

Little Acorns & Penketh Community Primary After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	29/09/2009
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Setting address	Penketh Community Primary School, Coniston Avenue, Penketh, WARRINGTON, WA5 2QY
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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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Little Acorns & Penketh Community Primary After School Club is one of two provisions owned and managed by Little Acorns Children's Day Nursery Ltd. It opened in 2007 and operates from the resource room, junior corridor, computer room and main hall within Penketh Community Primary School, Warrington in Cheshire. A maximum of 24 children aged under eight years may attend the club at any one time. The club is open each weekday from 3.15 pm to 6 pm, term time only. All children share access to the school grounds for outdoor play. There are currently 28 children aged from four to under eight years on roll. The club is open to children from Penketh Community Primary School only. The club employs six members of staff including the manager who is also the registered person. Of these, four hold appropriate qualifications in early years and the remaining staff are unqualified. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are secure and happy at Little Acorns. They enjoy spending time together at the end of the school day and taking part in the range of activities provided for them by the caring staff. They make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. The staff team are currently working to develop a more systematic approach to planning and assessment in order to tailor provision more closely to children's individual learning needs. The setting works in close partnership with parents and the school and this contributes significantly to children's well-being. The setting uses self-evaluation and review procedures appropriately to ensure their service is continually improving and meeting the needs of the current service users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the arrangements for observations and assessments so they can be used to help in planning learning and development activities tailored to meet children's individual needs
- ensure that plans for learning and development activities clearly identify the desired outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The provider ensures that checks are carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Health and safety and child protection procedures are in place and meet statutory requirements; this is supported by appropriate staff

training in these areas. The setting is well-staffed and staff are deployed effectively to ensure good supervision at all times. Provision to ensure children's welfare is managed well, with high standards set by the manager and her deputy.

The manager and her staff understand the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and have correctly identified areas for improvement. They have begun to bring their planning and assessment practice into line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, in order to address the needs of individual children more closely. This work is at a very early stage, however, and it has not yet begun to impact sufficiently on children's learning and development, which is currently satisfactory.

The setting is inclusive and children are valued and cared for as individuals. Staff create a warm and supportive ethos, for example by encouraging younger and older children to collaborate in activities. Children respond very well to this, with older children showing care for the younger ones. Resources, particularly in the reading areas, are chosen to reflect cultural diversity and broaden children's awareness of the wider world.

The setting works successfully in partnership with parents. This is reflected in a comment typical of many, 'My children love coming to Little Acorns and I know their welfare is given the highest priority by the staff.' The setting's partnership with the primary school enables children to benefit from sharing many of the school's resources, including the ICT suite. Most of the children who attend Little Acorns have previously attended the nursery run by the same provider. When they join the after-school club they meet staff they already know and with whom they feel secure. Induction arrangements are managed well to ensure that all the children settle quickly and happily into the setting.

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

Planning procedures are currently being reviewed by the staff team, but further work is needed to ensure that the desired learning outcomes for children are identified clearly when activities are planned. Although staff make and share informal assessments, their observational assessments and records are not yet being used systematically to help with planning the next steps in activities for the children.

An appropriate range of activities is available and resources are of good quality and maintained in good condition. There is a good balance between activities chosen by the children themselves and those led by adults. Staff interact well with the children. They allow child-initiated play to proceed without unnecessary interruption and they are also there to give support when it is needed, to encourage learning. They encourage children to make choices, for example in helping select the resources that will be brought out each day. They join the children in imaginative play and help them have fun, for example by organising games using the large parachute. Staff are particularly skilled at encouraging language development and developing thinking skills in their discussions with

children. Children are able to use the well-resourced outdoor area for part of the session on most days; continuous access is not possible because the site is open for other users at the end of the school day. Staff make every effort to ensure that children are able to choose to be out of doors as often as possible and arrangements for outdoor supervision are good.

Robust systems support children's health and safety. Good hygiene standards are ensured, with anti-bacterial sprays in regular use and well established routines for the children. The setting actively promotes healthy eating and drinking and children show a good understanding of personal safety and healthy lifestyle issues. Staff have appropriate first-aid qualifications and systems for reporting accidents meet requirements.

The setting's caring ethos and the warm relationships that prevail between staff and children enable the children to be secure and happy. This is reflected in their very good behaviour, their courtesy and the good collaborative skills they display.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met