

Little Acorns Day Nursery

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

Inspection date

03/07/2014

Previous inspection date

15/01/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

4

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| 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

- There is a welcoming, stimulating and well-resourced environment, which encourages children to explore and investigate freely. Practitioners provide an environment which fosters independence and confidence in children, which in turn, helps maximise learning opportunities.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of how to protect children and keep them safe. They implement robust safeguarding procedures in order to keep children safe from harm.
- Partnerships within the team, with parents and other professionals are valued and successful ensuring children have a co-ordinated approach to their learning and that they receive the support they need.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to further extend the provision of mark making both outdoors and indoors to enhance children's early writing skills.
- On occasions, there are missed opportunities for children to take part in and learn from some routine tasks throughout the day.
- There is scope to extend and consolidate peer observations, to help practitioners to identify strengths and weaknesses within the team and provide more formal opportunities to share good practice.

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 activities in the rooms used, as well as the outdoor environment.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with a member of the childcare team.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the nursery and spoke to practitioners at suitable times, throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment files and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with the children.
- The inspector discussed self-evaluation with the manager.
- The inspector met with parents on the day and took account of their views.

Inspector

Trish Potts

Full report

Information about the setting

The Little Acorns Day Nursery was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the New Earswick area on the outskirts of York, and is privately owned and managed. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four rooms within purpose built premises and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 15 childcare practitioners. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 83 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-old children. It supports a number of 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 further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- provide even more opportunities for children to engage in spontaneous mark making, both indoors and outdoors, to enhance their early literacy skills
- extend and consolidate peer observation for practitioners to identify weaknesses and strengths within the team, and provide more formal opportunities to share good practice
- provide opportunities for children to become more involved in routine tasks to enhance and make the most of learning opportunities, for example, by helping to set the table at lunchtime.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners demonstrate a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observation and planning is very detailed and effective, enhancing all areas of children's learning. Practitioners encourage children to 'have a go' during their play and this helps the children to become more confident in their actions. Practitioners know the children and plan for their needs very well and, as a result, children are well supported to make good progress in their learning. The environment, both indoors and outdoors, invites exploration and investigation, stimulating children's curiosity, encouraging a positive attitude to learning. However, there are fewer opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, for children to spontaneously engage in mark making activities. The

indoor area is well resourced and spacious, and children can move about freely. Children have lots of opportunities to access the outdoor area, which is divided into separate areas to ensure children's safety and to maximise learning opportunities. They also have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills outdoors by using large apparatus, such as slides and climbing equipment. There is a garden area where flowers and vegetables grow, and a 'bug hotel' where children can explore mini-beasts. This enriches children's experiences of the natural world. Practitioners provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and, as a result, children are prepared for their next stage of learning and school.

Children with English as an additional language and those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Practitioners liaise with parents and other professionals to ensure information is shared effectively, which in turn, informs planning. This ensures that children are enjoying challenging experiences across all areas of learning. The nursery welcomes support from other professional agencies to ensure each child receives the relevant support. They offer advice and support for practitioners, and help ensure that the children are provided with opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Partnerships with parents are a key strength. Parents and carers are well informed and welcomed in the nursery at any time. Communication between practitioners and parents is well embedded and purposeful from the start of their children's attendance at the nursery. Information from parents, about their children's needs and preferences, is initially used to inform effective planning for children, according to their starting points, ensuring children settle in as easily as possible. Practitioners use parent's knowledge and expertise to inform their ongoing planning for children, and the value placed on their contribution is evident in children's development records. This ensures a cooperative approach to children's learning in the home and nursery setting.

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

Practitioners keep children safe and secure. The utmost priority is given to the safety and well-being of the children. Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves safe and minimise risks. They are encouraged to become as independent as possible, which enhances their self-esteem and confidence. Practitioners are positive, calm and consistent in their approach to managing behaviour, taking into account children's understanding and stage of development. Practitioners act as good role models for children, treating them with respect and modelling good manners. Consequently, children behave appropriately, recognising boundaries and responding to expectations.

The key-person system, which is extended to include the buddy system, is very effective and helps children to feel secure in their environment. The mixed-age grouping during various times of the day means that children are familiar with children from other rooms and other practitioners within the nursery. As a consequence, children are more comfortable with the move from one room to another.

Practitioners continually promote children's good health, well-being and self-confidence. Examples of children's work are displayed all around the nursery. This helps to provide a

welcoming environment, shows children their work is valued, promoting their self-esteem and helping children to develop a sense of belonging. Children have free access to the outdoor area every day, enabling them to be physically active and benefit from fresh air. They are taught about healthy eating, and are provided with choices of healthy snacks and drinks each day. However, there are missed opportunities for children to take part in everyday tasks, such as setting the table at lunchtime. Practitioners promote good hygiene practices by encouraging children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are taught the importance of caring for other people, as well as for other living things. For example, by encouraging them to show interest in and care for plants and insects in the environment. This helps children to show respect for other living things. They also have opportunities to explore other cultures by eating foods from different countries, gaining knowledge about different languages, recognising national flags and exploring cultural events. This helps to provide children with an understanding of other cultures, their place in the world, and differences between people and places.

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

Leadership and management are good, and the manager is very supportive of practitioners, resulting in a very positive and happy environment. Although practitioner turnover is infrequent, procedures are in place for safe recruitment. The recruitment and selection processes ensure all practitioners working with children are safe to do so. All practitioners are suitably experienced and qualified to work with children, and all have up-to-date first-aid certificates. Individual practitioners are encouraged to continue with their professional development and update training on a regular basis. They update and enhance their knowledge by attending a variety of workshops and training sessions, which adds to their expertise in their given field. For example, practitioners have recently attended training on cultural diversity and making a mud pit. As a result, practitioners feel valued and respected, and continual professional development enhances their care and education of the children. Practitioners benefit from individual supervisions and regular team meetings, which enable them to share good practice and ideas for improvement. Practitioners demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children in their care and they understand their role and responsibility in protecting them from abuse and neglect. The nursery provides a very welcoming, bright and stimulating environment for children to explore and investigate. Strong partnerships have been established with parents and other professionals, including the other educational settings children attend, to ensure planning for individual children meets their needs effectively and ensures a co-ordinated approach to children's care and learning.

Detailed written policies and procedures are in place and underpin the nursery's good practice. All policies are available to parents, to help them understand the responsibilities of the nursery, to meet children's overall needs, and keep children and adults safe and well. Practitioners are well informed and confident in the procedures they need to follow in the event of a concern. Risk assessments are in place and are carried out on a daily basis to minimise any risks to children. Accident, incident and medication records are kept and shared with parents, which ensures continuity of care. The manager demonstrates a good understanding of her responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements,

and learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

At the previous inspection, actions were identified regarding staff deployment, recording of staff clearances, and the provision of mathematical activities and other learning opportunities for children throughout the day. As a result of these actions, a monitoring visit was carried out by an inspector. All of the actions had been addressed at the time of the monitoring visit and further improvements have been made since then. Changes have been made to the organisation and deployment of practitioners to ensure staffing levels are maintained at all times which, in turn, ensures children are well cared for and provided with a comprehensive range of learning opportunities at all times of the day. The changes to the deployment of practitioners also ensures children are welcomed into their own room, by a key person to whom they have an attachment. A designated practitioner has been appointed to ensure children's knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts is being encouraged and developed in all areas of the nursery. All practitioner clearances are now recorded fully, demonstrating that all those working with children are suitable to do so. Self-evaluation is developing, with staff appraisals and performance monitoring informing the self-evaluation process. However, there is scope for practitioners to extend and consolidate peer observation, in order to identify any areas for improvement and to share good practice. The manager is continuing with the action plan for improvement and has informed parents throughout the improvement process. Practitioners actively seek the views of parents through verbal discussion and through the introduction of questionnaires. This alongside the views of staff about the service they provide enables the identification of strengths and good practice within the setting, and areas that can be developed further.

Parents speak very positively of the service provided. They feel practitioners are supportive, approachable and that the nursery has really helped their children to be happy, in their surroundings, and to progress. For example one parent comments: 'I'm really happy leaving her here and wouldn't think of going anywhere else. I know she is well looked after and is really happy'. Another parent comments 'It's great that he has so much fun while he is learning so much'.

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

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| Unique reference number | EY464798 |
| Local authority | York |
| Inspection number | 965380 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 49 |
| Number of children on roll | 83 |
| Name of provider | Little Acorns New Earswick Ltd |
| Date of previous inspection | 15/01/2014 |
| Telephone number | 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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