

Little Acorn Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY409528

Inspection date

21/10/2010

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery is a privately owned provision. It opened 16 years ago and operates from a two-storey building in Yaxley, Cambridgeshire. The nursery is open five days a week from 8.00am to 5.30pm all-year-round, except bank holidays. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time and there are currently 70 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery currently supports a small number of children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 staff; 12 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and one who is currently working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff recognise and value the uniqueness of each child and they work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure that all children achieve well in their learning and development. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the provision enable staff to identify areas for continuous improvement. Children enjoy a varied range of activities and experiences which effectively meets their needs and helps them to make good progress. Good arrangements exist to ensure children's safety and health, and the environment promotes children's welfare very well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further the use of information about children's learning so that parents have opportunities to contribute to the record of their child's progress towards the early learning goals
- develop further opportunities for children to use, hear and see their home language in their play and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children procedures and help children to understand how to keep themselves safe. Clear records demonstrate the effective systems that are in place for recruitment, and induction procedures for new staff ensure they are suitable to work with children. The nursery is well organised and staff are well deployed so children are safe and supervised at all times. Clear risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis to ensure that hazards are identified and minimised to safeguard children. Well-

organised, comprehensive documentation is in place for the safe running of the nursery and underpins the good practice at the setting; policies and procedures are implemented effectively by all staff and shared with parents. All these factors contribute to the nursery safeguarding children effectively.

The nursery works well in partnership with parents and carers, and staff demonstrate a good understanding of the benefits of working closely with parents. Very good settling-in procedures that are based around their individual needs help to support children in the transition between home and the nursery. Good information is gathered from parents about their child before they start so that staff know children's individual interests and needs, and this means they settle readily and feel secure. Good written information and verbal feedback ensure parents are informed of their child's progress on a daily basis. Parents speak very highly of the setting, management and staff who are committed to ensuring that children receive a good quality early years experience. Although staff ensure that they find out about the children's home language and gather key words, children have fewer opportunities to use, hear and see their home language in the setting. This potentially affects their ability to confidently use their own language outside the home and build strong bilingual foundations when learning English.

Systems are in place to effectively monitor and evaluate the provision to identify priorities for improvement; there is a strong emphasis on raising standards, continually improving the provision and self-evaluation is good. The management team provide strong and effective leadership; they communicate clear expectations to staff to drive and secure improvement. All staff are enthusiastic, they work well together as a team and they present as positive role models. This has a positive effect on children's welfare and learning and consequently outcomes for children are good. Staff work well in partnership with others and share information to promote children's learning, development and welfare. There are clear strategies in place to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children and babies are independent because staff ensure they can make choices and direct their own play throughout the day. Older children readily free-flow between indoors or the outdoor area and this enables them to be active learners and make decisions about their play. Children are relaxed and confident in the nurturing care of staff; they are developing good self-esteem because staff are attentive and value their contributions. Babies' emotional needs are met as staff gently cuddle them when they are upset and toddlers are expertly comforted if they become upset when their parent leaves. Children enjoy a range of creative activities such as drawing pictures and making models with a range of materials and junk. Babies enjoy sensory activities such as handling foam which they delight in spreading on the table; they explore the dressing-up box, trying on scarves and carrying their handbags around.

All children enjoy looking at books, alone or together; they participate enthusiastically in well-read stories, confidently joining in and answering questions

about what happens next. Children have opportunities to write for purpose; some write their name on their work and younger children confidently make a mark to indicate their own name. Babies are beginning to be problem solvers as they play with sorting and posting activities; some young children confidently sort groups of objects according to colour. Children count with confidence and demonstrate good problem-solving skills as they persevere in building structures from small pieces of construction bricks. Babies enjoy push and play or pop-up toys, whilst older children confidently use the computer. These simple activities lay firm foundations for children's future learning.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and this enables them to provide challenging activities and practical experiences to support and extend each child's learning and development. Flexible planning is in place and is based on children's interests and this means staff can be responsive to children's changing needs and interests. Staff carry out regular observations of the children as they play and these are added to children's individual assessments to inform planning. However, this information, and information gathered from parents is not always used to clearly identify the next steps in each child's learning.

Staff provide opportunities for children to enjoy energetic play in the outdoor area. Children confidently practise a range of movements, such as pedalling around on tricycles, climbing, crawling and sliding. This is because staff create an environment which is safe and supportive where children learn to be safety conscious without being fearful. Children enjoy healthy snacks which are offered on a 'rolling' basis so that they can choose when they want to eat; this allows them to continue their activities and enhances the flow of the session. Clear information is gathered about children's dietary requirements and this ensures they can eat safely. Thorough risk assessments are completed to ensure the environment remains safe for children. They practise the fire evacuation drill so that they know what to do in an emergency.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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