

Little Acorns

John Dixon Centre, Drummond Road, Bermondsey, SE16 4BU

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

09/01/2013

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

- Staff plan a interesting range of experiences for children that widen and extend their learning and development. This range involves the contributions of parents enabling staff to build on valuable home-life experiences.
- Staff have developed warm and caring relationships with children fostering their emotional development well. Good relationships have also developed with parents who praise the friendly staff team and the personal care children receive.
- Children make good progress in their learning and development in relation to their starting points. Useful information is sought from parents and all adults share information to enhance children's learning to help them progress.
- All children have really good opportunities to develop their self-help skills through purposeful experiences such as snack and meal times, so children develop a wide range of skills.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Methods to develop children's early writing skills are inconsistent and some activities do not capture the children's interest.
- Staff do not make full use of the garden area, particularly in regard to the younger children.
- Rest routines for the toddler age group do not benefit all children as well as possible.

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 spent time observing the interaction between staff and children.
- The inspector sought the views of parents and carers available.
- The inspector spoke with staff.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of relevant documentation, including that relating to self-evaluation.

Inspector

Justine George

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns nursery is an established setting which re-registered in 2012. It is located in Bermodsey in the London borough of Southwark. The nursery is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, throughout the year, with the exception of public holidays. Children attend a variety of sessions, including part time. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. Children use a range of

rooms according to their ages and needs. There is an enclosed garden to the front of the building and there is a residents' communal play area to the rear, for outdoor play. The nursery has 57 children on role and supports children who learn English as an additional language and children with special education needs and/ or disabilities. There are a total of 20 staff including students and a cook. The manager has a degree and Early Years Professional Status, while 13 other staff have relevant qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the rest periods for the toddler group so they can rest or sleep when they want to and plan alternative activities for younger children who do not need sleep at the same time as others
- review the arrangements for younger children to use the garden area by arranging flexible outdoor play times, so they use this area more frequently
- promote consistency across the staff team in regard to children's literacy development, so all adults plan opportunities for children to explore writing for a wide range of purposes that are meaningful to them, for example, in the construction or role play area.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have good systems in place to identify children's starting points. They liaise with parents to gain an insight into family life and experiences. They also seek information from other professionals involved in supporting children's development. Staff have developed effective partnerships with other professionals to gain information about how to support children with additional learning needs. This system helps to narrow the achievement gap so all children make progress. Staff regularly observe children to identify their skills and achievements. This assessment enables them to plan the next steps and experiences to enhance children's skills further, so they gain useful skills for the next stage in their early education. As a result, children are making good progress and planning is personalised for each child.

A particular strength of the setting is the ongoing communication with parents about home life and how to further support children. The nursery has a 'learning tree' and

parents complete a 'leaf' in which they record any events and experiences at home. This system enables staff to build on children's interests well; for example, if they have been on a bus, staff set up a role play bus area for the children to extend their play ideas further. Staff talk about events personal to children, such as holidays or family celebrations, valuing family life.

Children partake in a wide range of good experiences. They go out in the community to the local river to feed the ducks, visit the park and farms. Children travel using public transport which has developed their interest in vehicles. Further outings are planned to explore other modes of transport and children are busy constructing vehicles using boxes. One child makes a plane using tubes for the wings whereas other children simply enjoy painting boxes or trying to fix them together. This play supports children in developing their problem solving skills as they use a variety of materials to attach and fix boxes together. Children enjoy role play experiences and learn about safety. The role play area is set up to reflect the fire emergency service. Play starts off with children taking orders in the restaurant. Children write for a purpose eagerly as they 'write' orders on a clip board, developing their early literacy skills. However, there is some inconsistency across the staff in how such early writing skills are promoted. Sometimes, writing is undertaken in a prescribed way by practising writing in a book, which children find less interesting than writing in a range of situations such as in the construction or role play areas. Staff support children's imaginative play by pretending that a fire has started and children dress up as fire fighters and use extinguishers to put out the flames. Children also learn about safety as staff extend this talking about hazards and how to keep safe.

Rooms are set up into different zones to reflect the different areas of learning. Children enjoy choosing where to play, moving freely between the rooms which offer a broad range of learning experiences throughout the day. For children who are not yet sure, staff encourage them to explore other areas aiding their independence in making choices.

Very young children have a range of experiences to promote learning in all areas of development. They practise their large motor skills moving around freely and using steps and slopes to challenge and enhance risk taking. As a result, children develop confidence in their physical abilities. They enjoy a range of tactile experiences to aid sensory awareness. Children use paint, glue and dough and explore different textures to help them develop hand and finger control that helps their early writing skills, which helps them develop useful skills for the future.

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

All children show high levels of confidence and demonstrate good behaviour. This is because they are settled and secure in the nursery. Children have developed positive relationships with their 'key person', who takes special responsibility for them, and other adults. This system helps them develop trusting relationships in addition to family life. Children seek cuddles when needed, for example, if upset. Staff are close by to support and resolve any issues children may have. For example, for any children who have recently just started or who are attending longer days and need additional reassurance

and support. Very young children benefit as staff find out about their home routines. Staff follow these when children start, which means children are content and their needs are well met.

Children help devise the nursery's 'rules' and staff record and display posters on the wall to which older children refer, which helps them understand what staff expect of them. To further support children in managing the demands of the day, staff use picture cards and these support children in learning about changes in routines, which helps them to feel secure.

Children show really high levels of independence as consistent staff practices are in place, so they understand routines. Children serve themselves at meal and snack times, fostering their self-help skills really well. Toddlers scoop soup into their bowls and help themselves to bread. They ask for more and sit really well enjoying their lunch. Older children use a knife to spread butter on oat cakes and some babies hold their own bottle to drink milk. Children benefit as their nutritional health is very well fostered. Staff are clear about any dietary needs and the cook makes inviting meals which reflect the different food groups. The cook is keen to develop menus further and plans are in place to seek favourite recipes from parents to introduce to children.

The premises are clean and hygienic. Staff apply consistent practices to minimise the spread of infection. For example, by washing children's bedding after use, ensuring nappy changing procedures are hygienic and implementing good food preparation and storage. In the event children become unwell, they are cared for properly as staff monitor them and contact parents to collect children. Staff inform parents of their child's general well-being throughout the day. This is because they record information about children's personal care and needs. As a result, parents are well informed about their child's day and care.

Staff promote children's health well and meet their individual needs, overall. Children are well rested and there are quiet areas for older children to have time to be themselves if required. These areas help children to feel calm and provides a change of scene. Toddlers rest after lunch; however, this system does not work as well as possible because some want to sleep a little later, or wake earlier. Staff have not thought about providing alternative quieter activities or changing the routine to help children unwind. Children have access to the garden and staff set out different activities for children to explore. Older children use this area often but younger ones less so. All children benefit from outings to different places of interest in the community.

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

Leadership and management are strong. This strength means that the nursery runs smoothly. Policies and procedures are accessible for everyone and the staff handbook is a good reference tool to develop staff knowledge. As a result, staff understand their roles and responsibilities and promote children's safety and well-being effectively. There are

robust recruitment procedures in place. Managers monitor ongoing staff suitability well through appraisals and observing staff practice. This monitoring helps managers and staff to set goals and identify training needs to further enhance staff practice and skills. This system also contributes towards driving improvement as this feeds into self-evaluation. Useful targets are set to improve practice. These currently include ways to improve the garden and reviewing planning and assessment to reflect the reformed Early Years Foundation Stage. Managers seek the views of parents, such as through the recent initiative of the parents' forum. Parents contribute ideas about issues important to them; for example, further improving hygiene by removing footwear in all areas of the nursery. The notes of forum meetings are available for parents who are unable to attend, which supports good communications. Newsletters, posters and a parent's handbook are available in the reception area to provide useful information. As a result, parents are well informed about how the nursery operates.

Staff have good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. All the required documentation is in place and organised efficiently. Safeguarding information is displayed around the nursery to ensure the correct referral procedures are followed in the event of any concerns. Staff have good knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Staff know what to do in the event of any concerns and this also includes challenging other staff and their professional conduct. This knowledge helps to ensure the protection of vulnerable children. Staff make sure premises are safe and secure. In the event of any accidents, children are well cared for as many staff have kept their first aid training up-to-date.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of child development and how children learn. This knowledge is reflected well in their practice, planning and assessment and through discussion. These systems are reviewed to help promote learning in all areas of development and to identify any gaps in learning. Staff have developed good partnerships with others and seek information to further support them in meeting the needs of all children. This support benefits children who have special educational needs and /or disabilities. This is because staff set targets for children which are consistent with strategies implemented by other professionals. This approach helps to promote consistency, so all children make progress. Parents comment that the care for children is personalised and that they feel their children make good progress from when they started.

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
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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	EY449725
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	803322

Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	65
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	Little Acorns The Next Generation Ltd
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	02072522300

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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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