

Little Acorns Day Nursery

Valley House, Towngate, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 9JG



Inspection date

23 February 2015

Previous inspection date

24 November 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff do not consistently gather information from parents about what children can do on entry to the setting, or use their own assessments of children's progress to fully inform planning for children's future development.
- Leaders and managers are not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching practice is not consistently good. For example, staff do not always extend and support children's learning during activities they have initiated themselves.
- Staff do not fully embrace the use of the outdoor play area when planning learning experiences for children. As a result, not all children are sufficiently engaged or motivated while playing outside.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide parents with regular information about their children's achievements and their general well-being. This promotes a shared approach to children's learning and care.
- Staff are clear about the procedures to follow to ensure children are protected from abuse or neglect. This helps to safeguard children from harm.
- Children have positive relationships with staff and they are happy and settled in their care. Staff make good use of every day routines to help teach children about the importance of health, hygiene and physical activity.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- raise the quality of teaching across the nursery by helping staff improve their teaching practice so that all children make good progress given their starting points, for example, by improving the programme for professional development
- use the information gained from assessments, including parent's views of what their children can do, to plan activities which link more precisely to children's next steps in learning.

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

- make better use of the outdoor space and resources to plan interesting and purposeful learning experiences, that encourage children to explore and investigate the outdoor environment.

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following a notification we received from the provider.
- The inspector observed activities in the three play areas inside, as well as the outside play space.
- The inspector evaluated a planned activity with the senior nursery manager and acting manager.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held meetings with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures, risk assessments and accident records.

Inspector

June Rice

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Not all staff gather sufficient information from parents about what children can do, or use their own assessments of children's progress to fully inform planning for children's future development. This means not all activities are well pitched to children's individual learning needs. The quality of teaching is also variable. While staff make some good use of planned activities to challenge and motivate children, they are not as effective in supporting children in activities they initiate for themselves. For example, children start to sing popular nursery rhymes but staff do not respond to this, join in or help children to pronounce the words correctly. As a result, children's learning is not maximised to its full potential. Staff make effective use of simple language, facial expressions, stories and general conversation to otherwise develop children's communication and language skills. This includes supporting children with English as an additional language.

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

Staff do not fully embrace the use of the outdoor play area to provide learning and play experiences that challenge children. Some resources are unappealing and staff do not make the most of spontaneous events, such as blowing wind, to ignite children's interest. As a result, not all children are fully engaged and motivated while playing outside. Children benefit from outings within the local community and enjoy visits from people, such as the police, dentist and crossing patrol officer. This helps them learn about the world around them. The key-person system works well. Parents are kept well informed about their children's well-being. Babies receive lots of cuddles and their home routines, such as sleep times, are integrated into the daily routines within the setting. This helps them feel emotionally secure. Children are well-behaved and gain the basic skills they need for school. For example, they develop the confidence to speak out in a group, and learn independent skills, such as dressing themselves and serving their own lunch.

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

This inspection took place following a notification of an accident from the provider. The inspector found that leaders and managers have a good understanding of the requirement to notify Ofsted of significant events. All required documentation is in place. The systems to review the cause of accidents and injuries are robust, and help to identify hazards. This ensures that prompt action is taken to reduce or limit risks to children's safety. There is a member of staff with a first-aid qualification in each playroom. The required number of staff-to-child-ratios are met and staff are well deployed throughout the setting. This helps to ensure children are appropriately supervised. Recruitment and vetting procedures help to ensure adults working with children are suitable to do so. Leaders and managers have correctly evaluated the quality of the care and learning they provide. However, they have not yet taken sufficient action to raise the quality of teaching to at least a good level, consistently across the nursery. This is because the programme for professional development is not yet fully effective in ensuring staff's practice is promptly improved.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY362250
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	1006477
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Little Acorns Group Limited
Date of previous inspection	24 November 2011
Telephone number	01924 499210

Little Acorns Day Nursery was registered in 2007 and is one of several provisions managed by Little Acorns Group Limited. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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.

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