

Little Acorns Private Day Nursery

279 Bolton Road, Atherton, MANCHESTER, M46 9HG

Inspection date

26/07/2013

Previous inspection date

02/11/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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 are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use this knowledge to engage children in their learning and development.
- Children explore resources and their environment with confidence and enthusiasm. This evidences that children are active learners and enjoy being in the nursery.
- Robust observation, planning and tracking procedures are in place which effectively identify children's next steps in their learning. Activities are planned in accordance with children's learning needs, which means that children make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Good relationships are in place with parents and a range of other professionals. Partnerships are purposeful and support children's individual needs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outside area has recently been developed and does not yet offer play experiences, which support all areas of learning and development, as comprehensively as the indoor environment.
- Some staff miss opportunities to skilfully question children, and do not always give children an appropriate time for children to formulate a verbal response in order to improve children's learning further.

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 and children at play throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with children, parents, staff and the management team throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation to ascertain children's progress towards the early learning goals.
- The inspector looked at the provision's self-evaluation processes.

Inspector

Elisia Lee

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Private Day Nursery was registered in 2006 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a converted, detached property in Atherton, Wigan. The setting is run by a limited company that also runs four other nurseries in the north of England. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from the ground and first floor and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 24 members of child care staff. Of these, twenty two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.15am until 6.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 120 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the outside area by offering further play opportunities and resources that support all areas of children's learning
- develop staff's practice to enable them to skilfully question the children further, to promote their critical thinking and allow sufficient time for children to respond to improve their learning even further.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan activities which create valuable learning experiences. Educational programmes cover the seven areas of learning and support children as they move towards the early learning goals. Focussed activities support children in their learning and development. For example, the nursery has recently undertaken training for 'Elklan'; this is

an initiative to support children's speech, language and communication skills. Staff support this by focussed phonics sessions using the 'letters and sounds' phonic programme. Phonic sessions are delivered in an interesting way which skilfully engages children's interest in learning. For example, children write their own words sounding out letter names and play games such as 'I went shopping' which focuses children's attention on initial letter sounds. Children feel for hidden items in a bag and delight in being able to recognise objects and discuss initial letter sounds while in small key groups. Age appropriate challenges are provided throughout the nursery to support all children as they move towards the early learning goals. For example, younger children sit with staff for story time and are asked to identify key objects within the story using story sacks.

Learning and teaching is good and has a strong impact on children's progress. Staff have a secure knowledge of how children learn and use strategies and resources to support effective learning. Planning is based on children's interests which means that children are keen learners. For example, children play with small world animals and discuss a recent trip to the zoo where they had the opportunity to see animals close up. Staff ask children which animals they saw, which was their favourite animal and why. This extends children's critical thinking skills, memory recall and enhances children's imagination. Staff follow children's interests and as they have been so interested in animals, they have enhanced learning further by developing a display where children have created paintings of their favourite animal. Children are active learners; they join in with different activities with enthusiasm and confidence and freely make their needs known. Older children make verbal requests while younger children point at objects to make their needs known. Children freely access resources and make independent choices in their play which supports the next steps in their learning and eventually, the move to school. Children who have special educational needs are supported well through having a special needs co-ordinator in place and through staff working with outside agencies such as, the speech and language therapist and the visual impairment team. Staff support children's individual needs by using a range of strategies such as, developing individual educational plans, using specialist resources and using visual timetables.

Staff have high expectations of children and are well informed about children's skills through a variety of assessments. Prior to starting at nursery, staff work with parents to complete an 'all about me' document. This allows parents to discuss children's development and skills in their home. Staff then produce baseline assessments. Regular observations of children, during play, give staff a holistic knowledge of children's interests and their developmental stage. Ongoing assessments are carried out every twelve weeks. This allows staff to support children's key skills and effectively support children's next steps in learning. Staff support children through using different teaching strategies which are age appropriate and differentiated to meet their individual needs. For example, staff support younger children by role modelling how to use construction bricks to build towers, children enthusiastically build the towers before giggling with delight as they knock them down. Staff support older children through discussion and posing a range questions. For example, children play with 'counting teddies' and staff ask 'how many have you got and what colour is that teddy?' However, some staff miss opportunities to skilfully question children to promote their critical thinking, and do not always allow time for children to think about a question and formulate a verbal response.

Parents are involved in their children's learning in a range of ways. For example, through undertaking observations at home, receiving information about planned topics, access to children's learning journals and daily diaries, parents evenings and daily verbal feedback. Parents provide information about children's starting points and are involved in the completion of progress check at age two. A range of strategies are used to support parent's involvement in learning. For example, a 'take home teddy' allows children and parents to write a diary to accompany the teddy whilst in the home. These communication methods mean that parents are kept well informed of their child's learning. Feedback from parents during the inspection was positive and they felt they were fully informed of their child's progress and could liaise with staff to discuss children's needs at any time.

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

The nursery has an effective key person system in place which enhances all aspects of children's development. Children are settled and happy in the nursery, exhibiting a strong sense of confidence. Children have secure relationships with staff. For example, staff support younger children with their physical skills as they stand behind them to support children as they learn to walk. Children make their needs known by pointing and raising their arms up, signalling that they would like to be picked up and given a cuddle. This shows that children feel comfortable with staff and that secure attachments are in place. Staff are caring role models, playing with children, showing children how to use resources and supporting learning. Children behave well in the nursery; they listen to staff and play cooperatively with their peers. Staff praise children consistently and celebrate children's personal achievements. For example, using the bathroom, setting the table and getting dressed.

Staff give a high priority to children's safety and children are supervised well throughout the nursery. Written risk assessments and daily safety checks are undertaken to help identify hazards and minimise risks. Children are learning about safety by taking part in regular fire drills, and are developing their understanding of risk. For example, children talk with adults about the importance of holding onto the rail while climbing the stairs. Children are confident and happy in their surroundings; speaking with staff, sharing resources, playing with their peers and taking part in routines, such as washing their hands at appropriate times and independently serving themselves at lunch. This shows that children are secure in their surroundings. Good quality resources are used throughout the nursery and the environment shows that staff consider how children learn through play. The outdoor area has recently been landscaped and developed; it is accessed by steps which lead down into a shaded area with grass and pebbled walk ways. This has enhanced children's understanding of the natural world and has had a positive impact on children's learning. However, opportunities and resources which consistently support all areas of learning in the outdoors are still in the early stages of development.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles through music and movement sessions and daily access to the outdoor area. In addition pre-school children have the opportunity to attend weekly swimming lessons at the local pool. Regular trips and outings are offered, such as the zoo and children's pantomime. Outings enhance children's learning. For example, pre-

school children visit a large shopping centre to purchase clothes for the 'take home teddy'. Food is freshly prepared daily on the premises and includes a varied menu with multiple choices. For example, menus include cheesy chicken casserole, homemade pork and apple burgers and carrot and chicken pilaff. Children develop their self-care skills through accessing drinking water and washing their hands at appropriate times throughout the day. Older children are highly independent during mealtimes; they get their own plate and cutlery and then serve themselves from large bowls which are placed in the centre of each table.

Children are well prepared for change and transitions which means they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. This is supported through imaginative activities. For example, pre-school children can dress up in the uniform of local schools in the role play area and have made a self-portrait display of how they will look when they are wearing their new school uniform. As children prepare to move onto school staff ensure that learning journey records are passed to parents and complete a transition document. This means that children receive good support as they move between providers and onto full time education, as all carers are aware of children's current developmental stage.

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

The inspection found that effective planning is in place, educational programmes cover all areas of learning and provide interest and challenge for children, assessment is effective as staff track children's development every twelve weeks, and that the key person system supports effective transitions. In addition there is robust documentation which outlines procedures for good practice. For example, information is sought about children prior to entry and concerns and complaints are effectively documented. The inspection found that staff are aware of their responsibilities.

Safeguarding practice is very good. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding procedures and children are well protected in the setting. The nursery has a designated officer in charge of safeguarding who attends appropriate training to develop her knowledge of safeguarding issues. All staff have attended safeguarding training and are aware of appropriate contacts for further advice and support should they be concerned about a child's welfare. Children are well supervised, and the staff are vigilant in ensuring that children stay safe. For example, daily safety checks are undertaken, the main entrance is key fob entry, regular headcounts are undertaken when children access the outdoor area and there are closed circuit television cameras in use. Written risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed to ensure that any potential hazards are identified and risks are minimised. In addition, the nursery keeps thorough records of accidents, medication and attendance to further protect children and promote their welfare.

Staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and comprehensively support children as they move towards the early learning goals. The environment is well thought out and areas of continuous

provision allow children to 'revisit' areas to embed their learning. For example, young children explore water using a variety of resources while older children consider capacity and learn key language such as 'empty' and 'full'. The management team regularly monitor educational programmes and children's progress to ensure that activities are well planned and targeted to support children's individual needs. Well organised tracking documentation is completed by knowledgeable staff who show a detailed awareness of children's individual needs and developmental stage. Children have a positive attitude to learning and make good progress.

Purposeful self-evaluative practice is in place which identifies strengths and weaknesses. The management team identify targets and priorities by undertaking audits, and by compiling action plans which supports sustainable improvements. The voice of children, parents and staff are reflected in the self-evaluation and the management team are proactive in responding to suggestions for further improvement. Currently the management team are improving the nursery website so that parents can see how suggestions have been addressed. The management team are very 'hands on' and regularly monitor practice and documentation on a weekly basis. There are good systems in place for recruitment and selection, supported by well executed inductions which ensure staff are fully aware of their job role and expectations. Professional development is highly regarded by management and staff have the opportunity to attend multiple training courses to update and refresh their knowledge. Staff have recently attended training in 'behaviour management', 'developing peer observations', and 'characteristics of effective learning'. Performance management systems are in place such as appraisals and peer mentoring. The management team oversee the quality of teaching and the support given to children by staff.

Staff have good relationships with a range of other professionals and attend multi-agency meetings as appropriate. For example, staff work closely with local authority advisors and have the opportunity to liaise with staff from other nurseries within the same nursery group. Staff give high priority to working in partnership with parents and are very aware of how close partnership working can enhance children's learning and development. Parents are complimentary about the nursery. For example, parents comment 'The nursery keeps me updated on my child's progress really well' and 'the nursery is fantastic'.

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	EY330412
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	923952
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	120
Name of provider	Just Childcare Ltd
Date of previous inspection	02/11/2009
Telephone number	01942 896102

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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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