

Little Acorns Day Nursery

Oak House 49a Uxbridge Road, Ealing, LONDON, W5 5SA

Inspection date	18/02/2013
Previous inspection date	07/11/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Staff do not follow appropriate procedures to ensure all areas used by children are safe for their use, as required.
- Staff do not follow adequate systems to keep the premises clean and hygienic or teach children adequate routines to protect their good health.
- The provider has not maintained the required records regarding accidents and injuries.
- Areas where children play, for example the baby room, are not well organised to promote children's engagement with learning or concentration skills.
- The key person system is not well implemented so not all children's learning and development needs are met.

It has the following strengths

- children participate in and enjoy a range of activities that promote their physical development.
- staff give children opportunities to learn about the natural and wider world. They enjoy playing with the guinea pigs.

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.

Inspection activities

- Three inspectors carried out this inspection over two days.
- The inspectors observed children, children's activities and staff interaction with them in both units.
- The inspectors reviewed a sample children's information and development records.
- The inspectors reviewed a sample of relevant documentation including some policies, staff records and evaluation paperwork.
- The inspectors held discussions with the provider and manager, and talked with staff, children and some parents.
- One inspector carried out observations of practice in the two- to three year old age group with the provider.

Inspector

Deborah Jane Orchard, Seerma Parmar & Naomi Brown

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery is privately owned by Little Acorns Day Nursery (UK) Ltd. It registered in 2008 and operates from two units on the same site, in the London Borough of Ealing. One unit offers care to children aged under two years, whilst the other provides care to children over two years. All children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6.15pm all year. There are currently 167 children on roll in the early years age range. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who learn English as an additional language. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and provides free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 27 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four hold other relevant qualifications. Several staff are working towards early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- monitor the implementation of daily checks resulting from risk assessments to ensure these are carried out effectively and eliminate any hazards that pose a risk to children's safety, with particular regard to trailing electrical wires, broken toys and plastic bags
- reorganise areas used by babies and toddlers so that all children are able to take part in play that supports their developing concentration skills and encourage them to see activities through to their natural conclusion for example by providing clearer paths between different areas of the room so that babies can see and focus on activities that have been planned for them
- keep accurate records of any accidents or injury to children and first aid treatment given to them
- improve the programme for personal, social and emotional development by making sure babies have their own special person in the setting who knows them really well and understands their wants and needs, and demonstrate clear and consistent boundaries and reasonable yet challenging expectations.
- ensure premises and facilities are kept clean and hygienic, and that waste food is disposed of appropriately
- improve the partnership with parents so that all parents know who their child's key person is; ensure key persons work positively with parents to meet children's individual needs and support learning at home
- improve the programme for children's physical development so that they learn good personal hygiene routines, and become independent in these routines

Inspection judgements

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

Most children are settled and engage in activities, which support all areas of their learning and development. Although staff demonstrate an understanding of how to support children to make progress, there are weaknesses in the quality of teaching and inconsistencies in practice across all age groups.

The key person system is not well organised or embedded and it is inconsistent

throughout the nursery. As a result, some younger children do not have a special person in the nursery with whom they feel safe and secure. This means that some babies have not settled well. This has a negative effect on their feelings of security. When babies and younger children become distressed, they are not always appropriately comforted. As a result, they do not focus on activities in the nursery and they do not explore their surroundings with confidence or build relationships with people who they get to know well and become special for them.

There have recently been some staff changes within the nursery and not everyone is confident in knowing how best to support the key children for whom they take special responsibility. For example, they do not extend children's use of numbers, during activities when appropriate. As a result, some children are not sufficiently challenged in their learning and helped to progress in their play or learning. Staff are undertaking the required progress checks for children aged two years, but the weaknesses in the assessment system means progress is not reported accurately.

Babies and younger children have free access to lots of toys and equipment to cover all areas of learning. Staff have made some efforts to organise specific areas of their playrooms to promote individual areas of learning. For example, there is a low table where children can stand and make marks with crayons. However, this room is very cluttered. As a result, babies are not able to concentrate on one activity at a time or to see an activity or learn from it through to its conclusion. Also, staff do not manage some routines well, for example tidy-up time. While some babies take part in a singing activity, staff do not encourage everyone to join in, and some babies become restless and distressed. They are easily distracted because staff tidy and move things around them and some are taken for nappy changing. This means that any learning intention of this activity is lost and children do not have the opportunity to become involved and engaged in singing. As a result, babies are not learning to focus on activities for appropriate periods of time.

Staff encourage children's language development by asking questions. Children who learn English as an additional language receive some additional support as staff use key words in children's home languages. Children with identified additional needs have individual plans to guide their development; however, due to changes in staffing, these are not always used well to promote their learning. Group times are not always managed well. Some children lose interest and staff do not provide sufficient support to keep them engaged.

Babies and younger children develop their physical skills and confidence as they crawl, dance and sing. They enjoy feeling leaves, which they scrunch in their hands. Younger children decide when to play outdoors. Older ones make regular trips to the park, where they use larger play apparatus to develop their physical skills further. They enjoy moving freely in the outdoor area.

Children enjoy finding out about the wider world. They have fun operating the nursery cameras, which they use to take pictures in the nursery. They have the opportunity to use programmable toys, which helps develop their skills for the future. They explore the natural world as they make trips to see the ducks, feed their pet guinea pigs and plant in

the outdoor area.

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

The provider does not promote children's good health and safety adequately. The inspection has been brought forward following concerns raised to Ofsted that there were mice droppings in the nursery. The provider has used a pest control officer to eradicate this problem. Monitoring systems are weak, however, and the premises are not kept clean by staff in all areas. Bins are left uncovered and overflowing; some containers hold food debris. Staff do not ensure that surfaces and areas are regularly checked and wiped, for example the milk fridge. Staff do not notice when children need their noses wiping; at times, children use the same flannels to wipe their hands. All these issues pose a risk to children's good health and skills of independent personal care.

The nursery uses an external catering agency to provide meals for children. Children enjoy healthy food. This is prepared to take account of their individual dietary needs. Children generally behave well in the setting, although some younger children are not consistently reminded about positive behaviour. For example, when one younger child hurt another, staff members comforted the upset child but did not explain to the other child why that behaviour was not acceptable. This means that some children do not learn the most positive way to behave. Children benefit from daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Some children develop their personal care skills. They go to the toilet independently and show they understand the importance of washing their hands. They take on roles as 'toilet monitors' to check that this area kept clean and tidy. Staff do not always encourage children to extend their independence by trying things for themselves, such as putting their coats on when they go out to play or tidying away their own plates after lunch.

The staff undertake daily checks as part of the risk assessment system but these are ineffective. Serious hazards to children's safety, such as trailing wires and plastic bags are left in areas used by children and pose a risk to their safety. For example, trailing wires are in the reach of children in cots. As children do not play in areas that are fully safe and secure, not only do these pose immediate and serious threats to their safety, they are not fully able to learn how to manage their own safety. The nursery premises are secure and the closed circuit television provides extra security. Staff teach children how to leave the nursery buildings safely. Children understand the importance of using wrist straps and holding on to the 'crocodile' when they go for walk.

Some older children express their needs confidently and approach staff for reassurance. However, at times, staff do not interact or talk with children when they may feel vulnerable, such as when they are changed. Staff do not always comfort children immediately when they become distressed, and do not organise daily routines to help younger children form secure attachments to their key person. Such gaps in the quality of staff interaction get in the way of children, especially babies developing secure emotional attachment with their carers and feel safe and happy at all times. Not all parents are aware of who is their child's current key person is, which is a breach of requirements.

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

The provider does not implement the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage adequately. The leadership team fails to monitor how effectively staff follow policies and procedures and a number of legal requirements are breached. The risk assessment procedures are not followed. While potential hazards are identified, staff do not remove or minimise them to keep children safe.

There are sufficient numbers of staff trained in paediatric first aid. Concerns were raised to Ofsted about an accident to a child. The provider is not meeting the requirements to make available records of all accidents, injuries or first aid treatment children have received. The staff team has an understanding of child protection issues and are aware of their responsibilities regarding recording and reporting any concerns they may have regarding a child in their care. The provider has notified Ofsted that a new nursery manager is in place.

The nursery leadership has completed a written self-evaluation although it has not identified a failure to meet all the legal requirements. The manager and provider have been able to identify some areas for improvement. They have taken steps to address the recommendations made at the last inspection and from feedback from the local authority adviser, demonstrating some ability to improve. The provider has recently made changes in leadership and staffing over the last few months. These changes have affected the overall running of the nursery, as not all the team are fully secure in their new roles. This has resulted in inconsistent practices across the nursery, such as the key person system, especially for younger children.

Relationships with parents vary. Daily verbal communication, notice boards and e-mails help to keep parents informed of the nursery's provision for children. Feedback from parents indicates that some parents find the staff friendly. The lack of engagement with the key person prevents support being given to guide children's development at home. Some parents are not satisfied with the educational programmes on offer. The parents operate a parent's forum, where they meet to share their ideas, although feedback from these meetings is not made readily available to demonstrate how such comments are being used to bring about improvements. The setting employs a Montessori teacher on a part-time basis. The nursery staff work with outside agencies to obtain support for the needs of individual children. The provider acts as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, having completed relevant training at level 3. There are good links with local schools to support children when they leave the nursery.

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	EY378122
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	905087
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	119
Number of children on roll	169
Name of provider	Little Acorns Day Nursery (UK) Limited
Date of previous inspection	07/11/2012
Telephone number	0208 567 0800

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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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