

# Little Acorn Day Nurseries Ltd

208b Broadway, Yaxley, PETERBOROUGH, PE7 3NT

<b>Inspection date</b>	07/04/2014
Previous inspection date	21/10/2010

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is outstanding

- The dynamic vision and passion of the owner to constantly strive for excellence is successfully disseminated to all staff, creating a team that will only accept the very best for all children.
- Exemplary teaching, particularly with regard to supporting children's communication and language across the nursery, significantly enhances the progress children make with their confidence and ability to become expert communicators.
- Highly effective arrangements for transition support all children and parents, allowing children to quickly thrive in a new environment.
- Initiatives to engage parents to help support learning at home are inspirational, successful and embraced by all.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the whole nursery is meticulously documented, clearly showing the journey of the nursery to date and what difference ongoing improvements have made to the children.
- Attachments are excellent with key persons knowing each child's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, each individual child's needs are given the highest priority.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed all areas accessed by children, including the two separate outdoor environments and three indoor rooms for children at different stages in their development.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning activities in the baby, toddler and pre-school room and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager to observe teaching and learning.
- The inspector met with parents and took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator for the nursery.
- The inspector met with the manager and deputy, looked at children's development records, including the progress checks at age two, planning documentation, evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working in the nursery and a range of other policies and procedures.

## Inspector

Vicky Pitts

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Acorn Day Nursery Ltd was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register. It is privately owned. It operates from a two storey building in Yaxley, Cambridgeshire. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7am until 5.30pm all year round, except on bank holidays and for a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in three separate rooms plus an additional Montessori room and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area to the front and rear of the building.

There are currently 90 children in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English is an additional language. There are currently 15 staff working directly with the children, 14 of whom have an appropriate early years qualification. Nine of the staff have qualifications at level 3 and one staff member at level 6. Two members of staff are Montessori trained. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider enhancing the already excellent partnerships with parents to enable them to independently provide ongoing opportunities to share their positive views of the nursery with others.

### Inspection judgements

#### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

This vibrant, homely nursery offers children a truly memorable early years experience within an environment that is a home-from-home. Knowledgeable, animated staff enhance the delivery of the educational programmes through the imaginative and creative use of the plentiful resources on offer, both inside and outdoors. As a result, children relish coming to the nursery and make excellent progress from their initial starting points with a particular emphasis on their outstanding progress in communication and language and personal, social and emotional development. Children learn at this nursery because of the consistently high standards of teaching, using the children's interests as a starting point. Enhanced provision supports new learning and all members of staff expertly display and use the resources that interest children and support them in thinking about past activities that they can then recall and use in a variety of different ways. For example, recent interest in living things enhances children's learning about life cycles. From a simple play dough activity two children are absorbed in their learning. The member of staff expertly enhances learning with a range of timely, open-ended questions. Her engagement is a

delight to the children who interact with her, willingly sharing their knowledge about 'things that fly' and giving their opinion on their favourite flying creatures. This discussion leads to imaginatively creating play dough flying creatures. Children are able to exercise their fine motor control with a range of play dough shaping tools. They refer to information books about mini-beasts and use the live tadpoles as stimulus for their mini beast creations. During the interaction the member of staff was able to accurately assess children's ability in counting, confidence in using new vocabulary, ability to think creatively and use malleable materials with a range of tools. However, the greatest impact of the exceptional teaching is her understanding of how to engage children to use language, trying out new words, speaking in complex sentences and holding a dialogue with one another. Children with English as an additional language are also superbly supported during this activity. As the member of staff engages children, they express their inner confidence and end up laughing and confidently displaying their ability to converse in English and understand all that is said to them. Children's progress in their language development is exceptional, with many children making accelerated progress from their initial starting points. The use of 'Every Child a Talker' strategies leads to highly effective methods observed throughout the nursery, with all staff able to identify children's next steps in language development. This information is shared with parents and together with informative assessment helps target children's individual needs. 'Every Child a Talker' groups are held with the special educational needs coordinator. Together, staff and parents are making a huge difference to the children's skills in language, effectively ensuring that children at this nursery have a fantastic opportunity to build on this life skill. Children with English as an additional language are actively supported to embrace their home language. Staff spend time with parents learning new words and displaying them in the environment. Staff then speak using children's home language, which they also see reflected within resources and labelling in the environment. This provides them with highly beneficial opportunities to learn English while feeling valued and supported. Other children are curious about the print and excellent opportunities are made to discuss differences between them and their friends. Children's individuality is actively embraced forming part of the reasons for the success in the high self-esteem and self-confidence children within this nursery display.

Children make rapid progress due to staff and parents working in partnership, particularly during transition times. Children's personal, social and emotional development, along with their physical development, is carefully considered alongside their tracked progress in helping them make decisions about when to move rooms. For example, a child that has made excellent progress with their language moves earlier to the toddler room to help further enhance their already exceptional language skills. As a result, the child has thrived, forming excellent relationships with their new peers and further developing independence with a greater capacity to make decisions about where they want to play and what they want to play with. For example, her physical development has increased as greater opportunities are provided to play outside and enjoy physical activities. Consequently, the child is thriving with progress in the prime areas continuing to excel beyond the expected stage of development. Parents constantly comment on how they feel valued and listened to. Evidence within children's folders demonstrate how they are able to contribute to the next steps for their children's learning, further supporting how the nursery constantly works with parents. Imaginative ways to engage parents in the life and soul of the nursery are highly effective. 'Stay and play' sessions are well attended, supporting parents in

knowing how to develop learning at home through play. The recent initiative of the 'weekend book' is warmly welcomed by parents. Parents and children write in the weekend book what they have been up to and this is always shared back at the nursery. Children love to share their news with their friends and are learning to actively listen to one another, share ideas and engage in meaningful conversations. As a result, key persons gain further insight into a child's life outside of the nursery and plan these experiences into activities within the nursery. Learning is much more powerful with parents, children and key persons all able to share in experiences together.

Children are not just prepared for school as their next big step but the nursery is embedding positive life skills, particularly with how key persons support children in demonstrating and enhancing the characteristics of effective learning. Children are given plenty of opportunities for creative thinking, such as how can they fold envelopes to fit into the post box, can they make enough pizzas to share with their friends for tea and how can they make the best mud pies in the cement mixer without getting too dirty? As key persons are so in tune with the thinking of their children, they are able to provide opportunities, resources and activities within the environment that not only motivate children but encourage them to be independent learners with a positive approach to succeed. Memorable experiences are created here, with parents and key persons being as much a part of the fun as the children.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Laughter, smiles and happy chatter are heard throughout the nursery because of the outstanding relationships every member of staff has with the very youngest to the oldest child. Parents state that 'smiles are genuine within this nursery' and 'you know that the staff really care about every child because every child really does matter here'. The nursery takes time to get to know the whole family prior to starting. Home visits with a member of the leadership team and the key person help build strong, positive relationships right from the start. Children start nursery recognising a face and have the confidence to come through the door for the first time. Settling-in sessions are provided to support parents and children and are organised according to individual needs. Every member of staff can confidently talk about their key children and often children that they are not directly responsible for. They know each child's strengths and interests, using this information to help settle any children. Within the baby room, children seek out their key person for reassurance, putting their arms out for cuddles before then going off to explore the well resourced and highly stimulating space. When children do require comfort, staff expertly use their knowledge of children's interests to offer a distraction. One member of staff soothes a child by taking them to the window, constantly talking about what they can see, following one of their interests. Therefore, children feel safe and secure with their key persons and are able to form positive attachments. These positive relationships lead to children who are full of self-confidence. Pre-school children are encouraged to try out new skills in a welcoming and highly stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. Commitment to free-flow play within the indoor and outdoor environments for pre-school and toddlers allows children to make choices about where they want to play and who with. Key persons know when to make timely interventions to further enhance development across all seven

areas of learning. This allows children the confidence to take risks themselves using the open-ended resources, but knowing that there is always an adult not too far away to offer support if needed.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pre-school children respect one another and competently use social skills to interact with one another, independently of any adult. For sustained periods of time children concentrate when using the computer, using the sand timer to decide whose turn it is next. Children in the toddler room say sorry to their friends without prompting when they accidentally knock into each other. As routines are clearly embedded the children know what is expected of them and in return are competently able to explain to others the correct way to behave. During lunch time one child explains that 'we eat our meals quietly and wait our turn'. Children within the baby room are appropriately introduced to tidying up routines. One child put every toy away, independently using the pictures on the boxes to match the toys to. Children are warmly rewarded with praise and as a result, are full of pride and are being very well prepared to become responsible for their environment and respectful towards their peers.

Well thought out opportunities for teaching children about healthy lifestyles are constantly evident and effectively taught. At lunch time the children identify the vegetables on their plates and know that vegetables will help them 'to be big and strong'. Children are responsible for growing their own fruits and vegetables in the stimulating and well resourced outside space. As well as growing their own vegetables and soft fruits, children are offered very healthy nutritious food, which is freshly cooked on site each day. Furthermore, the menu is rotated every four weeks and is seasonally adjusted. Most importantly, children's traditional dishes from around the world are incorporated into the meals cooked. This helps children explore the rich diversity there is in the foods available and helps them understand about cultural differences. Opportunities for learning are maximised during personal hygiene routines. The older children have been taught to close the door to the bathroom to stop others seeing inside. Younger children sing while washing their hands. Staff deployment at this time is effective to support independence for the older children and to engage younger children to adopt good hygiene principles from a young age. Children competently organise themselves at lunch time, setting the table, pouring their own drinks and checking that the allergy cards are put on the table in the correct places. High adult to child ratios support the calm atmosphere and it is evident these practices are embedded within the nursery, supporting children's sense of belonging with excellent knowledge of their nursery environment. This nursery belongs to the children.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

The manager has recruited and retained a staff team that are highly effective in safeguarding children. New staff are quickly inducted into the life of the nursery and are expertly prepared through the induction of the expectations required from them. External and in-house safeguarding training is provided regularly with further plans to ensure all rooms have leaders that are externally trained to be special educational needs

coordinators, child protection designated officers and equalities named coordinator. Best practice is applied to ensuring the Disclosure and Barring Service checks are updated every three years. Record keeping is highly comprehensive. Leaders check children's attendance registers for patterns of any absence and are quick to identify and support any issues that may be preventing children coming to nursery. As a result, children and parents are superbly supported and children do not unnecessarily miss out on the opportunities that they receive while attending the nursery.

This is a highly qualified team, rich in experience as well as qualifications. Parents comment that one of the strengths of the nursery is the staff team and their obvious experience with children. The manager constantly reviews staff deployment and how this will impact on the children. Key persons will stay with children through transition from the baby to the toddler room, supporting the strong attachments that are embedded. The deputy is instrumental to supporting the manager to strive for excellence. The impact of having a full-time, highly qualified deputy supporting the manager in leading excellence has led to rapid improvements. This is because monitoring the provision at every level happens on a daily basis as well as through well documented evidence that takes on board staff, parents and children's views on how to constantly improve the nursery. Leaders have an excellent knowledge of how the nursery operates on a daily basis as they are a strong visible presence to staff, children and parents. Staff are empowered to have a voice and make a difference to the lives of the children that attend. Regular supervisions and peer observations have fostered a culture where everyone's opinion matters. Ideas are shared enthusiastically and future planning is contributed to by all staff ensuring that this nursery is a forward thinking nursery. This regular approach to supervision and constant presence in the nursery gives leaders expert knowledge and first-hand experience of what is going well and where timely support can be targeted. Training that is delivered externally is always shared back at the nursery in staff meetings. A whole team approach, particularly with the 'Every Child a Talker' training, has led to the success of the quality of teaching across the whole nursery. Impact is monitored and well documented, ensuring there is a clear picture about what is successful and how this is achieved. Clear tracking of the progress of children identifies that children who are at risk of falling behind their peers with their skills in communication and language have successfully made accelerated progress.

The manager's drive and passion for quality childcare is infectious. Her pursuit for excellence is shared by parents and other agencies she works closely with. Recent initiatives led by the manager are seeing a collaborative approach to the progress check at age two between the nursery and health visitors. The manager fully supports the sharing of information between external agencies, parents and the nursery. She continually searches for ways to make this happen to ensure the nursery meets the best interests of the child. Her often innovative ways to improve the nursery are regularly shared with parents through newsletters and daily conversation. Parents appreciate the efforts that are made to take their ideas on board and comment on the speed that they see their ideas being incorporated into the heart of the nursery. Often things happen overnight or certainly over the weekend, whether this is the purchasing of new resources, organising the reception area, installing air conditioning or moving the entire contents of the top floor to provide a more restful space for the babies. Parents trust the manager whole-heartedly and fully appreciate her relentless enthusiasm and drive for providing outstanding

childcare. However, parents express that they would appreciate further opportunities to promote the nursery to help promote the quality that exudes from the nursery and to celebrate all of its many achievements.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY409528
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	851016
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	48
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	90
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Acorn Day Nurseries Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21/10/2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 244000

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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