

Little Acorns Nursery

Oak Farm, Drayton Lane, Drayton Bassett, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B78 3EF

Inspection date

04/09/2013

Previous inspection date

29/07/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The superb grounds, accommodation, facilities and high quality teaching results in children rapidly acquiring new skills and being extremely ready for their next stage of learning, including school.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this highly welcoming nursery. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and use creative strategies to enable children to explore, make their own discoveries and problem solve.
- Highly skilled and sensitive staff provide a nurturing environment, which successfully promotes children's independence, sense of belonging and well-being.
- Partnership with parents and carers is extensively promoted through parents' involvement in the planning and assessment arrangements, regular meetings and numerous fun events.
- Staff caring for children demonstrate the highest level of commitment to securing their safety. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust, carefully managed and effective in identifying risk to children.
- The leadership team are clearly passionate about the nursery and have an ambitious vision to relentlessly enhance the already very high quality service provided.

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 playrooms and outdoor areas.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and carried out a joint observation.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of staff working within the nursery, the provider's self-evaluation, development plan and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection and information and feedback from parent questionnaires.

Inspector

Parm Sansoyer

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Nursery opened in 2004. It operates from five playrooms within converted farm buildings, with a separate self-contained building for the out of school provision. The premises are situated on the outskirts of Tamworth and Sutton Coldfield in the West Midlands. The nursery serves families in the local community and surrounding areas. There are enclosed areas for outdoor play and children also have access to the farm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 76 on roll, who are within the early years age range. There are currently 15 children on roll in the holiday club of whom four are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm throughout the year.

The nursery employs 16 members of staff. Of these, three hold an early years qualification at level 6, of whom one holds the Early Years Professional Status. Four members of staff hold a qualification at level 5, eight hold a qualification at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2 and is working towards an early years qualification at level 3. 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 learning opportunities for children in the toddler room even further, for example, by making the resources in the sensory area and role play area more open ended, so children can more easily move and combine them in a variety of ways.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff use sharply focused observation and assessments systems to plan and provide children with a rich and challenging range of high quality activities and experiences. This results in children making excellent progress because activities are clearly based on children's interests, ideas and developmental needs. For example, staff identify any problems especially in relation to speech, language and behaviour early and these children are allocated 'special time', where staff provide activities and experiences on targeted areas for improvement. The educational programmes and environment both indoors and outdoors offer a stimulating and challenging range of experiences across all areas of

learning and teaching techniques are extremely strong across the nursery. Consequently, children show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration as they play. A highly inclusive approach to children's learning is evident. For example, children with English as an additional language are supported extremely well to increase their English and also a clear emphasis is placed on valuing their home language, to help build on what they already know. A highly successful two-way flow of information and communication, from the outset when children first start and throughout their time, results in excellent parent partnership working. Parents and carers contribute their ideas to the planning of activities and share their own observations of their children's development and achievements, which are valued by staff and used to inform planning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered exceptionally well. All children, including those who are new, are supported extremely well to help them settle. Older children speak with confidence and they happily share their views and ideas with staff and their peers, as highly positive relationships are fostered. They display high levels of confidence and work exceptionally well independently and with their peers showing excellent negotiation and cooperation skills.

Children's communication and language is supported extremely well. Daily group times are used exceptionally well to place a strong focus on promoting children's speaking and listening skills. For example, children freely talk about their interests, families and the topics being covered at nursery. Staff successfully introduce new ideas, concepts and vocabulary at every opportunity, including snack time, which is also used as an opportunity for extending learning. Staff use songs and rhymes throughout the day to further increase children's language development, in particular, for children aged under two years. For example, on the daily visit to the onsite farm staff use songs and rhymes in relation to the animals children are looking at and babies show a real fondness for what they hear. Babies enjoy being physically close, make eye contact and use their voice and touch to communicate and staff mimic and build on the sounds they make and words they say. The 'rhyming walk' offers excellent opportunities for children to take a walk in the extensive grounds and follow a trail of children's favourite nursery rhymes and stories and includes interesting visual aids to capture their curiosity. This is used exceptionally well by staff to encourage children to sing, recall and act out stories and promote their language development.

Children build excellent foundations for early literacy. The promotion of a 'letter of the week' and a clear focus on linking sounds and letters means the more able children rapidly link sounds and letters and many of them write their own name and recognisable letters. Children make sense of visual signs and symbols as the environment is rich in English, Punjabi and Portuguese print, which also gives value to the other languages spoken at the nursery. An extensive range of opportunities engage children in making marks both indoors and outdoors.

The extensive grounds and farm offers an abundance of meaningful first-hand experiences resulting in children that are active learners and who are creative and think critically. Children use a challenging range of physical play apparatus to test and extend their physical skills and access the outdoor areas in all weather conditions. The purposeful

learning environment outdoors provides a wealth of experiences for children to increase their understanding of the natural world. For example, children observe and learn about the many pigs, sheep, horses, rabbits, llama, birds and the tortoise. Staff use the grounds exceptionally well throughout the year to support children's learning in the changing seasons. For example, children collect natural items of interest and have been identifying animal tracks in the snow. Children camp in the woods, make dens and collect wood and have been learning about bees and how they make honey. Children become avid gardeners. For example, a well-established pumpkin patch, caring for onions, potatoes and lettuce, provide excellent opportunities for children to sow, harvest, eat and use fresh produce. They also learn about the importance of recycling paper, plastic and tin.

Children learn about diversity in a meaningful way and they develop an understanding about a variety of festivals and celebrations throughout the year. Parents play an active role in the life of the nursery and are keen to share their stories and music from their own cultures with children. Positive image resources and photographs help children to understand about similarities and differences in society and help them to learn and respect their own and others cultures.

Children's mathematical learning is fostered extremely well. Staff use the daily routine exceptionally well to encourage children to count and problem solve, such as snack time as they calculate how many cups they need. Children have time, space and encouragement to discover and use new words and mathematical ideas, concepts and language. Staff creatively combine a mathematical element in many activities and areas. For example, when harvesting the fresh produce they consider size, weight, colour and shape. Children enjoy problem solving as they use the guttering to make ramps for their cars and learn about speed. The computer and programmable toys are used well to further extend mathematical concepts and problem solving.

Extensive opportunities are available for children to develop their creative skills and use their imagination. They use a wide variety of resources and use their senses as they explore different materials and textures. Children experience a range of painting techniques and arts and craft activities, which they thoroughly enjoy. Children easily adopt roles and cooperate during their imaginary games. Musical instruments are popular with children and used well by staff to encourage children to create sound and consider rhythm.

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

Staff create a nurturing and calm environment for children and therefore, they are extremely happy and well settled in this welcoming nursery. The highly embedded assigned key person system results in an exceptional knowledge of each child's backgrounds, care and educational needs. For example, in the baby room staff work extremely closely with parents to collate detailed information about the babies specific care needs, likes, dislikes and behaviour. This is then displayed in the room and carefully followed by the staff team. The uniqueness of each child is captured and staff value and respect all children and their families. For example, staff have created 'Family books', which include photographs of children and their families and are used as a base to learn

about each child's background and family and are made easily available for children to access. Transition between rooms within the nursery is very carefully planned to make this a smooth and easy move for children. Children show an extremely strong sense of belonging. For example, although, many children have very recently moved room they are already very well settled. An informative transition book for each room is available to all parents, to help further support this smooth move. Partnerships with the local schools are strong and continue to strengthen, resulting in teachers from some of the schools visiting. There is good sharing of information and an excellent use of resources, such as photographs of the teachers and uniforms shared with children in preparation for school.

This vibrant accommodation, its excellent grounds and the superb range of resources and experiences, provide a highly enjoyable and challenging learning experience for children. Staff make extremely effective use of the space they have, to provide rich and meaningful experiences for children. There is, however, scope to further enhance opportunities for children in the toddler room, for example, by making the resources in the sensory area and role play area more open ended, so children can more easily move and combine them in a variety of ways.

Excellent attention is given to encouraging children to adopt healthy lifestyles. They benefit from freshly cooked, nutritious meals and snacks. Exemplary practices are adopted to prevent the spread of infection. For example, the nursery is kept meticulously clean and the grounds immaculate and protective clothing worn when serving food and changing nappies to prevent the spread of infection. Top priority is given to keeping children safe, so they can move safely and freely both indoors and outdoors and staff are vigilant and supervise children very well. Children develop a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe at nursery and on outings. Visits from the police and fire brigade help reinforce the message of staying safe. Children are extremely well behaved. Staff adopt consistent strategies to manage children's behaviour and therefore, they clearly understand agreed codes of behaviour.

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

The leadership and management team consists of the two registered individuals, manager and deputy manager, who are creative and innovative. One of the registered providers is extensively involved with the nursery on a daily basis and offers excellent levels of direction to the manager. The manager's expert knowledge of the learning and development requirements and overview of the educational programmes results in high levels of challenge and support for the staff team. High aspirations are clearly shared amongst the staff team and a culture of respect is firmly embedded and therefore, staff are highly motivated. Very successful staff meetings, supervision and annual appraisals take place to ensure a clear focus on safeguarding, high quality care and education, is sustained. The initial staff induction is extremely comprehensive ensuring all staff meet the high competency levels set and a robust programme of professional development is in place, to secure outstanding practice. Fully embedded continuous improvement plans and self-evaluation systems, which involve parents, carers, staff and children means the nursery offers excellent care and education to children.

Safeguarding arrangements are well embedded in all aspects of practice. Any concerns are given the utmost priority and dealt with effectively in relation to child protection issues. All staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues and how to implement the safeguarding policy and procedures. There are robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. High security systems are in place and all visitors are made clearly aware of the fire procedure and rules in place to keep themselves and children safe during their visit.

All parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection and the ongoing parental satisfaction surveys clearly indicate that they are extremely impressed with the service provided and the care their children receive. They are particularly impressed with the range of high quality experiences on offer, how their children love coming to nursery and the broad range of events they can attend with their children. A highly personalised approach results in positive partnerships and means they are kept very well informed about the provision, activities and all aspects of their children's achievements. This welcoming environment includes a wealth of displays in the entrance hall and in each of the rooms, providing extremely useful information about the importance of play and how parents can support their children's learning. The nursery is extremely motivated in working with other settings, local schools and other professionals and agencies to support transition and children's care and education.

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	EY257600
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	908129
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	79
Number of children on roll	91
Name of provider	Little Acorns (Drayton Bassett) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	29/07/2009
Telephone number	01827 289537

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

