

# Little Acorns

Baptist Church, South Street, BRIERLEY HILL, West Midlands, DY5 2RR

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

05/09/2013

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This inspection:

4

### Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Activities lack appropriate levels of challenge and interest for children of different age groups and too little account is taken of their individual interests, capabilities and needs. This is not monitored effectively and limits children's learning.
- Regular assessments including the progress check at age two are not undertaken to ascertain children's progress in their learning and development. In addition, children's stage of development in relation to their age is not identified when they first start attending. This means that progress is unable to be securely measured and children's additional needs are not identified and addressed quickly.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are not yet fully developed which means there is limited information shared regarding children's learning and progress. This does not promote consistency for children.
- Procedures regarding risk assessments and the recording of accidents and injuries are not robust enough. This means that children's safety is being compromised.
- The setting has yet to develop a system for self-evaluation which means that priorities and targets for self-improvement are not identified. This does not demonstrate a sufficient drive for improvement.

### It has the following strengths

- Children have positive relationships with the practitioners who care for them which means that children are happy and content.

## 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

- The inspector observed activities within the different areas of learning inside the setting and their play in the field nearby.
- The inspector held discussions with the practitioners who operate and manage the setting and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records.
- The inspector looked at the suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with the children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents from written documentation.

## Inspector

Carole Price

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

Little Acorns Playgroup was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the hall of the Baptist Church in Brierley Hill, West Midlands and is managed by a private partnership. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There are currently nine children on roll.

The playgroup employs three members of childcare staff, two of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday, term time only, from 9.15am to 11.45am. The setting 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:**

- improve the planning of challenging and enjoyable learning experiences across the seven areas of learning and development, by taking into account the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child
- improve the educational programme by effectively planning the use of resources and the learning environment both indoors and outdoors to reflect and support children's individual learning needs
- develop initial and ongoing assessment arrangements by: ensuring that assessments are carried out when children first start attending the setting and using observations of children's play effectively, so that their progress can be tracked and monitored and any gaps in their learning are identified
- ensure that the two year progress check is implemented so children's individual needs are identified and addressed appropriately
- develop systems to inform and include parents in their children's learning and development including when they first start at the setting and then at further regular intervals
- establish a two-way flow of information between providers, including local schools, to share information about children's learning and development to assist with their transitions and promote continuity
- ensure there is a robust procedure in place regarding risk assessments whereby they are carried out and reviewed regularly so that children's safety is not compromised
- ensure that all accidents and injuries are recorded and parents are informed.

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

- develop rigorous and effective systems for self-evaluation that identify the setting's priorities and are used to set challenging targets for improvement
- implement effective ways of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, to ensure that the quality of the provision improves and children are helped to make good progress.

## Inspection judgements

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

Activities provided lack appropriate levels of challenge for all age groups and so do not always fully engage children. Younger and older children are all provided with the same resources which means that their individual interests, capabilities and needs are not considered. For example, older children are encouraged to make footprints in the play dough using the animals on the table. Younger children attempt to copy but are not aware of the concept of the footprints. Although practitioners praise all of the children for their efforts there is little learning appropriate to their ages taking place. Practitioners talk to the children about what they doing and then suggest other ideas or resources that could be used. There are limited opportunities for children to engage in meaningful conversations about what they know and understand or to explore their own ideas. As a result, children are not encouraged to build upon what they already know and can do. This means that their learning is significantly limited.

Before children arrive at the setting practitioners set out resources which are age appropriate for children to access, such as the home corner, small world toys and book area. Children spend much of their time occupying themselves by selecting from the available toys. Although practitioners have a basic understanding of the prime and specific areas of learning, they do not adapt their skills and knowledge to meet the needs of each child. For example, when children use the pencils for drawing, older children are encouraged to write their name on their piece of paper. Practitioners write each child's name for them to copy, occasionally using letter sounds to match letter names. Younger children are provided with the same materials for early mark making and therefore, become disinterested quickly. The children have access to a nearby public field for energetic physical play. However, this does depend upon weather conditions and whether there are other people using it. This means that children's learning is further inhibited.

Planning overall is ineffective and does not set clear targets for children to achieve new skills, or to extend their existing abilities. There is little connection between activities set out and what children can actually do, minimising their learning experiences. As a result, children are not developing the characteristics of effective learning to support their readiness for school. Practitioners undertake observations of children in their play. They take photographs and record in writing what children are seen doing. Next steps in children's learning are sometimes utilised and considered in future activities. However, these are not always clearly indicated, so opportunities to promote them, are missed. Practitioners have yet to implement an assessment system to measure and monitor children's progress. There is little information obtained by practitioners or parents regarding learning and development when children first start attending the setting. This means that children's progress cannot be measured while attending the setting and any additional needs cannot be identified and addressed. Furthermore, the setting has yet to implement the required progress check at age two, which means that children's needs are not being addressed.

Practitioners share information with parents during regular conversations. However, they are not informed of children's stages of progress and next steps in learning. This limits their involvement in their child's development, within the setting and at home.

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

Practitioners welcome all children into a warm and caring environment. An adequate key person system and settling-in procedure help children to feel comfortable and form secure attachments with adults. This helps to secure a smooth transition from home into the care of practitioners. Children make a positive contribution to the setting, as they take part in the activities, which they choose, and older children help with tidying up the toys. Practitioners readily praise children for their achievements which helps promote children's self-esteem.

Practitioners provide routine care for the children, instructing them to follow the tasks of the day, such as when it is time to wash their hands and to tidy-up ready for snack time. Children are familiar with these routines and manage their self-care with increasing levels of independence, developing their understanding of the importance of good hygiene. When asked what they need to do before eating, children respond enthusiastically with 'Wash our hands'. They use antibacterial gel to clean their hands before they eat and are reminded what they need to do to make their hands clean.

Children are encouraged to independently use knives for spreading during snack time and are also offered choices regarding what they would like. Practitioners reinforce expectations, such as remaining seated while eating and also using manners. Practitioners use occasional explanation or reason, to help children understand the meaning of rules and boundaries.

Practitioners also provide small wheeled ride on toys and bikes for children to ride inside. Although there is limited space available, children, on the whole, negotiate obstacles and manage the space effectively. Children are also able to access the nearby field for fresh air and physical exercise. However, this does depend upon weather conditions and whether there are members of the public also using the facility. Although practitioners state that a thorough risk assessment is carried out each morning, the field not used by the children until later in the day. In the meantime, it is freely accessible to the public. This means that risk assessments are not robust or implemented effectively enough to ensure children's safety.

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

Practitioners do not make effective use of their basic knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. This results in, weak practice that does not meet the needs and interests of all children. Consequently, children's development is hindered. Children become disengaged from activities as they not challenged enough. Practitioners focus much of their time on routine care practices and do not take into account the differing needs and abilities of all children, especially regarding their learning, in activities.

This limits children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. The quality of teaching and learning is not satisfactorily monitored, and as a result, children make insufficient progress.

While practitioners demonstrate an adequate understanding of safeguarding policies, such as how to recognise and respond to the signs and symptoms of abuse; they do not consider risks which they may encounter when using the field nearby. Furthermore, accident records are not always updated regularly. This compromises children's safety and well-being. However, recruitment and vetting procedures are secure, ensuring that practitioners working with children are suitable to do so. The process for self-evaluation is yet to be implemented and therefore, improvements have yet to be identified. This does not demonstrate a good enough capacity to improve.

There is some positive engagement with parents to keep them informed about their child's daily care and routines. However, this does not always extend to shared learning opportunities between the setting and home. This limits children's development and progress. Partnerships with other settings and childcare organisations are yet to be developed which means that children are not supported regarding their individual needs. Parents express how the setting has helped their children to develop and grow.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY455872
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	908027
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	9
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Acorns Playgroup Partnership
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 572227

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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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