

Little Acorns Pre-school Playgroup

Sidegate Primary School, Sidegate Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 4JD



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

15 June 2015

5 October 2010

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		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		Requires improvement	3
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- The setting has not provided Ofsted with all the relevant information about changes to committee members.
- Staff are not yet making the most of the different ways to further enhance their own practice, in order to improve their teaching to an outstanding level.
- Children are occasionally not involved in purposeful play and learning because the organisation of lunchtime takes too long.

It has the following strengths

- Staff have good knowledge and understanding of what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care and can identify the potential signs and symptoms of abuse. Consequently, staff keep children safe from harm.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff regularly share children's learning journeys with parents. In addition, parents are encouraged to continue learning and development with their children at home by borrowing books from the lending library. This supports continuity of learning between home and the pre-school.
- Children settle very quickly at the pre-school. This is because the staff go to great lengths to find out about children before they start. For instance, staff offer home visits, a joining open day and gradual settling-in sessions. Once a child has registered, staff give them a welcome book that includes pictures of staff and the environment.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build further on the good quality of teaching by, for example, introducing a programme of peer observations to focus more specifically on the sharing of good practice
- review the organisation of lunchtime so that children are able to spend more time being involved in play and learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the pre-school and held discussions with the provider and the managers.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed adult-led and child-led activities in the playroom and the outside area.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and discussed the pre-school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspector

Sharon Alleary

Inspection findings

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

The well-qualified staff gain information about children's starting points and interests, monitor their progress and clearly identify their next steps in learning. As a result, all children make good progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children benefit from the highly positive involvement of staff during their play. However, delays in some routines, such as getting ready for lunch, mean that children spend too much time waiting instead of being engaged in play and learning. Staff understand that children learn best from a balance of adult-led and child-led play. During small-group sessions, staff encourage children to use their listening and attention skills to follow instructions. For instance, they choose an instrument and listen for instructions to play it loudly, softly, quietly and to stop playing. As a result, children begin to learn important skills to support their readiness for school.

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

Staff talk with great affection about the children they look after. Children develop secure emotional attachments to their key person. Consequently, children demonstrate self-confidence around adults. Staff help children to have an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For instance, children are involved in the daily, outdoor risk-assessment check. Children behave well because staff offer lots of praise and encouragement. They help children to understand good behaviour by setting clear boundaries for them. For example, they make sure children remember to take turns and share. Children love to experience fresh air and exercise in the outdoor play area. They make pretend cakes in the mud kitchen and climb and slide on the large equipment. Consequently, they are developing an understanding of the benefits of physical exercise and a healthy lifestyle.

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

There are effective procedures in place to establish the suitability of new staff. The management team follows safe recruitment procedures and have a clear induction procedure for all staff and volunteers. However, the provider has not followed the correct procedures for providing Ofsted with the required details about some committee members. Although this is a breach in requirements, there is minimal impact on children in the pre-school because these committee members do not work directly with them. The managers of the pre-school have very positive attitudes towards making improvements. They regularly make changes to practice and have a focused improvement plan for future developments. The management have regular supervision meetings with staff. This creates opportunities to discuss issues about individual children, teaching practice and training needs. However, staff have not yet had the opportunity to share their good skills, for example, by evaluating each other's practice to improve the quality of the pre-school even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251558
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	864453
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	62
Name of provider	Little Acorns Pre School Committee
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2010
Telephone number	01473 712 236

Little Acorns Pre-school Playgroup was registered in 1994 and is located in Ipswich, Suffolk. The pre-school employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, six at level 3 and two at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 12 noon on a Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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