

Little Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY336168
Inspection date	11/02/2010
Inspector	Hilary Elizabeth Tierney
Setting address	Little Acorns, 84 Firgrove Crescent, Yate, Bristol, Avon, BS37 7AG
Telephone number	01454 850 122
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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 operates from a converted shop and has been registered under the existing management team since in 2006. The nursery is one of five nurseries owned by a private partnership. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm excluding Bank Holidays and a week between Christmas and New Year. The provider is on the Early Years Register. Children aged up to two years have access to a playroom, sleep room and changing facilities on the first floor. Children aged three to five years have use of a playroom, a smaller messy play area and toilets on the ground floor. The setting also includes an office and a kitchen, where children's meals are prepared each day. Children have access to an enclosed rear garden.

The group is registered to provide care for 32 children in the early years age group; of these, not more than 12 may be under two years at any one time. There are currently 53 children on roll, of these, a total of 35 are in the early years age group and 17 are under two years old. Children attend from surrounding areas. The nursery currently have no children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. Partnership arrangements with other early years settings are with a local pre-school setting which is based on a school site.

The two owners are appropriately qualified and they employ nine members of staff to work with the children and a cook. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. All staff have completed child protection and first aid training.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development because the staff are caring and have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff know the children and their families well, they recognise and treat children as individuals and unique. Effective arrangement to ensure the safety, health and well-being of the children are in place. Good links with parents, carers and other professionals have been developed and ensure that all adults are involved in their care. Highly motivated staff ensure good quality practice and an extremely high commitment to drive improvement. Good quality self evaluation and development of action plans for future improvement are in place and demonstrate clearly the settings drive to provide high quality childcare.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the role of the key person so that all adults can continue to meet children's individual needs and ensure parents are made aware of their

child's key person.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust steps to safeguard children are in place. Clear vetting procedures ensure that all adults are suitable to work with the children. There are effective procedures for the identification of children at risk in a caring supportive environment. Staff ensure records of children's existing injuries are recorded and shared with parents and confidentiality maintained. Robust risk assessments and daily hazard checks and regular fire evacuation procedures are carried out regularly and the staff are vigilant in their supervision of children all which contribute to creating a safe environment for children. For example, as the premises opens onto a road and has large glass windows staff ensure they ask for identification from visitors to be shown through the glass door before they allow the visitor in the building. Detailed accident and medication records are kept and shared with parents and all necessary details are obtained from parents before any medication is administered to children.

Resources are in good condition, most are easily accessible and used effectively to help children learn and develop. Staff have developed a toy book with photographs of the resources that are stored on higher shelves so children are able to see what other resources are available to them. Children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them as a result of the setting taking effective steps to promote equality and diversity well. Children's backgrounds and differences are acknowledge and catered for extremely well. Through discussion, staff demonstrated their understanding about how they would include and offer support to children who have English as an additional language and special educational needs and/or difficulties.

Comprehensive policies and procedures contribute to the smooth running of the setting. An excellent, detailed self evaluation has been completed and a detailed action plan is well targeted to help bring about improvement and recent actions taken indicate development is seen as on going. For example, changes made to the planning, observations and assessment process have been made and implemented successfully to ensure that all staff are able to contribute to children's learning. This demonstrates a good commitment to embedding ambition and driving improvement. All staff are highly motivated, work well as a team and committed to providing good quality childcare.

There is a good partnership with parents and carers. Detailed notice boards, monthly newsletters, parents' feedback forms, daily diaries, regular parents evenings and regular verbal communication ensure parents are kept involved in their child's learning. Parents spoken to commented on how they feel the staff are all approachable and how happy their children are to come to the setting. However, some parents were unclear about who their child's key person is. Parents all commented on how they are aware that the policies and procedures are easily accessible to them. All necessary written parental permissions are in place. Links with other early years settings are good. Both written and verbal information is

regularly shared with them and helps to ensure that all adults who care for the children are contributing to the child's development.

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

Children settle quickly and enjoy their time at the setting. The nursery is bright and cheerfully decorated with children's work and staff create a warm, friendly environment where children feel safe. Children are confident, active learners and make friends, they are eager to learn and explore. The staff provide a good balance of stimulating, challenging activities which are both child-led and adult-led. Children show good levels of self-esteem and a sense of belonging. They develop skills for the future through careful guidance from the staff, for example, staff encourage children to help themselves to snacks and serve themselves at lunch time. Good manners are encouraged and children were observed saying 'please' and 'thank you' with little or no prompting from staff. Children develop their independence and are able to visit the toilet alone, they understand the importance of hand washing and staff are good role models. Staff use anti-bacterial gel regularly and wear aprons when serving snacks, meals and when they change nappies. Children have excellent access to fresh air and exercise. They are able to have free flow to the enclosed garden which has a decked area, barked area with swings and a slide. Children have a lovely time in the garden exploring the outside area, they are able to dig and grow, run, climb and ride bikes. They were observed having a lovely time interacting with each other and the staff. All staff have a calm, caring approach towards the children and use plenty of praise and encouragement with the children. The children are well behaved and understand the rules of the setting and show care and concern for each other.

Clear planning, observations and assessments help staff identify children's starting points, interests and next steps and highlight which children require extension or extra support. Clear records help staff provide challenging activities for both the younger and older children. The key person system has recently been changed so the number of adults involved with the child is reduced and a second key person has been introduced, for example, the key person or the second person now changes their key child's nappies rather than anyone in the room. This ensures that children learn about how to be strong and independent from a base of loving, secure relationships from their key person.

Children are able to develop their imagination through role play and creative activities such as painting and using recycled materials. Children have easy access to books and were observed sitting in the cosy book corner looking at books alone and together with staff. Children enjoy taking part in songs and rhymes. Children were observed having a lovely time singing songs and all sit really well and join in the songs with excitement and enjoyment. Children understand that they can use items to count such as their fingers and beads. They can count confidently and most can count to ten. Children interact with each other and are beginning to learn about taking turns, sharing and working together. Younger children are treated with genuine care and concern by the staff. Lovely interactions were observed with staff talking constantly to the babies and younger children about what they are

doing and the items they were playing with. Staff understand the younger children's needs and anticipate what they want as they play. For example, the younger children looked through the window and saw the older children out playing and started to shout for attention from the staff outside. A member of staff contacted the staff downstairs to get them to wave back. Then the younger children were asked if they wanted to go outside, which they did. Staff met children's individual needs extremely well and work closely together to ensure they continue to provide activities to challenge and interest the children.

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	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
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

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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	1
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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