

# Little Acorns Day Nursery

Hartrigg Oaks, Lucombe Way, New Earswick, YORK, YO32 4DS

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

15/01/2014

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

- There are inadequate records kept to demonstrate that staff have been appropriately vetted and checked to ensure their suitability to work with children. As a result, children are not fully safeguarded and their welfare is compromised.
- The provider is not consistently meeting the adult to child ratio requirements set out in the Safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means staffing arrangements do not always meet the needs of children at all times.
- There are too few staff available at the beginning of the nursery day to ensure children receive sufficient attention from their key person and other staff at this time. This has a negative impact on children's well-being and overall progress. For example, during this time, children cannot always gain the attention they want or need and have limited access to some resources and the outside area.
- There are weaknesses in the educational programme for mathematics with staff overlooking opportunities to fully support children's understanding and use of mathematical language during everyday routines.

### It has the following strengths

- Overall, practitioners plan meaningful activities to help support and extend children's learning and parents are actively involved in contributing to this.

## 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 play and learning activities and spoke to staff and children in the indoor environment.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's learning journals and progress tracking information.
- The inspector carried out a meeting with the manager and looked at and discussed a range of policies, records and procedures.
- The inspector met with a parent to seek their view.
- The inspector checked records of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, along with the providers self-evaluation and improvement plan.

## Inspector

Judith Bodill-Chandler

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the village of New Earswick on the outskirts of York. The nursery is privately owned and managed. It operates from four rooms within purpose-built premises. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 73 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded education for two-, three-, and four-year olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- record and maintain details of the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed for all staff, including Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure reference numbers, the date when the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it
- ensure staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children at all times of the day and that the staff to child ratio requirements set out in the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are consistently maintained
- ensure staff deployment provides consistent and effective learning and emotional support to all children throughout the day and that the educational programme offered is effectively monitored to ensure that children benefit from access to all resources, good quality interaction and teaching support at all times
- improve the educational programme for mathematics by extending opportunities for children to develop their use of mathematical knowledge and language during everyday activities and routines, for example, by learning about and describing quantity and capacity at snack and mealtimes.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children's learning needs are not always consistently supported due to poor deployment of staff. At the beginning of the day children aged between 18 months and four years are all cared for together in one room. Staffing ratios at this time are not being met, resulting in limited opportunities for children to access a range of developmentally appropriate resources and activities to meet their individual needs. As a result, children are not fully engaged in their learning as they move from one mundane activity to the next, while waiting for the rest of the staff to arrive so that they can move into their own care rooms and access the outdoor area. At this time, staff merely supervise children rather than actively engage in supporting their learning and development. Consequently, children's learning and development needs are not consistently met because the number of staff available is not always sufficient to provide them with the close adult support they need to make the most of their experiences.

Overall staff have a clear understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and, when staff to child ratios are met, they use their knowledge appropriately to support children's learning and development. At these times, they observe children and plan a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities and experiences. These are based on children's interests both from home and those identified in the setting. For example, one child enjoys joining in with songs and rhymes on computer software at home. The child's keyworker recognises and supports this interest by providing similar software in the setting so that the child benefits from continuity in the things being learnt at home and in nursery. Older children take part in daily 'show and tell' and 'my news' sessions with their key worker. One child talks confidently about the magazines brought in from home and shows other children pictures and illustrations in these. Younger children are encouraged to repeat words shown to them in simple picture books and are given praise when they attempt to do so. As a result, children are developing their speaking and listening skills by sharing books with familiar adults and talking about what is of interest to them. There is a sufficient range of mark-making opportunities available, both indoors and outdoors, for all children. Older children are encouraged to write their own name on their creative work. All have their own 'busy book' which they can access independently to draw or write in. Staff support children to begin to form letters to write specific words, for example, one child drew a poppy in her book on Remembrance Day and independently wrote the word 'soldier'. As a result, children are beginning to write identifiable letters to communicate meaning. A self-serve snack is available to children during the morning and afternoon sessions. Children are given choices about what snack they would like and when they would like it. As a result, children are helped to develop their decision making skills. At lunchtimes children are encouraged to pour their own water from small jugs resulting in children developing and refining their fine motor and co-ordination skills. However, there are missed opportunities at this time to develop and support children's use of mathematical language to describe quantity and capacity and this impacts on children's overall progress in this area.

There are good partnerships with parents who contribute to children's starting points by

completing a 'What I like doing' sheet. A termly parents 'comments and observation sheet' is sent home asking parents what their children like to do, what they can do, and what their interests are at home. Staff use these to plan activities which generally meet children's needs. However, this does not happen when ratios are not being met at the beginning of the day. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and are provided with a termly summary report. A place is provided on the report for parents to contribute their own ideas and possible next steps. This means that parents are informed of their children's learning and contribute to ideas for helping their child to move forward with their learning. Staff also gather key words and phrases from parents in children's home language to support children who have English as an additional language. Welcome signs are written in languages which are known to the children. Children with special educational needs are supported by the designated special educational needs coordinator. She links with outside support agencies and attends training to ensure children's needs are suitably supported. The required progress check for children aged two is completed and a written summary is shared with parents. Parents feel they are generally well informed on a daily basis about their child's achievements.

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

Children's well-being and emotional needs are not always effectively met. At the beginning of the day, children are unable to receive sufficient attention from adults, for example, a child needing a reassuring cuddle was overlooked. This is because staff take on supervisory roles rather than engaging and supporting children as there are insufficient staff present to meet the required adult to child ratios. As a result, children's care is not always fully tailored to meet their needs, particularly during the first two hours of the nursery day. At this time, children do not have access to the full range of resources and, as a result, children do not have opportunities to develop their independence skills to freely-choose activities for themselves. Key worker groups are displayed on the parents' board and children recognise and know who their key worker is. For example, older children know who to go to when it is group time and a baby's face lights up when he is passed over to his key worker by another staff member. However, the key worker system is less effective for children who arrive early as they are not greeted by their key worker frequently enough. As a result, only some children form strong, emotional bonds with their key worker. When ratios are met, children behave well. Adults give positive praise when children help tidy up and delight in children's achievements, for example, when a child takes their first few tentative steps by themselves. Adults are generally good role models and demonstrate active listening skills, are polite and show respect for children. However, when ratios are not being met children's behaviour is less positive because staff are unable to give all the children the attention they need to fully support and remind them of the nursery's rules, boundaries and behaviour expectations.

Transition arrangements are sound. Children have introductory visits to meet staff and familiarise themselves with the nursery environment. The number of settling-in visits arranged is dependent on individual children's needs. This means that the settling in process is organised to reflect the needs of individual children. Staff gather information from younger children's parents about children's needs and care routines. Changes in

routines are agreed with parents and recorded on an 'amendment to routines' sheet. This means that parents are involved in their children's care. Transitions between rooms are also supported as children are gradually introduced to their new key worker during joint activities. Older children are supported by an agreed transition information sheet which is passed on to the school they are due to move to. As a result, children make seamless transitions from home, within nursery and then on to school.

Children demonstrate their growing independence skills by putting on their own wellingtons and managing their own personal care when preparing for lunch. For example, they help to set the tables and serve themselves at lunchtimes. Their understanding of a healthy lifestyle is supported through receiving well-balanced and nutritious food and children talk about vegetables being good for you and 'making you have adult teeth'. As a result, children eat a nutritious range of foodstuffs and older children are beginning to develop their understanding of why this is important to their health. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, with a variety of equipment available to develop their large muscle and co-ordination skills. However, children are only allowed access to the garden when sufficient staff are present, and so do not have the opportunity to use trikes, a climbing frame and a rocking boat to practise their physical skills during the early morning period.

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

Leadership and management is inadequate because the manager has insufficient understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has a significant impact on children's safety and well-being. A stable and appropriately qualified staff team is employed. However, those in charge do not have a record to confirm all staff have been vetted and checked regarding their suitability to work with children. This is a failure to meet legal requirements and potentially places children at serious risk. In addition, staffing arrangements at the beginning of the nursery day do not meet the legal adult to child ratio requirements. As a result, children are inadequately supervised and supported at this time and so their learning, safety and emotional needs are not consistently met. Overall, staff have a suitable understanding of child protection procedures and can talk about early signs of possible abuse or neglect. A safeguarding policy is in place which includes guidance on the appropriate and safe use of mobile phones and cameras. Risk assessments are carried out for playrooms and areas in the setting so that any hazards in the environment are identified and minimised. Staff are suitably qualified and there is an induction procedure in place for when new staff start. Policies and procedures are discussed and are signed once they have been read and understood. Training needs are identified at monthly one-to-one meetings and if appropriate, staff access external training. Monthly staff meetings give staff an opportunity to share new knowledge by cascading training to colleagues. As a result, knowledge from training is shared effectively.

Self-evaluation is carried out and parents contribute to this process through entry and exit questionnaires. However, the failure to tackle weaknesses related to consistently

maintaining required staffing levels and securing robust information to confirm staff's suitability, shows that reflective practice is not robust enough to identify major weaknesses in the overall quality of the nursery's practice. The manager understands her responsibilities for overseeing the curriculum to ensure all the learning and development requirements are met. She monitors planning informally when working alongside staff in the various care rooms, and any areas for development are discussed at supervision. This ensures that when staff ratios are met, there is a suitable range of experiences provided for the children and generally all areas of learning and development are being covered. However, the curriculum is not always sufficiently monitored to ensure all areas, such as mathematical development, are fully effective or that children gain full benefit from resources and the outside learning environment at all times of the day. Children's overall progress is monitored termly using both children's individual progress summary sheets and cohort overviews. Through this process any gaps in learning are identified and support provided.

Partnerships with parents are generally positive. Parents are complimentary about the setting and say they find staff approachable and friendly. They receive a range of information about their child's progress, as well as about the operation of the nursery in general. Partnerships with external agencies involved in supporting children's care and education are effective and staff have worked collaboratively to share information in the form of a transition document. Links with the local community have also been developed with local elderly residents often visiting the setting to read stories and play with the children.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY464798
<b>Local authority</b>	York
<b>Inspection number</b>	931606
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	49
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	73
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Acorns New Earswick Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01904766866

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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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