

Little Acorns

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

Inspection date	08/11/2013
Previous inspection date	04/09/2013

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

- Staff know the children very well and plan effectively for their individual learning needs. Consequently, children make good progress in their development.
- 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.
- Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment and the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met to a good standard.
- Parents praise the friendly staff for the positive relationships they establish with their children. Consequently children are confident, secure and happy in the nursery.
- Management welcome advice and positively plan for improvement. They consistently implement changes, which benefit children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff have not fully developed strategies to engage all parents in their child's learning at the setting and at home.

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 examined documentation including a representative sample of children's records, policies, operational plans and staff appraisal records.
- The inspector had discussions with staff, children, the management and parents.
- The inspector observed children's play and staff interaction.
- The inspector offered a joint observation with senior staff.

Inspector

Ray O'Neill

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 for 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 21 staff including apprentices and a cook. The manager holds Early Years Professional Status. 17 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:

- extend and develop strategies to engage all parents in their child's learning at the setting and at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use an effective key person system to support children to make good progress, across all areas of learning. Staff plan a well-balanced range of activities that takes into account children's starting points, abilities and interests. Children's records demonstrate how staff use initial discussions with parents about developmental starting points to support them in planning children's next steps for learning. Family photographs and details about the children and their interests are displayed ensuring all staff know the children and that the children feel welcomed and valued. Efficient planning, observation and assessment systems enable staff to set clear goals for children across each area of learning. The nursery has established effective partnerships with other professionals to support children with additional needs to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity for every child. For example following speech and language programmes devised by health professionals to ensure identified children develop their communication and language skills. As a result, children are making good progress and planning is personalised for each child. Staff continually update the planning to correspond with the children's interests and offer activities to extend this. For example, setting up role-play areas to act out family celebrations or ensuring animal figures are available following a visit to a zoo.

Rooms are set up to reflect the needs of different ages and the seven areas of learning. Staff show a good understanding of how to support children's learning through play. They plan and provide an interesting, varied curriculum that ensures children of all ages take part in a well-balanced range of activities and experiences. They set out resources so that babies and toddlers can explore freely. Children enjoy investigating toys in baskets, drawing shapes at the table with plates and pencils and exploring paint with their fingers. Very young children have a range of experiences to promote learning in all areas of development. They explore a good range of soft play materials freely in a safe and organised room. For example, children enjoy selecting toys to feel or look at mirrors and mobiles in the sensory area. Staff promote their early communication skills effectively when they talk to them as they play, singing rhymes and sharing books.

High staffing ratios enable older children to move freely and choose from the different activities provided. Children enjoy selecting photographs from a recent farm outing, discussing their memories with staff, while gluing the pictures for their own record of the visit. They enjoy the weekly storytelling visit from the librarian and sharing books with staff in the quiet areas. Staff engage children very effectively when they use props and different voices to bring stories to life. They support children's language development skilfully when they ask questions to extend conversations and encourage children to express their ideas. Children recognise their name cards on arrival and develop their early writing skills as they practise writing their names on their artwork. The nursery provides many activities for children to develop their understanding of number, shape, space and measures. For example number rhymes, shape puzzles, movement sessions and sand play.

Children have a wide range of experiences in the community visiting the local river, park, farm and shops to buy fruit and handle money. Children make very good progress in their physical development as the nursery provides plenty of opportunities and resources for physical development. For example, climbing apparatus, wheeled toys, hoops and balls are used enthusiastically by the children to demonstrate their climbing, balancing and running skills.

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

Staff make children feel valued and secure because they have strong, warm relationships with them. They know the children well because they find out about children's personalities and skills when they first arrive at the nursery. For example, children's records and parental comments demonstrate that staff gather relevant information to ensure that effective care practices and strong attachments are formed from the outset. This enables staff to plan and provide experiences that meet the interests of each child. It also enables staff to make certain they follow children's specific routines regarding sleep, nappy changing and toilet training in line with parents' wishes. All children move around the nursery happily, including those who only started recently, owing to the trusting relationships established with staff through the effective key person system. The high ratios of staff to children ensure that children's needs are well met.

Children behave well because staff manage their behaviour effectively. They use a good range of positive methods to motivate children to behave well. For example, they agree ground rules with children, which are phrased in a positive way. To further support children in managing the demands of the day, staff use picture cards and these support children in learning about changes in routines, which helps them to feel secure. Children show good awareness of safety as they walk around the nursery and use equipment during messy play activities. Children support one another, for instance, sharing pencils when drawing shapes and cutting pictures to make farm books following a recent visit.

Rigorous care practices are followed, such as nappy changing, food preparation and accident recording to promote children's well-being. For example, staff change nappies in clean, private and comfortable areas, wear disposable gloves and aprons when serving food, and parents are phoned promptly in the case of an accident and details recorded. Children have good self-care skills. They use the bathroom independently and wash their hands at appropriate times. Staff are careful to ensure that children's preferences and special dietary needs are catered for. A nursery cook provides healthy, appetising meals and children serve themselves fresh fruit snacks and pour their own drinks. This supports children's independence and self-care skills well. Children benefit from daily fresh air and physical exercise through use of the resources in the outdoor area. This supports children's good health and promotes their understanding of a healthy lifestyle well.

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

The experienced staff team has a thorough understanding of safeguarding procedures and a high regard to promoting children's safety and care needs. Children are protected extremely well, as there are very robust systems in place to ensure the recruitment, vetting and continued suitability of staff. For example, a well-monitored induction programme means that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and promote children's well-being. An effective appraisal system monitors staff suitability through half-yearly appraisals and regular observation of staff practice. Training needs are identified and targets set to further improve practice and drive improvement in the quality of the provision for children. All staff are very well trained in child protection issues and have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow if safeguarding concerns are raised. All of the required documentation is in place for the safe and efficient running of the setting. For example, children's safety and welfare is very well maintained through high ratios of trained staff, good supervision and deployment of staff, and the regular practice of evacuation procedures. Risk assessments are fully in place for the indoor and outdoor spaces. For example, daily checklists are completed to identify hazards and staff take appropriate action to minimise risks to keep children safe. Comprehensive risk assessments are also conducted for visits to the park, health centre or farm. Staff 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.

The nursery has a comprehensive operational plan based on effective self-evaluation

involving contributions from all of the nursery community. For example, views are sought from parents through questionnaires and the parents' forum, from staff in regular meetings and children in discussion activities. The setting acts positively on the recommendations made in recent inspections. For example developing plans and securing funding to develop play opportunities for children in the outdoor area. Also, partnerships with a local primary school and children's centre has recently been established; others are planned to support children's transition and give families access to a range of services to aid children's learning and development. The nursery has an ambitious drive towards its continuous development.

Staff have strong links with a range of professionals involved in children's care and learning, particularly those children who have special educational needs and /or disabilities or speak English as an additional language. This support from community health professionals and local authority advisers benefits children as specific targets to meet individual needs are set, strategies implemented and good progress made relative to their starting points. Overall partnerships and engagement with parents are good because staff keep parents informed about their child's progress and provide good opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child's learning and development at home. For example, parents complete a recount of the child's activities over the weekend which are displayed and used to inform planning. However, staff have not fully developed strategies to engage all parents in their child's learning at the setting and at home to further support children to make good progress.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	938380
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	1 - 8
Total number of places	76
Number of children on roll	67
Name of provider	Little Acorns The Next Generation Ltd
Date of previous inspection	04/09/2013
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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