-time cook. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children settle very well and receive a good level of care because the qualified staff work closely with the individual children and their families. All children make good progress in their learning and development and enjoy a wide range of play opportunities, which cover most aspects of learning well. Provision for children with English as an additional language is not fully developed. Partnerships with parents and carers are good and information is generally shared effectively, but parents are not always encouraged to contribute to children's development files. All members of staff are enthusiastic in their roles and work successfully together to secure continuous improvement and identify aspects for future development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop children's experiences by planning an indoor and outdoor environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words that take into account their differing interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures
- develop more opportunities for children learning English as an additional language to participate fully

- ensure parents review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well-protected because all staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and know when to take action to safeguard children in their care. Staff are aware of possible signs of abuse and know what to do if they have concerns about a child. Children are effectively protected as the well-qualified staff team keep the premises secure and supervise the children at all times. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and staff are vetted for their suitability, protecting children's welfare. Regular risk assessments ensure hazards are reduced and staff follow a clear site security policy to ensure children can play safely and enjoy their time at nursery. Fire drills are practiced regularly and an effective record ensures that identified issues are dealt with.

Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated accordingly and the manager makes good use of a range of evaluation tools to inform the nursery's detailed action plan. This identifies areas for improvement and results in ongoing development of the provision and improved outcomes for children. For example, an all weather canopy has been installed and upgrades made to the outdoor environment. Strong leadership of the setting effectively enables staff to meet the needs of children, as they are provided with challenging and interesting activities. Staff are knowledgeable about the early years foundation stage and use this well to support children in their learning. The nursery is well resourced and the areas are used effectively to allow for continuous play provision.

Successful liaison with parents and carers contributes to improvements in children's achievements, well-being and development. The use of daily diaries and daily conversations between parents and carers all contribute to this. Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they first start, such as, likes, dislikes and starting points. This helps staff to have a sound knowledge of each child's background and needs. Transitions between rooms in the nursery are well-planned and provided for. The open plan setting enables children to become familiar with other adults and children and helps to ensure a smooth transition contributing to their well-being. Parents spoken to expressed very positive comments about the nursery and their children's progress. The nursery has good links with other early year providers and schools as they recognise the importance of helping children with transition to their reception year. Staff demonstrate a high level of awareness of how to support children with special needs and/or disabilities all children are included in the setting. However support for children for whom English is an additional language is less well developed, for example, at group times staff have not yet fully considered how to include them. The nursery has addressed previous recommendations promptly and effectively. For example, they have developed the planning in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage and observations now include the next steps in children's learning and development. An effective equal opportunities policy is regularly reviewed and supports the staff well.

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

Children settle well in the nursery and feel very safe and secure because the staff are attentive to their needs. Children have warm relationships with the staff and clearly receive an enjoyable experience across all areas of learning. Children know how to use toys and other resources safely, for example, they use scissors to cut and also use knives and forks appropriately at lunch time. Children gain a high level of awareness of their personal safety as they confidently talk about why they need to walk in nursery. Children follow good hygiene routines. Older children show a clear understanding of how to stay healthy. They confidently talk about the reasons why they have to wash hands before snack or after going to the toilet. Freshly prepared snacks and nutritious meals provide children with a very good variety of healthy foods. Older children help themselves to a snack when they are hungry. All children are encouraged to be independent at meal times and staff provide effective support when necessary. Children routinely serve themselves, for example, chilli con carne and rice. They then choose the flavour of their yogurt for dessert. Staff effectively support children's ongoing good health by maintaining good standards of hygiene at all times.

There is planned, purposeful play and exploration, with a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities. For example, older children design a run for the cars by fixing a large cardboard tub to a chair with sticky tape and then take turn to run small cars through it into a basket. They later experiment what will happen when the basket is removed. Children listen attentively at group time, taking turns to take an object from the bag, tell the other children its name and then the letter sound it begins with. This benefits the children's learning and development. Resources are easily accessible at children's height and some are labelled which also promotes word recognition. However, the range of signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words in the indoor environment are less well developed. This is also an area for development outdoors. An understanding of number is developed through simple counting exercises and children experience good opportunities to learn simple calculation through songs and rhymes, for example, five little ducks. Babies and young children respond excitedly to the familiar faces of the staff and readily seek out adults for comfort and reassurance when they are upset or tired. Babies and younger children are effectively supported to follow their own routines for sleeping. Babies and young children benefit from a wide range of sensory activities and enjoy playing in the sand. They explore in a treasure basket and press buttons to activate battery operated toys.

Detailed, ongoing observations and assessments are undertaken by staff and provide a clear insight into the children's progress and achievements. Planning takes into account children's next steps and is successfully evaluated. Children have an individual development file which is used to record their progress. These are available in the nursery for parents to read. However, although parents are encouraged to look at and contribute to their children's development files and comment on observations, this is inconsistent.

Children enjoy being outside where they climb the ladder to the den and slide down the slide, make pancakes in sand, build a train track and excitedly play 'What time is it Mr Wolf' as they develop their growing physical skills. Children behave well and work alongside each other as they share resources, such as trains when building a train track together. Children listen attentively at story time and join in music and movement sessions. They paint and draw and creativity is celebrated as their art work is displayed throughout the nursery. Children are developing good skills for the future as they become competent communicators. Older children confidently use the computer, they skilfully manipulate the mouse and operate the game. This gives them an awareness of information and technology. Celebrations and festivals are planned to enhance the children's knowledge and awareness of the wider world. A good range of resources, such as, posters, play figures and books promote positive images of themselves and of the diverse society in which the children live.

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	2
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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