

# Little Acorns

St John's Room, 19 St John's Road, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 4AF

<b>Inspection date</b>	27/10/2014
Previous inspection date	11/04/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

### **This provision is outstanding**

- Children flourish at the nursery, they thoroughly enjoy their learning and achieve extremely well in relation to their starting points.
- The quality of planning for all children is excellent; each child receives an exceedingly enjoyable, challenging experience across all areas of learning.
- Children feel extremely safe and secure in the nursery and arrangements for safeguarding the children are robust.
- Staff use excellent observation, tracking and assessment systems, to ensure all children are highly challenged and reach their full potential.
- Children relish their time at nursery and are very happy and relaxed. Staff provide a wide range of exciting activities, which stimulate and motivate children to become active learners.
- Children benefit hugely from the highly successful partnership between the staff and parents who share key information effectively between them.

## 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 discussed the format of the inspection on arrival.
- The inspector invited the manager to carry out a joint observation.
- The inspector looked at children's online assessment records and sampled some documentation.
- The inspector took account of the written views of parents and those spoken to on the day.
- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and the outdoor learning environments.

## Inspector

Alison Large

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery registered in 1997 and is one of two privately owned settings. The nursery operates from a converted parish hall in the Hedge End area of Southampton. The premises have two floors and is used solely by the nursery. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are 118 children in the early years age range on roll and the provider receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language. There are 17 staff employed to work with the children; 16 staff hold a relevant qualification, including two at level 6. One staff member is currently working towards a childcare qualification.

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

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

- provide added opportunities in the outdoor area for children to explore, build and role play, to further enhance their learning.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children flourish at the nursery. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and achieve extremely well in relation to their starting points. Children are thriving and achieving their full potential under the care of the extremely knowledgeable and inspirational staff team. Staff very skilfully support children to take ownership of their environment by enabling them to make the choices about what they need and how they are going to achieve it. Older children are extremely engaged in their learning and younger children are cared for very well. The staff team create a challenging and stimulating environment, where the atmosphere is extremely positive and encouraging. Throughout the nursery, children are making excellent progress in all areas of development. The nursery use an excellent online system for assessment and planning to ensure activities and learning experiences fully support children's interests and the next steps in their learning. The monitoring of children's progress towards all the early learning goals is extremely effective. The excellent online tracking system enables staff to skilfully track the progress of all the children attending the nursery across the seven areas of learning. This enables staff to highlight if any child is below or above average for their age and stage of development, and plan accordingly. All children enjoy many opportunities to choose, participate and become independent in their play, which benefits their future learning. Children develop excellent

communication skills and chat happily both to one another and to adults. Staff support children extremely well, by offering praise and encouragement and they show an excellent understanding of children's individual learning needs. Staff demonstrate excellent teaching methods as they interact and sit at the children's level, maintaining eye contact. They interact with the children extremely well using excellent questioning skills to extend knowledge, giving children time to think and respond. All children relish their time at nursery and are very happy and relaxed. They thoroughly enjoy a wide range of exciting activities that stimulate and motivate them.

Children are very active learners. Staff enable the children to develop new skills and grow in confidence and rise to the challenge of trying something new. Younger children are beginning to use tools, such as rollers or paint brushes with confidence. Older children are becoming confident in counting and naming colours and shapes, and the oldest are progressing to writing their own name and understanding simple mathematical concepts. Children are developing a range of skills, such as putting on their own coats and shoes, pouring their own drinks, and helping to tidy up. Staff provide children with extensive opportunities to explore their senses through high quality experiences. Staff skilfully use these learning experiences to talk to the children about the activity. For example, children in the pre-school and toddler room are able to make their own play dough. Children discussed the process as they poured, mixed and created the dough. Children added colours to the dough to discover what happened when they mixed it all together. They discussed the colours, textures and smells with staff. This excellent interaction exposes children to new language and develops their thinking and communication skills. The babies were able to discover the textures of paint, sand and a whipped dessert. They were able to use their hands to mix and feel, or crawl in, with excellent support offered by staff. Staff demonstrate an extremely secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn. As a result, children are very enthusiastic, develop a highly positive attitude to their learning, and learn to work alongside their peers extremely well.

The nursery has implemented the progress check for two-year-old children very successfully and all related documentation is in place. Excellent strategies are in place to involve parents in their children's learning. Through the highly effective online assessment, and recording of children's progress, parents receive a very clear picture of where their children are in their learning. This actively encourages parents to be involved in their child's learning and development. Parents receive excellent information about the life of the nursery via the notice boards, newsletters, parent meetings and through daily chats to staff.

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

Children demonstrate that they feel extremely secure and safe in the nursery experiencing a sense of belonging, fostered by excellent care from staff and a superb range of resources. An excellent key-person system is in place, which enables all children to develop independence and be ready for the next stages in their learning. Children build very strong emotional and trusting relationships with their key person and this close relationship helps children develop high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Staff provide

all children with lots of opportunities to learn and explore within the outside environment. Older children access the garden area throughout the day. Babies and young children have excellent opportunities to access their own outside area during the session, and also the garden with the older children. Children have extensive opportunities to be active and master new skills as they learn to manipulate and pedal trikes, and climb the steps of the low-level slides. Staff offer lots of encouragement as children independently step up and climb the slide. Staff provide children with many opportunities and space to take safe risks under their very close supervision.

The nursery provides an excellent variety of healthy, nutritious snacks and meals, which are all prepared on the premises. The cook caters well for children with special dietary requirements or allergies, to ensure the nursery meets all children's dietary needs. Excellent systems are in place to inform staff of any health or dietary conditions the children may have. Children benefit hugely from the carefully balanced selection of food offered to them. Excellent interaction and encouragement from the staff help those who are struggling to obtain the confidence to try to cut their own food with their knife. Staff place their hands over the children's hands to offer additional support. Young children relish the opportunity to feed themselves as they use their own spoons and forks. This helps to enhance their hand-to-eye coordination preparing them extremely well for their next stages in development. Children learn about very good hygiene routines and from a young age can independently take themselves to wash their hands. They all know that they must wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after messy play. Children develop an excellent awareness of tooth brushing routines and how these contribute to their good health. Excellent systems are in place for behaviour management. Throughout the nursery children play extremely happily alongside each other and demonstrate excellent turn-taking skills as they share the resources. Children know what staff expect of them and are very confident to make their own choices and decisions. This demonstrates staff are extremely effective in supporting children's growing understanding of how to behave in order to keep themselves and those around them safe.

One of the nursery's many strengths is how staff coordinate the children's move between rooms within the nursery. Staff keep parents informed throughout the process to ensure they know what is happening. They invite parents to visit the next age group to get to know the staff before their child moves up. All staff are committed to making sure the changeover to the different age groups is as smooth as possible for each child. Excellent procedures are also in place to ease the move to school. Staff have developed superb partnerships with the local schools the children move to. Staff invite the teachers to visit the nursery to enable children to become familiar with the new faces in readiness for going to school. Staff have sought excellent information about the schools to enable them to provide children with resources, such as books and photographs. This high quality organisation ensures children are extremely well prepared for school.

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

The leadership and management of the nursery is excellent. The management team works highly effectively together to undertake high-quality supervision for the staff team. This excellent monitoring of staff promotes and achieves consistency across the nursery and as a result, the outcomes for the children are greatly improved. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. All staff undertake training in child protection. Consequently, they have a very good understanding of safeguarding procedures, their roles and responsibilities, and of how to protect children. The management team ensure extremely robust and secure recruitment and induction procedures are in place. These systems ensure the nursery is meeting their responsibilities concerning the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means well-qualified and suitably vetted individuals are caring for children. The management team have high aspirations for quality. This is evident through ongoing improvement in all areas, in close consultation with staff, parents and children. There are excellent systems in place to monitor and evaluate the nursery, to identify strengths and areas for development. For example, management has plans to lay an all-weather surface in the garden and provide extra resources in the outside area to make it even more exciting for the children. Staff promote equality and diversity highly successfully. As a result, all children are included and supported extremely well.

The superb partnership between the nursery staff and parents ensures key information is shared between them effectively. The staff inform parents about daily routines, their children's progress and the activities their children have taken part in. Parents expressed enormous confidence in the very high standards of care, communication and their child's preparation for the future. They praise the wonderful staff and commented on how nurturing and caring staff are, and how extremely happy they are with the progress their children are making. Partnerships with other settings the children attend are excellent. Staff liaise extremely well with the other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which results in a fully shared approach to children's care and learning.

### **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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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>	509573
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	836919
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	60
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	118
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Acorns Partnership
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11/04/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01489 795860

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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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