

Little Acorns

Baptist Church, South Street, BRIERLEY HILL, West Midlands, DY5 2RR

Inspection date	09/07/2014
Previous inspection date	05/09/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	4
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

- Dedicated staff provide good quality teaching and a rich and varied learning environment to help children make good progress from their starting points in readiness for school.
- Children are happy and emotionally secure in the environment; they are comfortable and they form strong attachments with key persons.
- Children are effectively protected because the staff consider health and safety as a high priority. Risk assessment is thorough and the staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities for child protection.
- Partnership working between parents and staff is good and effectively supports children's well-being and progress. Parents speak highly of the nursery and value the friendly and approachable staff team.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Performance management and monitoring systems are not yet firmly embedded to clearly demonstrate how the good quality teaching is continually monitored and how the information gained is used to shape practitioner's professional development.
- There is scope to enhance the very good partnership working further by developing the information which is shared between settings that children will move onto in the future.

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 the staff engaging in a range of indoor learning activities, play and daily care routines with the children.
- The inspector talked to children and staff, and also held a meeting with the managers during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's development folders, children's and staff files, a selection of policies, daily records and verification of staff qualifications and suitability checks.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the day of the inspection and also gained parents' and other professionals' views from documentation available.

Inspector

Patricia Dawes

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Playgroup was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. It operates from the hall within the grounds of the Baptist Church in Brierley Hill, West Midlands. It is managed by a private partnership. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There are currently 12 children attending who are all in the early years age group. The playgroup employs two members of childcare staff, both of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, during term time only, from 9.15am to 11.45am. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build on the performance management and monitoring systems further to ensure that the good quality of teaching continues to be monitored and the information is used to shape practitioners' professional development in the future
- enhance children's progress and well-being further by developing even more effective ways to exchange information about children's experiences, progress and individual needs as they move onto other settings in the future.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development because staff know the children well and capably describe children's individual personalities, needs and preferences. Staff make good use of the progress check completed for children aged between two and three years to plan for the next steps in children's learning. They carry out detailed observations which are routinely reviewed and use these well to assess children's progress and to identify the next steps in their learning. The managers explain how they have recently changed the way planning is undertaken to improve learning outcomes for children. Moves from home to the playgroup are well-managed because there is a good two-way flow of information between parents and staff, which helps staff to plan for children's learning. Staff discuss children's progress, activities and achievements with their parents on a daily basis and listen to what parents tell them about the activities and experiences their children have at home. Parents also receive a termly summative assessment report about their children's achievements. All of this has a positive impact on children's learning and as a result, children make good progress in their learning and development.

Teaching is good, staff are well deployed, relaxed and supportive of children and know them well. They join children in their play throughout the day, readily conversing with them to stimulate children's interest and foster their developing language skills. Children join in enthusiastically with staff at the end of the session, singing nursery rhymes and songs in preparation for their 'leaving party' concert. Staff use their imaginative and creative skills well to engage the children and encourage their interest, making learning fun. Children have easy access to a varied range of resources from which they are able to confidently make their own choices in their play and learning. Children are encouraged to freely explore their environment and initiate their own play. Children use their imagination to create their own home environment looking after the 'babies' by washing, dressing and feeding them.

Children have access to resources which help to develop their knowledge of technology. They use the lap top to make marks and a printer to print off their picture. They use electronic toys, such as the key board for listening to and making sounds. There are a variety of different resources and games which encourage children to recognise differences in numbers and shapes. Staff use suggestions and questions to challenge their thinking. For example, children show high levels of concentration as they draw circles, triangles and squares in shaving foam or use textured rolling pins to make patterns in play dough. Staff extend their learning by asking them to write their name in the foam or the initial letter that words begin with, such as 'sssss' for snake. Some more able children are able to write their peers' names as well. Children count how many spoons of sand it takes to fill a cup, asking staff how many sugars they have in their cup of tea. Children are acquiring the skills, attitudes and dispositions they need to be ready for school or the next stage in their learning because staff encourage them to share toys and play together to promote their social skills.

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

Children enter the playgroup happily because there is an effective key person system in place, which helps children to settle quickly. Staff work alongside parents to ensure there is a collaborative approach to supporting changes in children's routines. Staff are on hand to support children to make choices during their day about where and with what they want to play. As a result, children are forming secure emotional bonds with staff. The premises are safe and secure because staff identify and minimise any potential hazards through the use of ongoing risk assessments. For example, staff remind children not to play on the stage and explain that it is only for them to use during their concert when their parents will listen to them singing. Staff encourage independence by teaching children how to use equipment safely, for example, as they use scissors to cut paper and play dough. Staff develop simple rules for indoor play by creating an obstacle course, encouraging children to negotiate the space and ride one way around the chairs, so they do not crash. Staff make best use of the available space, arranging the resources to provide an acceptable environment, which enables children to take managed risks and explore safely.

Children are forming positive relationships at all levels. They play well together and are supported by calm staff who talk positively to children about any unwanted behaviour.

Children's behaviour is very good because staff are consistent and remind children of the agreed expectations for how they all do things at playgroup. Staff have clear expectations which are discussed with children at group times. Staff and children share positive behaviour, demonstrated throughout the session by adding leaves to the 'achievement tree'. All of the children aim for five leaves and a small reward. These positive strategies help children to develop a good understanding of the actions and behaviours that help to keep them safe.

Children's health and well-being are well-supported through attention to daily routines like developing their own self-care skills as they independently access the toilet and wash their hands. Staff sit with the children at snack time and support them well with developing their independence skills as they butter their own crumpets. Children are also provided with fresh fruit, which helps to promote their understanding of making healthy choices. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children help themselves when they are thirsty. Play activities throughout the day, such as, using the climbing frames indoors or racing around the obstacle course on tricycles and sit and ride toys, provide children with good opportunities for exercising limbs and having fun. As a result, children are developing a sensible awareness of a healthy lifestyle.

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

Children are safeguarded well as staff have a very clear understanding of their roles and duty to protect children and promote their well-being. All staff have attended safeguarding training and have good knowledge of their responsibilities. They know how to recognise and report signs of abuse or neglect. There are robust recruitment and selection processes in place to ensure the suitability of the staff. All staff are checked thoroughly before being employed. All necessary information is displayed in the main room on a very informative parent's notice board. Other procedures to further protect children, such as the maintenance of daily records, safe collection systems and those required for seeking all necessary information at registration, are thoroughly carried out. Risk assessments are conducted to ensure that good standards of health and safety are maintained. The premises are secure and staff are deployed effectively to ensure that children are always supervised well.

The leadership and management of the playgroup is strong. Both managers work well together and are committed to reflecting on practice and making improvements. They have successfully met the actions and recommendations that were raised at the last inspection. This has significantly improved the outcomes for children. An open-door policy provides opportunities for staff and parents to consult with them at any time. Staff actively engage the views of children and parents through termly progress reports and parents questionnaires. These systems clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The managers demonstrate a good capacity for improvement to continue to move forwards on their journey towards excellence. Good support is provided by outside professionals and there is a strong commitment to ongoing training to enhance staff's knowledge and practice. The managers monitor the planning of the educational provision

for children to ensure that this provides depth and breadth across all areas of learning. Daily staff meetings help to ensure care and learning needs for children are consistently managed. Teaching is strong, however, systems to monitor the quality of each other's teaching, to ensure a shared and consistent approach is practised, are not fully embedded yet. When managers have finalised this they will also help to ensure that the opportunities to raise children's attainment are maximised. In spite of this minor weakness, monitoring overall is strong and the information that is obtained through performance management systems is used well to shape staffs' professional development in the future.

Partnership with parents is strong and parents comment very positively on the ongoing support and approachability of all staff. Very informative display boards, parent prospectus and regular newsletters ensure that parents are fully informed about all aspects of the playgroup. Parents are kept informed of children's daily progress through regular feedback from staff. Parents say that children are happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup and often talk about their experiences at home. Staff work proactively with parents to engage with external agencies and services to secure appropriate interventions for children. Partnership working with the schools children will attend is not as strong. For example, the managers do not always share information as well as they could about children's progress and the activities they participate in at playgroup to help with the move to a new school, such as setting up communication books to share information about children's progress. Consequently, this hinders the process of helping children to move with ease to another setting.

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	EY455872
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	963523
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	12
Name of provider	Little Acorns Playgroup Partnership
Date of previous inspection	05/09/2013
Telephone number	01384 572227

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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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