

Little Acorns

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

Inspection date	04/09/2013
Previous inspection date	09/01/2013

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

- Children are happy and keen to learn because of their good relationships with staff who provide a warm and caring environment. Parents are welcome to contribute by sharing home-life experiences.
- Staff plan a range of interesting experiences for children to learn new skills and make good progress.
- Children learn self-help skills by learning good hygiene routines and clearing away at meal times.
- Children gain confidence through being able to make choices throughout the day from a wide selection of activities that cater for all areas of early learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The nursery has not established good partnerships with local schools to support children's transitions to full-time education.
- The outdoor provision does not fully support all children's learning and developmental 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 spoke to one of the Deputy Managers and the staff.
- The inspector sampled some of the policies and documentation including risk assessments and children's learning records.
- The inspector observed a range of activities planned for children and the staff's interaction.
- The inspector invited the deputy manager to carry out a joint observation.
- The inspector sought the views of some parents and carers.

Inspector

Karen Callaghan

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Nursery is an established setting which re-registered in 2012. It is located in Bermondsey in the London Borough of Southwark. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and 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. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two and three years. 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 currently has 67 children on roll. The nursery supports children who learn English as an additional language and children with special education needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 22 staff including apprentices and a cook. The manager holds Early Years Professional Status. 18 staff hold National Vocational Qualifications in childcare at levels 2 or 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop links with schools children move on to, in order to support their move and next stages in their learning
- strengthen opportunities for children to learn through play in the outdoor environment.

Inspection judgements

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

The atmosphere of the nursery is purposeful and busy. Each child has a key worker who gets to know the children well and plans for their individual needs. When a child enters the nursery staff make detailed notes with parents on their child's likes and dislikes and home routines. This information, along with careful observations, helps staff to identify children's starting points for learning and development. The nursery uses family photographs to create a display with relevant details, which allows all staff to get to know the children and gives the child a sense of belonging and being valued. Children with additional learning or medical needs are well supported as the staff have developed effective partnerships with other professionals who are able to give advice. For example, a speech and language therapist has devised a programme to extend and enrich children's early language. A lead practitioner uses this within the nursery and they are rolling it out

for the benefit of all children.

Ongoing communication with parents, including a parents' forum where carers can get advice on supporting their child, is a strength of the nursery. Staff are able to talk about events at home with the children and can plan for children's interests by collecting news and experiences. The parents' accounts are written on to a 'leaf' and put up on display to form a large tree for everyone to read. The nursery asks parents to contribute to displays so they are involved in their children's learning. For instance a black and white theme has pictures and items from home. Role-play areas are set up to extend these interests including family celebrations such as a christening. Children are able to make invitation cards and practise their early writing skills to support their literacy development.

Rooms are set up to reflect the needs of different ages and the seven areas of learning. The rooms for the babies are safe and have a good range of soft play materials for them to touch, chew and they are able to learn to crawl. There are sensory areas with mirrors and mobiles for them to watch, and tactile toys for them to shake, feel and bang. They have large crayons to make marks on big pieces of paper on the floor, which develops their hand control. Staff share books before meal times and keep the babies amused by singing and interacting with each of them individually, supporting their early communication skills. The staff support the children's emotional needs well and are adept at comforting them when they cry and managing their care in a warm and friendly manner. Parents receive a daily bulletin of their child's personal care, for example how long they have slept for, and what they have eaten, which helps parents keep informed about their child's day at nursery.

Older children are able to move freely around between rooms and outside, choosing where to play. There are quiet areas where they can sit with friends and share a book. Staff have story sacks to enhance story telling with puppets of the characters for the children to use their own imaginations. There are plenty of opportunities for children to explore new materials. Outside, a table is set up for them to play with bubbles and pour water into and through different sized containers. On another table there is a tray with ice cubes, shells, glitter and bubble pack for them to feel while a practitioner asks questions about what the items look and feel like, suggesting new words to describe their texture. Such experiences help children to think critically. Children have opportunities to count when they mix powder paint with water and make new colours when they mix them. Other children build with large construction materials and this develops their problem-solving skills as they design a stool strong enough to sit on. Children are pleased with their attempts when they finally find a solution that works. All children are absorbed in these tasks and play well together showing independence.

Children have a wide range of experiences in the local community. They visit the local park to feed the ducks and in small groups visit the shops to buy fruit and handle money. Farm visits extend their understanding of the natural world. The children learn about safety by walking sensibly and wearing the correct clothes for the weather. The librarian visits the nursery every week to encourage a love of books and extend the children's vocabulary.

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

All children move around the nursery happily and know that the staff will support them. They soon become settled and secure and make positive relationships with their key person. The high number of staff helps to ensure that the children's needs are well met. They resolve any issues that arise between children in a fair and sensible manner, which results in good behaviour. For example, children who may struggle with aspects of their behaviour are well supported and taught how to play and share. They receive plenty of praise and learn about behaviour expectations to support their personal and social development. The staff understand the needs and routines of babies, and meet these well to support consistency and continuity of care. They are given cuddles to comfort them, particularly when they are settling in to nursery.

Children understand the rules because staff explain them and put them up on display to remind the children of what is expected. They help one another, for instance, after lunch when they help their friends to take off their shoes and find a place to snuggle down to sleep. Children are able to sleep when they need to and those that do not have the opportunity to have a quiet book sharing time with members of staff. At lunch times there are plenty of opportunities for children to help themselves to food and clear away afterwards so they gain independence and skills for the future at school. The cook provides healthy lunches and snacks with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. The meals have variety and reflect the different cultures as well as ensuring a good balance of ingredients to support healthy lifestyles for the children.

The premises are cleaned regularly throughout the day and nappy bins emptied promptly to maintain a hygienic environment. The staff use disposable gloves and aprons for food handling and changing nappies. Accidents are recorded with time and treatment to safeguard children. The staff telephone parents and ask them to collect their child when needed, such as if they become unwell, to support their well-being. The children know that they must wash their hands before touching food, after messy activities and after using the toilet thus learning good self-care skills.

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

The nursery is well managed with a high number of staff, many of whom are well established and trained, which ensures that children are appropriately cared for, and are safe. Robust recruitment procedures and a well-monitored induction programme means that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and promote children's well-being. Managers monitor ongoing staff suitability well by observing their practice, supporting their development and identifying their training needs. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding procedures and the steps to take to report any concerns about a child's welfare. They know the possible signs and symptoms that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. This knowledge helps staff to ensure the protection of children, and links with the local social services are strong.

Risk assessments are fully in place for both indoor and outside areas as well as trips out and about the local community. Staff identify potential hazards and take appropriate steps to minimise risks, such as not using the broken play boat in the garden. These procedures, together with daily checklists, help staff to ensure the premises are safe, hygienic and suitable for the children. The children are well cared for in the event of an accident as many staff hold suitable first aid certificates.

All areas of the nursery are well resourced and the equipment is organised and well looked after. The many interesting activities are well planned and resourced with staff supporting and encouraging the children who access them. Children are appropriately supervised at all times so they keep. Access to the nursery is by an electronic entry system and parents, staff and visitors sign in to safeguard children.

Staff have a good understanding of child development and how they learn best. Displays in each room give examples of good practice and care, and there are quotes from leading practitioners to inspire staff. Planning for all seven areas of the curriculum is well thought out and evaluations of activities ensure that improvements are made in the outcomes for children. The interests of the children are paramount and the plans are adapted and extended to meet their learning needs. Detailed observations are made of the children's progress and these form a personal learning file with photographs and pieces of work. Staff record and share details about every area both verbally and through written reports so they are involved in their child's development. Tracking identifies any gaps in learning and children receive further support to improve their achievements. Children with special educational needs have detailed educational plans that staff monitored regularly. These procedures help to ensure that children make good progress during their time in the nursery from their starting points. Parents say they are pleased with their child's achievement and the care that they receive.

Relationships with parents are positive and the recent parents' forums where they can discuss problems and learn how best to support their child are well established. The nursery seeks views on their practices through the forums and questionnaires. This helps staff to reflect and evaluate their practice in order to drive improvement in the quality of the provision and plan for further action. Relationships with the local schools are not consistently well established to support and prepare children for their eventual moves to school.

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	EY449725
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	932924
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	67
Name of provider	Little Acorns The Next Generation Ltd
Date of previous inspection	09/01/2013
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, 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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