

Little Acorns Pre School (Folkestone)

Folkestone Baptist Church, Hill Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 6LY



Inspection date 9 March 2015
Previous inspection date 28 April 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children make good progress as a result of strong teaching and the broad range of interesting activities that promote their all-round learning and development well.
- Staff make good use of the exciting outdoor area to provide challenging physical activities and to promote children's knowledge of the natural world.
- The thoughtful organisation of the indoor environment and the impressive range of resources encourage children to explore and investigate. This helps them to gain independence in their learning and prepares them well for their future move to school.
- Staff are sensitive to the needs of children, including those who are still settling, and provide support and encouragement. As a result, children play happily and develop good levels of confidence.
- There is a strong focus on training and staff development. This, along with effective self-evaluation, results in a service that is continually improving.
- Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a child's welfare. They keep the premises safe and secure. Consequently, children are safeguarded effectively.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Parents receive regular updates on their child's achievements but are not as well informed about the activities planned to help them to progress further. This does not support a fully shared approach to promoting children's learning between the pre-school and home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- offer more opportunities for parents to take an active role in promoting children's future learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed all areas of the pre-school.
- The inspector observed the interaction of staff and children during a range of activities, indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the committee, the manager, staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector checked a selection of documentation including some policies and procedures, and records of children's development.

Inspector

Liz Caluori

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Children have fun in the stimulating environment and make good progress. Staff have a thorough knowledge of each child's abilities and provide suitably challenging activities that reflect their interests. For example, children are enthusiastic gardeners. They speak knowledgeably about planting bulbs with the roots facing down and carefully make appropriate sized holes in the soil. Children are also very creative, expressing themselves through music, arts and crafts and imaginative role play. Staff make good use of times when children are gathered into groups, such as snack time, to instigate lively conversations. This helps to promote their communication and language well. Staff speak to parents daily, sharing information about their child's experiences. They also hold regular social events for children and parents, during which all parents are able to speak to their child's key person. During these meetings staff provide clear and accurate information about children's achievements and outline the new learning goals they have set. However, they do not provide details of the types of activities planned to help children reach these goals to encourage their learning at home. Nonetheless, information about children's care needs is shared very well.

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

Children respond very well to the friendly, caring support of staff. This promotes their self-esteem and gives them the confidence to become independent in their learning. Children behave very well and staff offer focussed support for individual children when necessary. For example, they know which children find it difficult to separate from their parents. They are ready with toys and books they know will distract the child and help them settle. One member of staff has specialist training to support children's speech and language. Staff also use sign language when interacting with children who are not yet confident speakers. Children enjoy nutritious snacks and engage in a lot of active play to promote their good health.

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

Leadership and management are strong and staff receive good support to promote their professional development. Regular training means that staff have up-to-date knowledge about child development and early years teaching. They use their training well to shape practice and plan educational programmes. The manager monitors children's progress effectively. She also gathers the views of the committee, staff, parents and children to plan ongoing improvements. As a result, the service is continually evolving around the needs of children and their families. Highly effective partnership working with other professionals helps staff to obtain specialist support for children when needed.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127323
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	840643
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	25
Name of provider	Little Acorns Pre School (Folkestone) Committee
Date of previous inspection	28 April 2009
Telephone number	01303 252259

Little Acorns registered in 1986. It is open Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm term time only. The pre-school employs seven staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The pre-school receives funding to provide early education to children aged two, three and four years.

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