

Acorns

Cherry Tree Lane, BLACKBURN, BB2 5NX

Inspection date

20/12/2012

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The nursery is extremely welcoming and staff have a warm and loving relationship with the children, which means that they are happy and feel safe. Staff encourage them to be healthy, well-behaved and independent learners.
- Children make good progress in their learning because every opportunity is taken to extend their learning through well-targeted questioning. As a result, children's speaking and listening skills are promoted exceptionally well.
- Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. This means that they plan exciting learning opportunities for children to gain the skills required in readiness for their progression onto new situations. The nursery has good relationships with local schools. As a result, children are well prepared for when they go to school, and are familiar with their new teachers.
- The nursery draw up plans to make improvements happen with the support of the staff. They have a well-established development programme that motivates and improves their practice. As a result, there is consistent good practice across the whole nursery.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always find out about what children already know and can do, therefore, they cannot securely plan play experiences to meet individual needs of each child.
- There is scope to improve the front outdoor area, so that children can access large apparatus to develop their climbing skills.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playrooms, the quiet room and the Christmas party the children attended at 'Little Acorn' nursery.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting, and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector spoke to staff, the manager, the deputy manager and registered provider at appropriate times throughout the observations.

Inspector

Ferroza Saiyed

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorns was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two settings operated by Little

Acorns Nursery (Blackburn) Ltd. It operates from premises in Cherry Tree, Blackburn and serves the local area. The nursery is accessible to all children and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nurseries manager oversees both sites and holds an early years degree. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 9am to 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 10 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. In addition, the setting provides wrap around care for children from three years in the form of a breakfast club, afterschool club and holiday club. The club operates Monday to Friday from 7am to 9am and 3.30pm to 6pm. The holiday club operates from 7am to 6pm. It supports children with special needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- use information about children's interest and what they can do already to plan activities to promote more learning and development
- consolidate children's learning by providing more challenge activities in the outdoor area, such as large climbing apparatus.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make good progress in their learning and development as staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how young children learn. Parents are encouraged to support and share information about their child's learning and development at home through timely conversations at the start and end of sessions. However, the systems to find out about what children know and can do in relation to their learning are not fully identified when they first start. Therefore, the planned group activities are not always effective to support all children's individual needs initially. Having said this, effective systems of observation and assessment ensure that children are monitored in their development across the prime and specific areas of learning. A clear picture emerges and the planning reflects what the staff intend next, in order to reinforce

new learning. This means that all children are effectively challenged and benefit from well-planned engaging activities to support their individual needs.

Teaching techniques are strong and children are provided with opportunities to experience a balanced variety of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff are particularly skilled at supporting young children's emerging language and communication skills throughout the daily routine. For example, staff sing and talk to children throughout the day and are very good at understanding what they are saying. Furthermore, they show children how to pronounce or use words by responding and repeating what they say in the correct way, while praising them at the same time. This makes children feel valued, while enabling them to hear how sentences are structured and words are pronounced. Staff show a sincere interest in what older children have to say and encourage them to think further by asking them lots of questions to encourage them to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences. As a result, children are confident communicators and respond enthusiastically. For example, while talking about the story during circle time, staff ask children to identify new words from the story. Older children confidently name the new words they have learnt, such as 'catastrophe'. Staff praise the child and they beamed with delight at their achievement.

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of children. Children's early writing skills are developing well. The environment is rich in print and areas are well resourced with a variety of writing materials to promote and encourage emergent writing. Older children label their own work and the letters they write, which they proudly identify correctly, are clearly recognisable. Young children are provided with opportunities to make marks and use chunky chinks, paintbrushes and their fingers to make patterns and marks in sand and flour. There are abundant opportunities for children to develop their numeracy and problem solving skills. There are numbers displayed in all areas and staff make the most of opportunities to encourage children to count. For example, children sing number songs, count the cake cases and measure ingredients for baking activity. They understand and use everyday words to describe size and positional language. For example, children playing with the fire engine, talk about 'putting the big fire out over there, under the bridge'. All staff's practice demonstrates a very good understanding of how children learn.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

All children show an extremely strong sense of security and belonging within the nursery. They are closely supervised by the staff, who are very attentive to them. For example, they sit on the floor with the children and get involved in their activity, or children sit on their lap when listening to stories. When staff offer specific activities, the children eagerly join in because they thoroughly enjoy their positive and genuine interaction with them. Consequently, learning can be facilitated due to strong emotional security.

The staff know all of the children as individuals; their different needs, skills and abilities. As a consequence, activities are at just the right level to challenge without overwhelming. All children make significant progress in their learning because they enjoy coming to nursery, have fun and have very good relationships with their key person. Children use

simple tools, implements and toys safely, and can talk about how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate manner. For example, staff wipe the spillage on the floor, a child immediately gets the wet floor sign, which shows their excellent understanding of safety. Visits from local emergency services help children to learn about safety issues and develop their future independence skills. Road safety activities and regular fire drills consolidate their understanding of staying safe.

Children stay healthy because the nursery has effective procedures and daily practices, which meet their physical, nutritional and health needs. They are familiar with simple good hygiene routines to encourage hand washing at appropriate times, such as before eating and after personal care. The nursery provides freshly prepared nutritious meals and snacks, which take account of children's preferences and dietary needs. Mealtimes are pleasant social occasions when the children sit together at low tables and chairs, using appropriate cutlery. Older children are able to serve themselves at snack time, which supports their individuality and confidence. Staff place importance on encouraging independence and self-help.

Staff are quick to praise and build self-esteem and as a result, children develop the self-confidence to participate and experience a wide range of learning activities. This developing confidence is evident in the way that children move from one activity to another, observing the routines of the nursery and sharing resources amicably. The very good role models provided by staff give children a clear understanding of how to behave and begin to understand the impact of their actions on others. This is further reinforced through the way the staff use simple visual images that depict happy and sad faces to show how their actions have made them feel.

Staff seek specialist advice for children in need of additional support, which enables them to use effective strategies to support them. As a result, children make good progress to catch up in their development. Staff share the children's daily activities with parents and make suggestions for learning opportunities to further support their development at home, such as the reading book scheme. This means that children make rapid progress. Staff use this information very effectively to support their two year old assessment and the transition process when children start school.

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

The nursery is very well organised. Those in charge have a very good understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The deputy manager monitors the levels of planning and assessment for all children and makes sure that records are accurate and up to date. This means that the nursery offers a broad range of experiences to help all children to progress towards the early learning goals. The managers have a good understanding of its responsibility in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements and these are consistently met throughout the nursery. All staff have attended safeguarding training and have a good understanding of the associated issues. Robust and effective recruitment procedures ensure that all adults working in the nursery are safe and suitable to do so.

Staff successfully use a range of safety measures, such as checking that all areas, toys and resources are clean and safe.

The manager is aware of the strengths and areas of improvement needed with regards to the nursery. She holds regular meetings with the staff and spends time to monitor their practice. The manager is quick to identify any areas of practice that she feels do not fully meet children's care or learning needs and addresses this immediately. For example, she recognises how further development of the outdoor provision for the children will enhance their physical skills. The managers incorporate the views of staff, parents and children in plans for developments and change. For example, they adapted and improved the food menu in response to suggestions from parents. The manager is dedicated and committed and a good role model for the staff team.

The energetic staff team work well together and are proud of the work they do. This is because they receive a lot of support and guidance from the management to enable them to develop their professional skills by accessing training opportunities. Consequently, all staff have a very good understanding of each area of learning and how children learn. Relationships between parents and staff are relaxed and very well established. Parents' comment on how they value the caring staff and how much their children have learned while attending the nursery. Parents have regular discussions with staff about their children's progress at the nursery. This enables parents to share learning priorities and enhances continuity in care.

Partnerships with other professionals and agencies are securely in place. Staff work with specialists providers, such as speech therapists, to develop strategies to support children who need additional support. This process effectively helps to support partnership working and continuity for children and their families. Parents spoken to are extremely complimentary about the operation of the nursery, expressing a high regard for the staff. They express complete satisfaction for the pleasing atmosphere and are very positive about the care and learning their child receives.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs

		of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447232
Local authority	Blackburn
Inspection number	805290
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 17
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	27

Name of provider	Little Acorns Nursery (Blackburn) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01254 207261

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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