

Inspection of Little Acorns Nursery

Clifton Childrens Centre, Kingsway North, YORK YO30 6JA

Inspection date: 19 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Inadequate
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Leadership and management	Inadequate
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety and well-being are compromised due to weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements. The nursery's safeguarding policy and procedures have not been kept up to date. Staff, including the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), have not accessed regular training. In addition, although appropriate referrals have been made where there have been concerns about children's safety, records of what has happened have not been maintained in line with the nursery's policy.

Despite these concerns, children are happy and settled in the care of the nurturing staff team. They giggle with delight as they copy the actions in a familiar story about animals dancing. When babies wake up, they are cuddled and reassured until they feel ready to start playing. Children behave very well. They are extremely polite and helpful. Older children proudly help staff to set the table at mealtimes. They then sit with their younger friends, showing them how to serve their food and pour their water. There is plenty of praise and encouragement from staff throughout the day. This promotes children's self-esteem.

Children are becoming confident and motivated learners. They can choose from a good range of stimulating resources, both indoors and outdoors. Younger children concentrate as they carefully scoop sand into buckets. Older children persevere as they try to balance on wooden planks. Meanwhile, other children take staff by the hand and go in search of treasure, using the map they have drawn.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The provider has failed to ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet the required standards. The safeguarding policy is out of date. The DSL has not attended the training required to carry out this role. Furthermore, staff have not received any recent training to ensure their safeguarding knowledge is up to date. Referrals have been made to local children's social care services. However, details of concerns about children, and actions taken, are not recorded consistently. As a result of these weaknesses, children's safety cannot be assured.
- Arrangements for regular supervisions of staff have not been put in place. As a result, staff do not have consistent opportunities to meet with senior colleagues to consider any support or training needs. Furthermore, the provider has failed to ensure that any staff working with children aged under two years have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies. Weaknesses in addressing the supervision of staff practice and failures to meet required training requirements do not promote the interests of children.
- The provider has a clear understanding of what she wants children to learn. The

curriculum is well sequenced to help children to develop the knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for their next stage of learning. Staff know children well, and this enables them to plan and adapt activities to support all children to make progress. For example, a craft activity is used to help some children to practise sharing and taking turns. For other children, the focus is on the use of scissors.

- There is an appropriate focus on supporting children's communication and language. Stories and rhymes are used effectively throughout the nursery to introduce new vocabulary and to encourage children to join in. Staff model speech and communication well. They sit with the youngest children and narrate what they are doing. Children are asked plenty of questions as they play. However, these are generally questions that require a simple answer, such as the name of a colour or a number. Questions to enable children to develop their thinking skills are not often used.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. Staff welcome the advice of other professionals. Children's key person ensures that all staff are aware of children's targets and strategies to help them to feel settled and secure. As a result, learning opportunities are well matched to children's needs.
- Children benefit from healthy, freshly prepared meals. They are delighted when they eat the strawberries they have grown themselves. They know they must wash away germs from their hands before they eat. Their good health is further promoted, as they spend plenty of time outdoors, often developing their physical skills by playing games and using scooters and bikes.
- Parents report that they are happy with the service the nursery provides. They value the care their children receive. There is effective communication at the end of each day, so parents know what their child has been learning. They welcome opportunities children have had to learn more about different cultures and festivals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The nursery's safeguarding policy and procedures have not been kept up to date. References to the local safeguarding partnership's arrangements for reporting concerns about children are not current. The DSL has not attended any training specific to this role. Staff report that they have not received any safeguarding training recently. Records show that the dates identified for staff training to be renewed have not been adhered to. Despite these weaknesses, most staff can identify indicators of abuse and know that their concerns must be reported, initially to the DSL. They know what to do if there is an allegation against a member of staff. Children are supervised vigilantly, including when they sleep.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement

action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure that there is an up-to-date safeguarding policy and procedures, which are in line with the those of the local safeguarding partnership	29/06/2023
ensure that arrangements are put in place for DSLs to attend appropriate training	29/06/2023
provide all staff with safeguarding training so they understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues	29/06/2023
ensure that accurate records are kept, in line with the nursery's safeguarding policy, if there are concerns about a child so that information is available to all those who require access to it	29/06/2023
implement effective arrangements for the supervision of staff to ensure their practice is monitored effectively and any training and support needs are identified	29/06/2023
demonstrate that arrangements are in place to ensure that staff who work with children under two have the required training and experience to do so.	29/06/2023

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

- support staff to extend the type of questions they ask children, to help children to develop their thinking skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY439221
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10299423
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Little Acorns (Clifton Green) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP906050
Telephone number	01904 552345
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Little Acorns Nursery registered in 2011. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two with early years degrees. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jan Batchelor

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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