

Little Acorns

Main Street, West Hagbourne, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 0NA

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

09/05/2014

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 provide good opportunities to enable young children to settle initially.
- Staff plan interesting and enjoyable activities that support children's learning and development well. Consequently, they make good progress.
- Close links with external agencies support children with special educational needs and /or disabilities securely. As a result they make good progress from their starting points.
- Evaluation of practice is effective. The nursery has identified what it needs to do to bring about improvement.
- Staff ensure children's care and welfare needs are met. Children are happy in a safe environment and enjoy strong relationships with the nursery staff.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor areas do not fully reflect all areas of learning in order to support those children who learn best outside.
- Procedures for communicating with parents at hand over time are not consistently followed because information boards are not always up to date, and key persons are not always available.

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 held discussions with parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider.
- The inspector made a number of observations of activities, including undertaking a joint observation with the provider.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the nursery's documentation.

Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns is a privately owned nursery. It operates from a single storey building situated in the village of West Hagbourne, near Didcot in Oxfordshire. The current owners registered in 2005 and re-registered as a limited company in 2013. Children use three different areas of the premises according to their age. There is ready access to outdoor play areas. The nursery opens weekdays all year round with the exception of bank holidays. Before and after school care is available, as well as holiday care. Sessions run from 7.30am to 6pm. Children attend a variety of different sessions. The nursery keeps guinea pigs, chickens, lambs and ponies as pets. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 84 children aged from three months to eight years on roll. The nursery receives government funding for two, three and four year old children. The nursery cares for children with special educational needs and /or disabilities and those that speak English as an additional language. There are currently 16 members of staff that work directly with the children. Of these, one has qualified teacher status; two have relevant childcare qualifications at level 5, one at level 4, three at level 3, seven at level 2, and two are unqualified but are working towards a qualification. The nursery also employs a cook.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further the outdoor areas so that they provide activities covering all areas of learning and fully supports children's learning and development
- improve systems for communicating with parents to ensure they are provided with full information at handover times about their children's daily experiences.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development because of the well planned range of activities provided to meet their individual needs and interests. Staff regularly observe and assess children's learning and development. They identify children's next steps for learning and their personal interests, and plan activities to reflect them. The introduction of an electronic system for recording assessment information enables staff to identify areas where they need extra support. As a result staff have strengthened the focus on the development of children's mathematical knowledge and skills. The pre-school children work in small focus groups at the start of the day to reinforce and develop their number skills. Children improve their counting skills through the activities staff develop so

that they count out the number of toys, or the number of children present. They learn to add one more or one less to make the number they are given. Staff provide many opportunities for children to count out loud throughout the day, and this helps children improve their number skills confidently. Staff enable children to complete jigsaw puzzles with numbers to ten, and this reinforces their recognition of these numerals. Staff provide stencils which children use skilfully to make geometric 2D shapes. As a result they are able to name squares, triangles, circles and semi circles. Some of the children are beginning to write some of the letters of their names and show good pencil control.

Staff plan topics linked to children's interests, and this ensures their enthusiastic engagement in activities planned for them to explore. Dinosaurs are popular and children play together using their imagination with the good range of resources provided. Staff skilfully use creative activities and stories to support children's learning. They teach children songs about animals linked to their topic about the jungle. Children enjoy baking and make their own animal shaped biscuits, as they learn about the different ingredients and taking turns to stir and roll out the mixture. Staff give clear commentaries and talk to the children constantly during the process and this helps to develop their early language skills. They show children how the ingredients change when they are mixed together. Staff use questions well to check children's understanding, and to engage them in conversation.

Staff ensure that children have easy access to books. They enjoy the excitement of going on board the mobile library bus that visits the nursery regularly. They listen intently to a story told by the librarian and select a book to take home afterwards. Sports coaches provide opportunities for children to develop physical skills in a variety of sporting activities. The large grassed garden area is used effectively by staff to encourage children to be active. Children enjoy riding wheeled vehicles, and playing with small apparatus including balls and hoops. The story chair is popular and children use it imaginatively to tell stories to each other. This allows children to be creative and to develop confidence in speaking to others. Bug hunting is popular and children enjoy searching in the undergrowth for mini beasts and examining them closely with a magnifying glass. Staff help children learn to take responsibility for caring for some of the animals that live on the site. This helps children understand the needs of animals that live in their environment. All groups of children have daily access to the immediate outdoor areas although these do not yet fully provide a wide range of activities across all the areas of learning.

Staff provide well for the needs of the very young children, and work closely with parents to enable their children to settle when they start attending. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support to enable them to make good progress from their starting points. Staff stimulate young children's interests through bright and colourful toys that children explore through feel and touch. Older children in this group explore and manipulate jigsaws and larger construction toys showing good concentration. Active play is encouraged and children enjoy using the slide assisted by staff to enable them to develop confidence. Staff encourage language development through introducing new vocabulary for children to use. They engage children in conversation to support their speech development and their understanding of the spoken word. When children move rooms they are supported well by their key person who takes them on visits to the next room. Children are developing the attitudes and skills that they

require to prepare them for school or the next stage of their learning.

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

Children enjoy being at the nursery and are happy to be left because of the flexible settling in periods provided for them. Children are secure and feel safe because of the strong relationships they have established with their key person. Parents share information about children routines, likes and dislikes so that staff can prepare to meet their individual needs. The younger children have their care needs met by their key person. Staff provide regular daily routines for children to follow, and this contributes to their feeling of security. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and manage them in a positive way following the nursery's behaviour policy. Children learn to know what is expected of them and know how to behave. As a result there are few incidents of poor behaviour because of the nursery's positive ethos.

Staff contribute to children's personal and social development and encourage children to play together co-operatively, to share and to take turns. Staff also encourage children to make choices and decisions and to develop some independence through taking responsibility for themselves. Children learn about healthy lifestyles, and understand the importance of hand washing before meals, and after being outside or using the toilet. Good hygiene procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection. The nursery provides well balanced and nutritious menus, often reflecting different cultures, and supports children's understanding of the cultural diversity of their community. Children enjoy meals and snack times and learn to take responsibility for helping to serve others, and to sit at table and eat in a social setting. Staff place strong emphasis on helping children to understand how to develop a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and a healthy diet. Children have daily opportunities to be active in the outdoor area, and participate in regular yoga and movement sessions.

Staff provide more adult led activities during the final term for children in the pre-school room in order to prepare them for their move into school. The nursery has developed relationships with other settings and local schools to which the children will transfer. Staff share progress and development information to ensure a smooth transition.

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

The provider has ensured that all staff have received training in the Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage and fully understand the learning and development and welfare requirements. Staff plan together and ensure all areas of learning are covered. Parents provide information about children's interests, and their individual needs are taken into account. Regular monitoring and observations provide information about children's progress and what they need to learn next. Detailed assessment data is gathered to identify any gaps in children's learning.

A safe and secure environment is provided for all children. Staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding children because they have all received training and are aware of the action to take should they have any concerns about the safety of children. Staff also undertake daily risk assessments to ensure the safety of premises and equipment the children may use. Strict recruitment procedures are followed and all staff are checked for their suitability to work with young children. An appropriate number of staff have received first aid training, and each room always has a first aid qualified person in attendance. Accurate attendance registers are kept and the nursery has secure arrangements for the collection of children in place. The required policies and procedures are in place, including a policy on the use of mobile phone and cameras on the nursery premises.

Self-evaluation is used effectively to identify areas for improvement including views gathered from parents and staff. The nursery has now adopted the use of electronic assessment data gathering which enables staff to identify areas of learning where additional support is needed for individual or groups of children. As a result managers have successfully identified weaknesses and have put support to close the gaps in learning. Training of all staff in the use of this tool has also been identified. Action plans are in place to drive forward improvements in each room with room leaders sharing responsibility for monitoring effectiveness. The provider has plans to hold open evenings more often throughout the year in order to provide further opportunities to share information with parents about their children's learning and development. Some parents feel that they are not provided with full information about their children's daily experiences at handover times.

Performance management interviews support the development of improvements to teaching, and career development. Additional training is identified to link with either individual need or aspiration. Recently appointed staff are to receive training in the use of signing, with continued training for existing staff. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities will be able to fully participate in nursery activities. The nursery has forged strong links with a local nursery school training centre, and is able to access a wide range of training courses. A strong partnership with a special needs co-ordinator ensures good support for children with particular needs, enabling staff and parents to access professional help and guidance.

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	EY462210
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	942979
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	84
Name of provider	Little Acorns (West Hagbourne) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01235 851423

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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