



Office for Standards
in Education

DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY281575

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/07/2004
Inspector Name Carol Johnstone

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Little Acorns
Setting Address The Village Hall
The Common
Evershot, Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 0JY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Little Acorns Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Little Acorns Committee
Address School House
Summer Lane, Evershot
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 0JP

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care. When making judgements, inspectors have regard to how well the provider meets the National Standards for under Eights Day Care and Childminding. A list of these is attached. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Playgroup opened in 1984. It operates from the village hall at Evershot, a rural location near to Dorchester. It serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 24 children on the register and this includes 5 funded 3-year-olds and 10 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting supports children with special needs and those who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09.00-13.00. There is also an additional session on Wednesday afternoon from 13.00-15.30 to support children who will be starting school imminently.

A holiday club operates for two weeks during the summer and admits children up to the age of eight.

Five part time staff work with the children. Over half of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Little Acorns playgroup provides satisfactory care for children. The environment is very welcoming with bright and colourful displays of children's work in all areas. Staff are committed to providing as many new opportunities as possible for children and this is reflected in the comprehensive planning of activities and creative use of varied resources. Most aspects of documentation are present although some require updating.

Children are safe and well cared for although additional training is required to ensure that all staff are familiar with the arrangements for administering first aid.

Improvement of the security of access to the premises is required. Snacks and drinks provided are healthy and nutritious and children are encouraged to learn how to prepare food and pour out drinks during snack time to encourage their independence. Children are also encouraged to learn about personal hygiene with regular hand washing, although the practical arrangements for this are to be reviewed to minimise any risk of cross infection. Staff have a sensitive understanding of each child in their care, giving equal time and attention and

responding well to their needs. However some additional training is necessary to ensure that every member of staff is familiar with the policies of the playgroup relating to special needs, child protection, and health and safety procedures.

Children enjoy a range of interesting activities that are based on weekly themes, and they contribute individually by bringing in items from home to show and talk about. Baking, model making and word and number play are a regular feature, and children are very engaged and settled in the playgroup. Interaction from staff is friendly, stimulating and patient and the children are confident and happy.

Partnerships with parents are excellent, with an active parent rota, regular meetings and weekly newsletters. Staff treat any personal information given to them about the children in confidence at all times.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection a new path has been laid to enable children to have safe access to the adjacent school when visiting to meet their new teachers.

What is being done well?

- Activities are varied and interesting. The current theme is 'People that help us', and children have made police helmets from papier mache, read stories, dressed up, and had guest speakers. Topics such as these help children learn about the outside world in preparation for school.
- Each piece of work or activity is acknowledged and valued by staff and there is lots of encouragement and praise. Work is displayed proudly in all areas of the hall, and children are keen to show visitors what they have achieved.
- Resources are varied, in good condition, and creatively used in order to enable all children to use them. Children have free access to most items and choose what they want to play with each day. Staff try to gently incorporate learning into each activity, and this is reflected in how well the children are engaged in their play.
- Food and drink supplied is healthy and nutritious. Children are given a wide choice of fruit each day and they also learn about where the food comes from. Fresh water is always available for the children.

What needs to be improved?

- the levels of staff training in relation to the policies and procedures of the setting
- the security of access to the premises
- documentation relating to the updating of the complaints procedure and the obtaining of emergency medical treatment consent forms
- the arrangements for hand washing .

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure that all staff are familiar with the policies and procedures of the setting.
6	Ensure that premises are secure and that children are unable to leave them unsupervised
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and drying.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.