

# Little Acorns Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY441452

**Inspection date**

16/05/2012

**Inspector**

Gill Walley

**Setting address**

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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.

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## Description of the setting

Little Acorns re-registered in 2012 under the company Kids Activ8 Ltd. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They operate from a purpose-built building set in the grounds of Overstone Primary School. The children have access to three rooms that can be adapted as and when required. There are separate toilet and wash facilities for children and staff. Children have access to a fully enclosed outside play area and they also make use of the school grounds. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas. The nursery is open Monday - Friday from 7.30am until 6.30pm, 51 weeks of the year. The nursery may care for no more than 46 children under eight years; of these, not more than 46 may be in the early years age group; and of these, not more than 18 may be under two years at any one time. The nursery currently has 80 children on roll, some of whom are in receipt of nursery funding. Children attend for various days and sessions. In term time the company also operates a breakfast and after-school club for children who attend the host school from 7.30am until 8.45am and 3.15pm until 6.30pm. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 14 staff who work directly with the children on a full or part time basis. Of these, eight hold appropriate childcare qualifications. Two staff are working towards Level 3 and two staff are working towards the Early Years Foundation Stage degree. All other staff are qualified nursery nurses. The nursery works closely with the school, the adjoining children's centre, the local authority and the other nursery within the company.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Little Acorns is a good setting where all children make good progress through stimulating and well-planned activities within a generally well-resourced learning environment. The children are well cared for and safeguarding arrangements are mostly very thorough. The nursery works extremely closely with parents and carers, with the local authority, the adjoining school and the children's centre. The manager and her staff have a very accurate understanding of the nursery's strengths through their exceptionally rigorous self-evaluation process, and they strive constantly for improvement. For example, they have successfully developed stronger links with parents and carers so that they feel confident to support their children's learning at home. The nursery has an outstanding capacity to improve.

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

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

- increase the rigour with which daily checks of the premises are recorded so

- that all staff follow consistent practice
- support the development of children's early literacy skills by displaying more print in the classroom, for example by labelling their toy boxes and other resources

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

All staff demonstrate a very thorough understanding of safeguarding and attend training regularly. They implement rigorous policies and procedures to ensure children's safety and are always extremely vigilant. All policies are reviewed frequently. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures so that all adults who work with the children are suitable. Security is consistently good because doors are locked and children are always carefully supervised. There are rigorous assessments to reduce the risk of accidents and daily checks of the premises are carried out, although the latter are not always recorded consistently well. Children practise fire drills regularly so that they fully understand the routine. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety, for example when playing outdoors on the tyres and bicycles. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. They receive regular detailed information about their children's learning and development through daily discussions with staff and a daily diary. Parents and carers see their children's learning records. They say their children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and they cannot think of anything which could be improved. Parents and carers are impressed with the care the children receive. They feel the children make especially good progress in their speech and social skills, their understanding of numbers, letters and sounds, and in developing confidence. Parents and carers attend termly consultation meetings and receive excellent information about how their children learn and how they can help them further at home. They are asked their views regularly and know the manager takes these into account and responds to them. Parents and carers share with staff the milestones children have reached at home so that the staff can reinforce them. Partnerships with the adjoining school are equally strong; for example the children share the outdoor environment and make visits to the nursery class so that there is a smooth transition to full-time education. There are very strong partnerships with outside agencies and the local authority to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting works closely with its partner nursery within the company to share resources and expertise. The nursery is extremely well led and managed and staff meet regularly to discuss planning and create action plans to address any areas identified for improvement. There are excellent self-evaluation systems which include parents' and carers' views, and the ambitious manager drives improvement extremely well so that all children make consistently good progress. The staff observe children's development while they are playing so they know precisely what learning opportunities each one needs next. They plan suitable activities bearing in mind each child's particular interests so that the children develop further skills and confidence. The staff know the children extremely well and they track their development rigorously, comparing the progress of different groups, such as boys and girls and the progress made in different aspects of learning. They understand how to motivate the children well, for example by using

their playground and the school grounds for many exciting activities.

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

The premises are well resourced with toys which enthuse and motivate the children to explore and learn new skills, for example through role play and retelling favourite stories. Children achieve well in all areas of learning because activities are matched well to their individual needs. They behave extremely well and are kind and considerate towards one another. Staff have excellent relationships with them and convey extremely high expectations. They praise and encourage children constantly to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Festivals such as Chinese New Year enrich children's experiences and give them a good understanding of different lifestyles and customs through dressing up, tasting food and creative tasks, including making paper dragons. The children play with toys, puzzles and dolls which help them to understand diversity. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully included in all activities and staff adapt activities well to support them. Children make healthy choices at snack time and develop a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. They take responsibility by choosing what they would like to play with and by helping to tidy their toys away. They develop their physical skills well as they climb on tyres and the climbing frame in the outdoor area. Adults challenge children well with questions about their learning, for example by asking them which containers in the water tray hold the most water. The children develop their early writing skills through mark making with chalks on the playground surfaces. They learn to enjoy books by listening to their favourite stories and visiting the library. They find out about the world around them through visits to the park, growing plants and vegetables and looking after their guinea pigs. The indoor environment is calm, well organised and stimulating although it lacks examples of print to reinforce children's learning in communication, language and literacy. For example, they learn a letter of the week but are not able to identify that letter in labels around the room. Children develop their independence, for example by choosing and finding the toys they want to play with and helping to put them away. The youngest children enjoy a wide range of experiences and play with toys which help them to manipulate and to develop their coordination. They begin to develop their physical skills through climbing and reaching. The staff supervise them well, for example at sleep times. They provide parents and carers with detailed information about their baby's routines and the experiences they have particularly enjoyed each day. Children participate enthusiastically in a wide range of exciting activities. They develop good creative skills, for example through making collages and painting. They count and identify colours, letters and shapes, and they talk about textures and weighing when they are cooking. They are confident to talk to visitors about their learning and enjoy visits from music, French and yoga teachers. These experiences give the children a good foundation for the next stage of their education.

## 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>	2
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	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	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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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