

Cowton Little Acorns

The Village Hall, Station Road, North Cowton, NORTHALLERTON, North Yorkshire, DL7 0HH

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

11/03/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 are warm, caring and nurturing. Consequently, children are settled, happy and growing in confidence.
- The manager has strong leadership skills and effectively supports staff to increase and update their levels of expertise to deliver the educational programmes. This continually develops the learning environment for all children.
- Teaching is strong. As a result, children are motivated to learn and explore and they subsequently make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare requirements, including child protection issues.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to improve the arrangements at lunchtime to reduce distractions and to enable staff to act as positive role models and encourage conversation to further promote children's social and language development.
- There is scope to strengthen the links with parents about what children are learning at home so this can be taken into account when planning activities to extend children's good learning even further.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed care in the childcare room, the outdoor area and the school dining hall.
- The inspector spoke to the manager and staff, the registered person and children.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation and other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents expressed through questionnaires and conversations during the inspection.

Inspector

Lindsey Pollock

Full report

Information about the setting

Cowton Little Acorns was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is one of two privately owned settings and is situated within the village hall at North Cowton. The provision serves the local and wider areas and is accessible to all children. It operates from the nursery room and has use of the main hall. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs five members of staff who all have a childcare qualification. One is also a qualified teacher. The nursery operates Monday to Fridays from 8am to 6pm, for 48 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 26 children attending, of whom 24 are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- revise the arrangements at lunchtime to create a more relaxed atmosphere where children can concentrate and where staff can sit with children to act as positive role models and encourage conversation
- build on the opportunities to support all parents to contribute to their children's learning in the setting and provide information about what children do at home. Use this shared knowledge to plan together and think through ideas of how to move children even further forward in their learning.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a secure knowledge of how to promote children's learning and development and teaching is of good and often very good quality. The manager is a qualified teacher and shares her expertise with staff so they can help children to progress towards the early learning goals. Activities are carefully planned so they provide stimulating and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all children. Planning is very much child-led with staff following children's interests. For example, the role play area is changed to a post office following children's obvious interest in the village postman. Children have lots of fun writing and posting their letters and learn how to use scissors and tape as they wrap their parcels ready for delivery.

The staff work hard to provide a rich, varied environment that supports children's learning and development. It is reassuring and comforting as well as being an exciting, stimulating place to play. Staff recognise that the majority of children in their care love being outdoors

and make good provision for this. They provide exciting areas, such as a mud kitchen, a large covered sand area and a 'bug hotel' where children happily explore, investigate and create. They use resources well to enhance learning and capture children's interest. For example, they use visual props at circle times and even manage to arrange for a hen to visit to bring a story of a hen alive. Staff ensure children have the skills, attitudes and dispositions they need to be ready to make the transition into school. They promote children's communication skills well, by asking children questions to extend their vocabulary and conversing with them. They teach children letter sounds in a fun way, in small group times when this is developmentally appropriate. As a result, older children are starting to sound out the letters in their name and other words. Staff listen carefully to what children say and give them time to think about what they want to say. This shows their respect for them and builds their self-esteem. They allow them time, space and independence without intervening unnecessarily and routines do not interrupt children's play unnecessarily. This results in children having a 'can do' attitude and being able to demonstrate sustained concentration.

Staff recognise that children's learning and development is best promoted when both they and parents work together. They look for new ways to encourage and enable parents to join in their child's learning at nursery and share information about what their child is doing at home. Some parents embrace this wholeheartedly, for example, coming into the nursery on World Book Day to read their favourite stories to the children and share their pleasure in books. However, as yet they are not fully engaging with all parents so they can extend children's learning towards excellence.

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

Children are happy, relaxed and confident in the setting. Their parents say that they are always happy to come and some even want to attend when it isn't their day. They say their children talk about the staff in a very positive way at home and have developed close attachments to them. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the settling-in procedures and key person system, resulting in a positive emotional environment, which supports children's well-being. Staff very much value children's individuality. Consequently, children have a strong sense of belonging and know they are accepted for who they are.

Staff are successful in helping children to manage their feelings and behaviour. They are kind and calm with the children and are positive role models. Therefore, children understand and cooperate with boundaries and routines, such as sitting quietly and listening during small group times and washing their hands when appropriate. They help to tidy up when asked and recognise when it is time to do this. Some are less enthusiastic about this task than others and have managed to acquire the skill of 'looking busy' while not really helping very much. However, staff are vigilant and encourage everyone to 'do their bit'. There is a happy atmosphere in the nursery with children playing well with each other and showing kindness and concern. Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe, such as road safety and when using equipment, such as scissors. They invite fire fighters to talk to children and involve them in evacuation procedures so they know what to do in an emergency. Staff's teaching is obviously successful. For example, the children

demonstrate impressive, safe behaviour when walking to and from the local primary school for their lunch.

Children's good health is promoted well in the setting. Staff allow children free access to the exciting outdoor environment, which entices them to play outdoors in the fresh air. They also make good use of the adjoining village hall so that children have the opportunity to be physically active and exuberant even when the weather is inclement. Their good health is further promoted by the provision of nutritious snacks and meals. Snack time is a relaxed, social occasion with children choosing when they wish to eat so their play is not interrupted. Lunches are eaten in the nearby school dining hall. This provides a valuable opportunity for the older children to become familiar with routines in preparation for their transition into school. However, the busy environment causes some children to lose concentration and become distracted from eating their food. Additionally, the noise level restricts social interaction between the children themselves and with the staff, who are not always able to sit and eat their meal with the children so they can be positive role models.

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

The management team and staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities to meet the welfare and safeguarding and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ensures children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The nursery has a comprehensive safeguarding policy and procedures in place. These are reviewed on a regular basis and discussed with staff in at their induction and throughout their employment. The premises are safe and secure and risk assessments are also completed for any outings. This means children play in an environment where potential dangers are minimised and are kept safe if they participate in activities away from the setting. All required documentation is in place, for example, records of children's needs, their attendance and any accidents or incidents are accurately recorded. Robust recruitment, supervision and appraisal systems are in place to make certain staff are suitable and supported in their role. The management team monitor the learning and development provision closely. This ensures children experience a wide range of activities that cover all areas of learning. Accurate assessments are completed and the information is used to plan for the next steps in children's development. Consequently, children make good and often very good progress in their learning.

The whole staff team are clearly committed to improving and developing the childcare provision. The management team are keen to enhance their own professional development as well as that of their staff. Good practice is shared between the two nursery provisions owned by the registered provider and both in house and external training is attended. The nursery manager and her team accurately evaluate the provision and identify and prioritise areas for development. Practice observations are undertaken to help staff, including the manager, improve and develop. Parents and children are also consulted about the provision and contribute to the self-evaluation of the setting. This demonstrates a good capacity of continual improvement and development.

Partnerships with parents are very positive. They are extremely complimentary about the support, care and learning their children receive. Parents feel staff are very friendly and caring and very much appreciate the flexibility of the setting to help meet individual family's needs. They say that they are happy with the way in which information about their child is shared and that this helps to ensure their child receives good quality care. Partnerships with other early years settings are developing well so that all can work together to promote all children's learning and ensure individual needs are met.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY469643
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	935714
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Elizabeth Jane Baker
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07896318103

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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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