

Little Acorns

Summerhill School, Poverty Lane, Maghull, Liverpool, L31 3DJ



Inspection date	15 October 2015
Previous inspection date	21 April 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff make detailed observations, accurately assess and regularly plan to meet children's needs, taking account of their interests. Children's individual learning needs are well met and they make good progress in their learning.
- Children are happy and settle quickly because the key-person system is effective. Staff have a warm and caring rapport with the children and are knowledgeable about the children that they care for. This helps to meet children's emotional needs and care routines.
- Staff are very successful in working in partnership with parents. They develop positive relationships and work with them to promote children's learning in the nursery and at home.
- The manager is committed to continuous improvement and seeks a variety of ways in which to enhance the experiences for children. She effectively uses information from staff, parents and children to drive improvements forward.
- Staff are well qualified and attend a wide range of training courses. The manager makes effective use of their individual skills to enhance the care and teaching children receive.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- On occasions, during some activities, staff do not always provide the older children with opportunities to enhance their thinking and reasoning skills.
- The manager has not yet established a highly successful system to monitor and review the progress of different groups of children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- encourage older children to think even more about what is taking place during activities and to consider different ways they can approach their learning and find solutions to achieve their desired result
- review and monitor the progress of specific groups of children, and use this information to assess whether the provision for different groups can be enhanced further.

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector met with the manager and checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, policies, procedures, and the nursery's self-evaluation.
- The inspector spoke to both children and staff and observed play and learning activities within the main environment and the outdoor environment.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector carried out a tour of the premises.

Inspector

Alison Regan

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager is skilled and well qualified. She has a thorough understanding of statutory requirements which helps to ensure the nursery runs smoothly and effectively. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a secure understanding of what would cause them to be concerned about the welfare of a child and good attention is paid to the safety and security in the setting. Staff have regular and supportive supervision meetings with the manager to review the quality of their work and to plan for their professional development. Information about children's progress is frequently shared with parents and they are supported to continue their children's learning at home. The manager monitors the progress made by individual children to identify any gaps in their learning. However, systems to monitor the progress made by different groups of children are not yet fully in place. Parents offer very positive feedback about how much their children enjoy attending the setting.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children are eager to investigate and thoroughly enjoy the varied experiences on offer. For example, children thoroughly enjoy singing times and staff skilfully use props to encourage all of them to take part. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Staff are very enthusiastic in how they interact with the children. Staff provide activities that motivate children and encourage them to learn. These activities are well supported by staff as they use a variety of teaching strategies to support and extend children's knowledge and discussions further. However, the teaching in some group sessions does not always extend the older children's concentration and thinking skills to challenge their learning to a higher level. Disabled children and those with special educational needs are very well supported by staff who have a very good understanding of their individual needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

A caring and sensitive staff team provide a welcoming and highly stimulating environment. Children are becoming increasingly confident, inquisitive and eager learners. The well-established key-person system ensures all staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and interests. On entry, parents provide key information to staff to ensure that children's individual requirements and stages of development are known. Children settle well and are happy and confident as they explore. Children behave well and staff are good role models. They encourage children to be kind and play cooperatively. Children learn to respect each other and tolerate each other's differences. Children show good levels of independence and are comfortable within their surroundings. Children enjoy daily outdoor play in the highly stimulating outdoor environment. Children's physical development is good. Children are handling equipment efficiently and gaining good control of their bodies.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress from their starting points. Children acquire necessary skills are well prepared for the next stage in their learning and for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	310440
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	867943
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 11
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	84
Name of provider	Maryvale Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	21 April 2011
Telephone number	0151 284 0796

Little Acorns was registered in 2000. The nursery employs five members of staff, of whom three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The out-of-school club is open each weekday from 3pm to 6pm during term time and 8am to 6pm during school holidays. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of disabled children and those with special educational needs.

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