

Little Thetford Acorns Pre-School and Children's Club



Oak Field, The Wyches, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3HG

Inspection date

6 November 2015

Previous inspection date

28 June 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- One director, who holds a position of responsibility for the pre-school and children's club, has not completed the notification procedure with Ofsted in the required timeframe.
- Supervision and coaching of staff are not always sufficiently robust to ensure all staff swiftly improve their teaching and overall practice.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of assessments and planning for children's next steps in learning.

It has the following strengths

- The manager's overall monitoring of children's progress and the educational programmes is robust. This means any gaps in development are quickly identified and strategies are put in place to promote learning.
- Staff use a range of visual clues to support children's verbal communication. This helps children's understanding, especially during small-group times as they discuss the routines and activities of the day.
- Children benefit from a stimulating environment and have access to a wide range of good quality toys and resources to promote development. They especially appreciate being able to continue their investigations outside, no matter what the weather.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ notify Ofsted of changes of circumstance as soon as they occur and no later than 14 working days after the change occurs 	20/11/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure planning for children's next steps in learning is suitably challenging and consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child. 	29/01/2016

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

- strengthen the supervision and performance management of staff so that practice and teaching are consistently strong and rapidly improve across the pre-school.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school manager and directors, and looked at relevant documentation, such as the pre-school's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jacqueline Baker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The management team understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns about children in their care. However, they have failed to ensure that all procedures have been followed to inform Ofsted of new directors. This lack of diligence means that one individual, who has been in post for several months and holds a position of responsibility, has yet to be associated with the pre-school and children's club. However, the impact on children's safety is minimal as background checks have been carried out regarding the suitability of this person. Staff have a thorough understanding of safeguarding. They keep children safe in the pre-school and during outings. They also know how to identify and report concerns according to local procedures. The manager is well qualified, dedicated and determined to drive improvements forward to benefit all children. Self-evaluation is embedded in practice and clearly identifies areas for development. Supervision of staff is in place and generally supports most staff to improve. However, these support strategies are not always successful in ensuring consistently good or better practice is demonstrated throughout the staff team. Training opportunities are encouraged by the manager.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Children enjoy playing and learning at pre-school, although sometimes the standard of teaching is variable amongst the staff team. Some planning for individual children's next steps in learning is not accurate enough to promote development effectively. However, children are keen to investigate and explore both inside and outdoors. They join in with group times, concentrate on stories and are able to comment appropriately. Children learn about capacity as they play with sand and rice, join in with counting rhymes and have plenty of opportunities to practice early writing. These playful opportunities all support children to develop skills needed for school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Children are developing strong bonds with their key person and are confident to move around the pre-school independently. They join in with routines and have a secure awareness of how they should behave. Staff encourage children to develop healthy lifestyles as they have plenty of fresh air and enjoy nutritious snacks. Partnerships with other providers are in place. Parents share positive feedback about the pre-school even though children may have only just started.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Children make satisfactory progress at pre-school from their starting points. Parents contribute information about children's care and learning needs and are kept well informed of children's development. Staff encourage news of children's learning at home and generally find ways for children to build on their experiences at the pre-school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY405040
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	850626
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 11
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	53
Name of provider	Little Thetford Acorns
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2010
Telephone number	01353 649234

Little Thetford Acorns Pre-School and Children's Club was registered in 2010. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and level 6. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 2.30pm. Additionally, a breakfast club runs from 7.45am until 9am and an after-school club from 3pm until 6pm. The holiday playscheme opens everyday between 9am and 4pm during some school holidays. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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