

Felsted Little Acorns

Felsted Primary School, Braintree Road, Felsted, DUNMOW, Essex, CM6 3EB



Inspection date

14 July 2015

Previous inspection date

17 September 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
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		Inadequate	4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Inadequate	4
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- The provider has not maintained practitioners' first-aid certificates adequately to ensure that there is at least one person present at all times who holds a current paediatric first-aid certificate.
- Monitoring of the provision and supervision of practitioners is weak. As a result, the lapse in practitioners' first-aid certificates and other training needs have not been appropriately identified and acted upon.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Opportunities for children to strengthen their self-care skills are not effectively promoted. Children are provided with few opportunities to develop independence through play and routine activities.
- Parents are not always actively encouraged to share their children's learning from home with key persons.

It has the following strengths

- Children settle well in the pre-school and enjoy the interaction they receive from practitioners and other children.
- Practitioners demonstrate appropriate knowledge of how to identify child protection issues and the procedures to use to refer any concerns to the appropriate authority.
- Parents feel that their children are well cared for and are making good progress in their learning. Links with other early years settings which children attend are secure and promote effective partnership working.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that at least one person who holds a current paediatric first-aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times when children are present
- improve existing methods for supervision to ensure that important training needs are identified more robustly and monitored effectively
- review opportunities during play and routine activities to extend children's physical well-being and independence to help them to develop secure self-care skills in readiness for school.

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

- enhance links with parents to further promote opportunities for sharing children's learning from home and to enable them to contribute to the identification of their child's next steps in learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the pre-school room and outside area.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and practitioners at appropriate times throughout the inspection. She also spoke to children.
- The inspector looked at records which include children's details, accident and medication records, written policies, newsletters for parents, the daily attendance register and a selection of other relevant documentation.
- The inspector saw evidence of the checks used to assess the suitability of practitioners and committee members and also saw copies of practitioner's qualifications and training.
- The inspector held a joint observation with the manager to review the quality of teaching.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Lynn Hughes

Inspection findings

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

Practitioners use their knowledge of how children learn to plan and adapt activities based on children's interests. For example, a practitioner effectively follows a child's discussion about a maze. The discussion generates from a cutting activity, planned to monitor children's scissor control as they cut around a pre-printed spiral shape. Practitioners use their observational skills to follow children's progress and to identify their next steps in learning. There are some opportunities for children to develop independence skills. However, practitioners miss a number of opportunities to enable a child to have a go before assisting them. For example, when children return from outdoors and immediately receive adult assistance to remove their all-in-one raincoats. There are also limited opportunities for children to develop independence skills during routine activities, such as snack time. As a result, children's health and self-care is less well planned for than some other areas of learning. This has an impact on older children forming strong independence skills in preparation for school. Parents are encouraged to borrow books and games from the pre-school to share with their children at home. However, parents have fewer opportunities to share learning that happens at home with the key persons.

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

The breach in requirements with regard to maintaining appropriate first-aid certificates, impacts on practitioners' ability to promote children's well-being effectively. The clear settling-in procedures, which involve parents, children and their key persons, help children to form close relationships with the adults caring for them. As a result, children's early experiences of pre-school life are positive. Children behave well as they follow key persons clear directions, such as remembering to walk indoors so that they do not slip. Children's knowledge of keeping healthy is promoted as practitioners encourage children to eat healthy snacks and access regular fresh air. Children know that exercise is good for them and readily access a wide range of physical-play resources indoors and outdoors.

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

Management have failed to monitor and maintain practitioners' first-aid certificates to ensure that children's safety needs are consistently met. Since February of this year, the pre-school has operated for three days per week with no qualified first aider. A relevant training course has now been booked at the beginning of September which will result in all practitioners holding current first-aid certificates. The supervision of practitioners has not been used effectively to identify their training needs and to maintain a robust programme of professional development. Management have addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. The manager has some systems for monitoring the educational programme. However, this has not identified the opportunities practitioners miss to enhance children's self-care and independence skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	404877
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	991807
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	Felsted Little Acorns Committee
Date of previous inspection	17 September 2014
Telephone number	07917 190328

Felsted Little Acorns was registered in 2001. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, all eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including the deputy who has Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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