

# The Little Acorns Day Nursery

223 Wilmslow Road, WILMSLOW, SK9 3JZ

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

22/05/2014

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

- Children's learning and development is supported as staff plan a stimulating environment. They enjoy a wealth of opportunities to develop physically and emotionally and expand their learning.
- Children are kept safe as staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and attend regular training to keep their knowledge up to date.
- Teaching is effective and staff have a secure understanding of Early Years Foundations Stage and plan for children's individual interests.
- Babies and children are happy, settled and secure because they form close emotional attachments with their key person who knows them well. This means that each individual child's needs are met well.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently encourage children's critical thinking skills.
- There is scope to enhance opportunities to further strengthen children's self-help skills by enabling them to serve themselves food and drinks.

## **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 taking place in playrooms and in the outside play areas.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager and deputy manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.
- The inspector looked at various documents, including a sample of policies and procedures, evidence of suitability of staff, qualifications and recruitment procedures.
- The inspector looked at children's learning records and children's information records.

## **Inspector**

Gillian Kitchen

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery has been operating since 1991 and was re-opened in 2013. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is a privately owned day nursery in Handforth, Cheshire. The setting operates from three purpose built buildings containing eight rooms. A number of secure and separate outside areas are available for outdoor play, as well as a paddock adjacent to the setting. Children attend from a wide area. The nursery is open five days each week, from 7.30am to 6pm except for bank holidays. There are currently 191 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 52 staff of which 33 work directly with the children, of these 29 have an early years qualification at level 2 or above and of these one staff member has the Early Years Teacher Status. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification and three are unqualified.

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

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

- strengthen children's ability to think critically. For example, by modelling thinking and helping children to plan tasks and review what happens during their play
- enhance opportunities to promote children's self-care skills even further, for example, by providing opportunities for them to become more involved in serving their own food and drinks at mealtimes.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff take account of children's individual interests and needs when planning activities, based on their knowledge of children and prior learning. The teaching is effective and staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn. Children are keen learners and are supported in their learning and development with age appropriate activities across the seven areas of learning. For example, the children enjoy stories and songs and staff both plan and spontaneously read books to children and sing songs with them both individually and in groups. This supports their communication and language development so that children listen with interest. Children's personal, social and emotional development is effectively supported by a well-established key person system. Staff show their pleasure in supporting children's learning and being with children so that children are happy and secure. Individual learning plans are completed for children with special educational needs and or disabilities, which clearly sets out specific targets for

learning. Children's key persons, the nursery management, outside professionals and parents are involved in planning for individual children. As a result, all children consistently make good progress, including those whose starting points are below their expected levels of development.

Children's learning journal records are maintained to a high standard and contain a wide range of information, including detailed observations, photographs and examples of their work. Their learning is significantly enhanced through effective partnerships with parents. Parents are given regular feedback about their child including, daily conversations, written daily sheets and the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. They also have ongoing assessments and continual access to learning journals. Staff know the children well and plan for their next steps. Children's progress is monitored and regular tracking of children's progress takes place, so that children are fully supported in their learning. Children enjoy circle time and share their experiences and interests from home, as a result, children learn together and from each other. Staff support children to expand their vocabulary, introducing and reinforcing the use of complex sentences, for example, 'what's your name' is developed into 'what's your surname?' Children are encouraged to say 'hello' in a variety of ways and to share their news from home. This supports children's personal, social and emotional development and helps them in readiness for school. Signs are displayed around the nursery in different languages to help families with English as an additional language. Children's interests are used exceptionally well to inform planning, for example, children enjoy watching and handling newly hatched chicks. Staff use questioning which helps children to plan what they are going to do. However, they review activities with children less frequently. This means staff do not always maximise children's ability to think critically, so that they are able to make links and manage problems for themselves.

Staff ensure that the environment, the equipment and the daily routines follow children's interests and support their learning. They know the children well and plan for learning and development and monitor their progress. There is a range of good quality resources, these are well organised and easy for children to reach. Children experience a variety of ways to move around in the environment, both inside and outdoors. Babies have low-level furniture, so that they can pull themselves up and are supported in their early walking skills. Older children enjoy the large outdoor space and the range of equipment available, including, push along and ride on toys. Children enjoy playing and exploring and are encouraged to have a go at new experiences. Staff sing songs to children in the play boat helping them to learn to paddle. They praise children in their successes and, as a result, children's learning is supported and children are encouraged to try new experiences. Children enjoy planting and growing in the garden in raised vegetable beds and talk enthusiastically about what they grow. There are covered areas outside where children's learning is further supported with a range of activities including, sand, water and opportunities for mark making. 'Patch' the cuddly toy dog is taken home by a child over weekend periods and adventures are photographed and written about in his travel journal. This ensures that parents are involved in children's learning and children's interests are followed.

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

The key person system is well established and very effective in supporting children's personal, social and emotional well-being. Staff are very caring and supportive of the children and they work closely with parents. As a consequence, children are fully supported in their moves, including during the gradual settling-in period when they first begin at the setting. Further moves within the setting are supported with progress reports and visits. Moves to school are well supported. Staff from local schools are invited into the setting to share information about children and to start to get to know children. Staff from the setting are invited into school to visit children when they are settled. As a result, children are emotionally prepared as they move on to the next stage of their learning. Staff are positive role models for children and they consistently praise, encourage and have realistic expectations of them. Children are considerate of others, as appropriate boundaries are in place, resulting in positive behaviours.

Children enjoy a variety of nutritious meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and a range of healthy food options. Children are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and the importance of drinking water to keep healthy. Mealtimes are social occasions, where key staff sit with children and talk about the activities of the day. Information about children's eating habits and any food allergies are gathered from parents on entry to ensure that individual requirements and preferences are fully met. Some children serve themselves and pour their own drinks at mealtimes. However, this is not always consistent. This means that children are not always supported to maximise their self-care skills. Daily risk assessments are carried out and ensure the areas used for children are free from hazards and staff constantly give the highest priority to the safety of children. This effectively supports children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm. There are good hygiene standards in the setting and children are developing a good understanding of their personal hygiene routines, as they follow daily routines. For example, children wash their hands before meals and after handling the chicks. Parents contribute to the children's initial developmental starting points and are well informed about children's development and learning.

Staff are attentive to the individual needs of children and show concern for children's well-being. For example, when children are not well, parents are informed immediately and all medications for children are accurately recorded, administered safely and stored appropriately. Children thoroughly enjoy the fresh air in the outside play areas. Younger children have an opportunity to sleep in prams in the covered outside areas. Older children run freely and use the physical play resources, for example, the static equipment, ride-on and push-along toys. Therefore, children develop their physical skills and their well-being is supported. Physical skills are further supported as children have opportunities to engage in weekly physical group activities, supporting a range of physical activities including stretch, a range of movement and opportunity to talk about healthy lifestyles.

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

Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and the Early Year Foundation Stage. Policies and procedures are known by staff

and implemented consistently. Appropriate checks are carried out on staff working with the children to ensure their safety and well-being. The management of the setting is a key strength and fulfils their responsibilities to meet the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Management oversee and monitor the quality of teaching and the educational programmes and supports the ongoing development of the setting. There is a commitment to staff training and development and they are supported to develop their practice through ongoing observation, assessment and feedback. There are effective systems in place for performance management with regular supervision and appraisals. Staff meetings, in-house and external training are an important aspect of the development of the setting. The policies and procedures are well established and staff have attended safeguarding training and hold paediatric first aid certificates. Closed circuit television is in place and staff carry out daily safety checks on the premises, which means that children are safe from potential hazards.

The self-evaluation process is well established, with areas for development in place. There are plans to develop the setting's environment further, for example, by developing a library for children, to support children's learning. Parents' views are valued and the setting provides an annual questionnaire and opportunities for parents to give feedback about the setting. Parents feel that their views are listened to and acted upon where possible. The recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed, with further improvements in place to ensure the children learn in a happy, safe and secure environment. There are very good systems and processes in place, to ensure that staff recruitment practices are thorough. Once appointed staff are subject to a robust induction period and probationary periods, to ensure that all staff are able to work at the highest standard.

The staff are highly motivated and committed to providing high quality services to children and parents; they work well as a team to provide the broad and balanced educational programmes at the nursery. A key strength is parental involvement and effective partnerships with parents are well established. Parents are actively engaged in children's learning including, two-way information sharing about children's development on a daily basis. There are parents meetings and detailed reports about children's learning and development. Partnerships with other professionals are effective in supporting their learning experiences. For example, meetings take place to share information about individual children so that children's learning experiences are consistently planned for.

### **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY471924
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	943697
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	122
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	191
<b>Name of provider</b>	Wendy Anne MacDonald
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 498 9251

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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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