

Little Acorns Childcare Ltd

34 Sheep Hill Lane, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley, Lancashire, PR6 7JH

Inspection date

05/06/2013

Previous inspection date

03/11/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children's independence is effectively promoted and, as a result, they are able to make decisions about what they want to do and are confident and active learners. Their self-help skills are fully encouraged to help prepare them for the next stage in their learning.
- Staff are very clear in their role in protecting children and are fully aware of the action they need to take to safeguard children and keep them safe and secure.
- Outdoor play promotes children's self-exploratory skills and allows for them to use their imagination and explore and develop their physical skills in a well-resourced playground.

It is not yet good because

- The progress check for children at age two is not completed and shared with parents to ensure early intervention can be sought if required.
- Deployment of staff within the baby room is not always effective in supporting young children's needs at all times.
- Children's learning needs are not maximised because adult interaction, planning and observation are not used effectively to extend children's thinking and successfully plan activities matched to their needs.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 nursery room and the outside learning environment, and viewed toys, equipment and resources.
- The inspector held meetings with the provider, the manager of the provision and members of staff, and spoke to a number of parents.
- The inspector looked at children's records and a range of policies.
- The inspector and manager took part in a joint observation of practice within the pre-school room.

Inspector

Janet Singleton

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Childcare Ltd was registered in 2002 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose-built premises in Clayton-Le-Woods, Chorley, is privately owned. There are three base rooms, with pre-school children cared for on the first floor. Each base room has access to enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round. There are currently 113 children on roll who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas when the child is between two and three years old. This progress check must identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected
- use the information gained from the observation and assessment of children's learning to consistently inform planning and shape learning experiences for each child, matched to their identified next steps, to further their learning
- improve the deployment of staff in the baby room to ensure the needs of children are met and their emotional well-being is fully supported.

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

- improve adult interaction in the use of language for thinking by making full use of open-ended questioning and modelling appropriate language to extend children's learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff and managers are generally secure in their knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Year Foundation Stage. Staff ensure all areas of learning are incorporated in the continuous provision in each of the playrooms. This means children make choices from the range of interesting and enjoyable experiences that foster their independence. Staff use observation, assessment and tracking of children's progress to identify their next steps in their development. Evidence of what child can do, for example, pictures and photographs of children's work, is kept within their assessment record. However, although this information informs future planning, it is not sufficiently rigorous to plan challenging activities matched to children's identified needs to ensure they are making the best possible progress in their learning. The completion of the progress check at age two is not appropriately undertaken to ensure children's development is noted against all primary areas of learning, to identify gaps in their learning and to identify the need for early intervention if necessary. This is a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

There is a focus on helping all children to develop their language and communication skills, as staff talk to children about what they are doing. As a result, children learn to listen and respond as they engage in conversations with staff and their friends about their play. Staff encourage children to practise counting as they count from one to five, and older children count to 10 and above with ease. Consequently, they learn there is a sequence to numbers. By pouring and filling in the water, and building towers in the construction area, children learn about space, shape and measure. Children in the toddler room delight in listening to stories; they anticipate what might happen and handle books with care as they develop their early reading skills. Staff plan for children to be able to make marks in different mediums, for example, paints, pens or sand or flour, as a tactile experience. Children in the pre-school enjoy writing and proudly show off their attempts at writing their names. Staff engage children in social occasions to develop their personal, social and emotional development. They help children to work together, to share information at circle time and to sit and chat at snack and lunch time. Consequently, children learn to mix and socialise, and are prepared for the next stage in their learning. Staff ensure children are able to go outside each day and develop their physical skills. Although staff mostly promote children's thinking, this is not consistent across the staff group. Some adult interaction is not as effective in extending children's learning; for example, they do not use open-ended questioning frequently. Additionally, not all staff skilfully question children to reshape tasks, so they are able to talk about what they are doing and how they are going to do it. As a result, learning opportunities are not maximised for some children.

Children enjoy riding wheeled toys and they climb large equipment and learn to coordinate their movements. Through team games, such as hide and seek, children are engaged, motivated and learn to listen, follow rules and work together as they play. Children take part in a racing game, lining up and taking turns to run through the willow paths and back to the beginning. They are thrilled and excited as they take part in this motivating and

enjoyable game. They work together, squealing and laughing as they demonstrate their feelings of delight. Staff help children to develop their hand-eye coordination as they play catch together, enjoying this one-on-one experience. Younger children free-flow between the indoor and outdoor areas as they play in the sandpit, use the smaller climbing equipment and manage their movements as they develop their spatial awareness. Children enjoy growing fruit and vegetables in the garden, and learn how food can be grown as they begin to understand the importance of a healthy and balanced diet. As a result, children are working comfortably within the typical range of development expect for their age and are developing those skills necessary for the next stage of their learning.

Staff ensure parents are provided with information regarding their children's needs by sharing the daily communication book and engaging in daily discussions with them. Staff invite parents and family members to stay and play with their children, with sessions planned for extended family members too. By holding parents evenings, parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning journey record and to support their child's learning at home. Consequently, a consistent approach to children's learning is maintained between nursery and home.

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

Children form warm, caring relationships with staff and, therefore, most settle well and are secure in the nursery. Key persons take responsibility for sharing information with parents. Consequently, children's individual routines from home are followed to keep them settled. However, this is not as robust in the baby room. Less effective staff deployment and supervision within this room means that some children's needs are not as well met. This is because staff are sometimes left with a number of very young babies who need to be supported. Consequently, if more than one child needs attention or comfort, staff deployment does not support their immediate needs for the cuddles and reassurance necessary to support their well-being at all times. On occasions, it results in children wandering and not being meaningfully engaged. Staff deployment in other playrooms and age groups is appropriate, and for those children their immediate needs are attended to and they feel secure and settled. Children are confident and effectively make choices as they as they develop their high levels of independence.

Staff support children in managing their behaviour because they use praise and give clear explanations of what is expected. As a result, children display a sound understanding of the behavioural expectation, and are well behaved. They follow rules and listen to staff when getting ready to go outdoors. They express their understanding of keeping safe in the sun, as they ensure they have their hats on and their sun cream has been applied. Children talk about getting 'hot' and 'sweaty' as they learn about the effect of heat on their bodies. They recognise their need to drink, and frequently get their drink of water to keep themselves hydrated in the warm weather. When playing outdoors, children learn to manage risks as they climb large equipment and learn to negotiate pathways. Staff assist children in managing risks indoors as they explain the need to support themselves with the handrail when using the stairs.

The well-planned environment allows for children to make their own independent choices

and decisions about what they want to do. Resources support activities and children's enhancement of their own play. Consequently, children take an active part in and contribute to their own learning; they are confident and independent. Transitions within the nursery are managed well. Staff undertake an assessment when children change rooms and, therefore, identify children's starting points. Discussions with parents and the previous key person contribute to this assessment, and this ensures children are settled into their new rooms. Therefore, children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning and future transition to school.

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

The registered person, managers and staff understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to the welfare and safeguarding requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, in practice, the implementation is not as robust because the evaluation of the setting focuses on the documentation, policies and procedures, and takes less account of the quality of teaching. This results in observation and assessment of children's learning need not being accurately reflected in the planning. Therefore, activities are based on children's interest rather than being consistently and successfully matched to their identified needs. The environment is well planned, both indoors and out, and this ensures children have opportunities to engage in a broad range of activities of their choosing.

The management team are committed and place a strong focus on staff development. Robust induction, staff training and development opportunities mean staff are continually updating their skills. Additionally, team meetings, supervision and appraisals mean staff performance is monitored and any underperformance is addressed robustly. Secure documentation to support the management of risks to children, for example, accident procedures, risk assessments and the monitoring of accidents and occurrences, is in place and robust. This means action is taken, risks are managed and a positive approach to try and prevent occurrences happening in the future is taken. All staff demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding and protecting children from harm; this is a strength and all are fully aware of their role and the action they need to take to keep children safe. The management team demonstrate a commitment to keeping Ofsted informed of any occurrences or accidents to ensure children are protected. Children's safety is of paramount importance. Visitors to the premises have their identity checked and are signed in. All external doors and outdoor areas are secured, and access is by a member of the staff to keep children safe all times. Strong relationships with parents and other settings, such as the health and social services, mean information which promotes the health and well-being of children is shared.

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 action. 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	EY136994
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	918089
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	113
Name of provider	Little Acorns Community Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	03/11/2008
Telephone number	01772 696288

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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