

# Little Acorns Day Nursery

10 Thornhill Road, Off Albany Road, Derby, Derbyshire, DE22 3LX

<b>Inspection date</b>	29/08/2013
Previous inspection date	21/11/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>1</b>
	Previous inspection:	1
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

- Children are provided with highly stimulating and enjoyable first-hand learning experiences by staff who know them extremely well and have a very good understanding of how children learn. Therefore, children's individual learning and development needs are significantly enhanced and they make excellent progress.
- Very close relationships and attachments with staff ensure children are happy and secure, and as a result, they are fully involved and confident at the nursery.
- Partnerships with parents are superb. The very effective sharing of information and excellent involvement of parents in their child's learning and care ensure that children's individual needs are quickly identified and met excellently.
- The utmost priority is given to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children. This is evident through highly effective practices and procedures that successfully promote children's safety and well-being.
- Extremely high quality professional development and training for staff and reviews of practice mean that children continue to receive a superb quality learning experiences and their care is exemplary.
- Highly effective and sharply focused self-evaluation and monitoring of the provision mean that children continue to receive high quality learning experiences. Parents and children have an active voice in the evaluation of all aspects of the nursery; this means their opinions are valued and they have a real say about changes within the nursery.

## 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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and children during activities, both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector supplemented all observations with pertinent questions.  
The inspector looked at samples of children's assessment records, planning documentation, the nursery's self-evaluation file, staff reviews and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff, directors and children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Yvonne Layton

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Little Acorns Day Nursery is part of Associated Nurseries Limited. It was registered in 1998 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted house in Derby, and is a privately owned limited company managed by directors. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 3 and 2. Three members of staff have Early Years Professional Status and one holds Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for Bank Holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 54 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is a member of recognised childcare organisations.

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

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

- build on the already excellent promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development by, for example, expanding opportunities for children to see themselves in larger photographs in order to enhance their already very positive sense of self.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are very motivated to learn in this extremely high quality nursery. The distinguished, effective teaching throughout the nursery ensures children are making excellent progress in their learning and development. The staff have excellent skills and knowledge of the learning and development requirements, and a first-rate understanding of how children learn. The stimulating environment, both inside and outside, ensures that all children make very rapid progress towards the early learning goals. In addition to a high focus on the prime and specific areas of learning, staff are extremely knowledgeable and superbly reflect in their practice the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. They are very skilled in enabling children to play and explore, create and think critically, and in the promotion of active learning. All of this ensures children are well

prepared for entry into school and their future learning.

Detailed information is gathered from parents when children start attending the nursery, which provides staff with a clear baseline for their learning. In addition, children's progress and development are observed and monitored extremely effectively. For example, identified next steps for children are detailed and inclusive. Development records are reviewed and a summative report devised at two-weekly intervals. Activities are planned and provide individualised play opportunities which enhance progress. Children's individual next steps, the characteristic of effective teaching and learning, children's engagement in activities and individual schemas are all used very effectively to inform and guide the planning of activities. Staff know the children very well and consult them about what they have enjoyed and seek their ideas for activities. As a result, activities are precisely matched to their needs and they make rapid progress in their learning and development. Detailed summative reports and the progress checks at age two are completed by key persons, using the information gained through the detailed observations made of children's learning and by consultation with parents. Staff provide interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Children's learning is exceptionally enhanced as the staff have a very high level of understanding of promoting children's interests and ideas. Their interests are positively extended and used to further their learning in all areas. For example, a transport theme extends children's imaginative and mathematical skills as they enjoy taking bus rides in a play bus and learn about money as they pay their fare. Children learn about dimensions as they make a transport three-dimensional display. The theme is enhanced to enable the children to learn about safety. For example, they make 'traffic light' cakes and discuss what the sequence of traffic lights means. Children learn about addition and subtraction as staff encourage them to count how many buns they have made and how many children are present. The theme is further extended as the children consider 'people who help us'. For example, a vet comes into the nursery and the children dress up in surgical gowns and use a stethoscope on soft toy animals. Teachers are integrated into this theme to assist children in the transitions to school.

Throughout the nursery, children's creativity is enriched as they express themselves freely in imaginative play, art and craft. They easily access and freely choose an excellent range of resources with which they can explore and investigate. For example, children develop their own play and learning as they choose their own resources for a water and sand activity. They experiment and learn as they mix sand and water. Children explore as they rake sand on the paving stones. Throughout the activities, staff are skilful to provide support and encouragement when needed and know when to step back to allow the children to experiment for themselves.

Through well-planned, purposeful activities and the engagement of staff in children's play, children's communication skills, vocabulary and language are developing at a fast rate. Staff constantly talk to and converse with the children in their activities. Children's language and communication is fostered efficiently by staff extending their vocabulary and thinking, as they ask open-ended questions and listen carefully to the children's

responses. Children and staff hold rich discussions about what they are doing, and staff are skilled in challenging children to think and consider. Staff engage babies superbly as they come down fully to their level. Their non-verbal communication is excellent and they use expressive language to encourage and enhance babies' communication. All children are encouraged to develop a love of books. Early writing skills are widely encouraged, and babies and toddlers have many opportunities to practise these. The wide use of the written word, including children's names, assists them in early reading and writing. Throughout the nursery, there is written text, such as different language labels on equipment. There is a display of questions and answers from the children, such as 'How does it rain?', and they answer with 'The clouds fill up'.

Children's awareness and understanding of the wider world are promoted very well. They have access to a variety of resources, including a rich range of posters and books which promote positive images of diversity. Visitors and outings enable children to learn about and experience the local community. For example, children develop their social skills as they visit a local residential home and learn about recycling at a local centre. Children are encouraged to learn about the natural world extremely well as they are supported by staff to look for insects and creatures in the garden. Staff extend their learning as they visit a local animal farm and learn about the lifecycle of frogs. All children use a well-resourced outside area. They make dens and grow vegetables in the garden. Therefore, their learning and development needs are very well met.

Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Staff exchange detailed written daily information and make sure they discuss the child's day individually with parents and carers. In addition, this includes what the child has done at home and 'wow' moments for parents to share any achievements. Staff share children's progress records at parents' evenings and informally. Parents are able to access their child's records at any time. Staff's strong commitment and extremely effective communication with parents ensure that children's learning and development benefit, as involving them enables them to play a full and active role in their child's learning. For example, parents receive activity leaflets about different activities to complete at home, which promoted children's learning and development. Parents are proactively encouraged to complete home observations of their child's progress, and each parent receives detailed information about the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Transitions to different rooms for the children within the nursery are handled sensitively, and children's individual learning needs are well met. A transition monitoring form is completed in consultation with parents before children move rooms. This means children's learning and development is constantly enhanced. An excellent range of resources and the staff's very good teaching ability ensure children can fully extend their future skills. Older children are superbly prepared for school as the staff proactively promote independence and group skills. For example, they learn to sit and listen attentively during group sessions and become used to routines. Children are encouraged to engage in early reading and writing. School staff routinely visit the nursery. Development files and summative reports are shared with other providers when the children leave the setting, after consultation with parents. Partnerships with other agencies are very proactive. This means that individual children's needs, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully met.

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

Throughout the nursery, children are extremely happy and very well settled. They are highly confident as they engage in conversations with staff and visitors. Staff offer lots of positive praise and recognition for children's efforts and achievements. They are very attentive to the children as they listen to their requests, and are fully aware of their individual needs, supporting very secure emotional attachments. Staff know the children very well and, therefore, are able to meet their care and learning needs effectively, including those children who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Children thrive in the nursery and enjoy the different experiences offered, as staff give consistent support and provide an environment that meets their learning and development needs very well. An effective key person system makes sure that strong relationships are formed between staff, children and their families to promote a good level of well-being. Photographs of the children throughout the nursery, including of them participating in activities, and themed books contribute very well to their self-esteem and sense of belonging. There is scope to build on the already excellent promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development by, for example, expanding opportunities for children to see themselves in larger photographs in order to enhance their already very positive sense of self.

Children demonstrate through their behaviour that they feel safe and secure within the nursery. They behave well because the nursery has established rules based on kindness, safety and respect. Staff consistently encourage them to remember the rules, and children respond and recall them easily. For example, children are encouraged to share, take turns and consider why certain behaviour is not acceptable and what behaviour is expected of them. Independence is assured as children help to clear away at mealtimes, and all children are able to self-select their own activities by choosing from themed boxes and picking resources from photographs. Therefore, children very effectively learn about social responsibility and accepted behaviour. Staff build respectful and caring relationships with all the children and their families. Parents and children readily discuss what is happening in their family. Staff engage children well to learn about different cultures and people through planned and spontaneous discussion and activities. They enjoy national and international festivals and celebrations.

Children learn about safety and self-care through excellent routine activities and discussions. They learn to keep safe as staff constantly give them opportunity to learn safety procedures. For example, non-mobile toddlers are encouraged to learn about using stairs as staff support them to 'walk' down the stairs. Older children very effectively learn to take risks safely and use tools properly as they enjoy activities, including learning to chop fruit and vegetables properly using a real knife. They undertake a 'safety hunt', where they look for safety signs and share what they mean and what they need to do. Children learn about how to make an emergency call, with staff making sure they are clear about when to do it appropriately. Therefore, they develop a very good understanding of how to assess risk. Children very effectively learn about self-care and personal hygiene

through consistent routines, staff reminders and activities. Younger children's nappies are changed and toilet training needs are handled with sensitivity. Staff use this opportunity to engage the children in rich conversations that extend learning and build attachments.

Physical skills and exploration are exceptionally well promoted as children use small and large physical equipment that build their skills superbly. All children have access to a rich outdoor environment, where they are challenged and learn to take risks safely as they use the equipment. The nursery is highly focused on promoting children to become mobile and active, supported by a detailed mobility and locomotion policy. Children learn about their bodies through activities, music and action rhymes. They enjoy a wealth of nutritious snacks and meals. Individual dietary needs are well known by all staff. The nursery has a high focus on promoting healthy eating. For example, all children are involved in 'Fruity Fridays' which include healthy eating, tasting different fruits and fitness activities. Children learn about the need for healthy food through many additional activities, such as displays, food tasting, cooking and baking. For example, children are involved in preparing their own home-made pizza, including making the dough.

Children are exceptionally well prepared for transitions from home to the nursery. Settling-in visits are provided to ensure children are settled and parents reassured. Staff are extremely alert to ensure that children's emotional well-being is promoted and assured, including children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Older children are prepared well emotionally for school as staff discuss all aspects of starting school with them, including possible routines and what is expected from them, to reassure and prepare them.

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

This is a very well led and managed nursery. Management are passionate and are highly involved in the practices of the provision. They have extremely high expectations of themselves and their staff and are very proactive in supporting children to achieve and make the best progress they can. This includes adapting and implementing different childcare strategies and theories which complement the excellent delivery of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff skills and practice are very keenly monitored and appraised through observations of practice and weekly self-reflection meetings. All staff complete a detailed self-reflection review sheet and grade their own practice. They share their findings within the meetings. As part of their appraisals, each staff member has a personal development plan, a career analysis and action plans which have a clear completion process. Therefore, all staff are able to maintain and improve their already excellent knowledge and practice.

The management are inspirational and an extremely strong part of their role is to develop and extend staff's professional skills. Staff training is given a very high priority, in particular in-house training. This includes using 'best practice' videos which have been made for staff to reflect on their practice. In addition, the training is often based on Ofsted publications and enables staff to reflect on and rate their own practice. Senior staff keep 'praising logs' for all staff and a record of any coaching they have completed. These

contribute to staff reviews. All of this ensures that all staff have superb skills to meet children's needs.

The management team and staff know every child and parent in the nursery very well, and use this knowledge to support and progress individual children with their care, learning and developmental needs. The planning of activities and children's progress is tracked very effectively to ensure that they are making good progress in line with their peer group, and support is provided to help narrow the gap if necessary. Therefore, children's needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met. Children regularly have access to different themed rooms and the outdoor area. This helps children to adjust to school routines. Staff are particularly alert to responding to children's needs within this routine. For example, if children wish to remain in a room, complete activities or change the rota then staff proactively respond positively to this. Routines and rotas are extremely flexible and are readily adapted or altered to meet individual children's learning needs. Therefore, children are extremely well supported to develop and progress at their own rate, make their own choices and follow their interests.

Staff have a very strong, secure knowledge of child protection issues, which is enhanced by safeguarding and child protection training. This ensures that staff are very aware of the possible signs of abuse and know what to do if they have concerns about a child. Children's well-being is extremely well assured as the premises are very secure, and robust safety and security procedures ensure children are extremely well protected. There are secure collection procedures, which ensure children are collected by a known adult. In addition, very efficient safety procedures, routines and detailed risk assessments enable staff to provide a safe environment. There are a wide range of policies, procedures and records, including effective accident and medication records, which proactively support the safety of the children and the management of the nursery. Children's well-being and safety are highly supported as the nursery has excellent staff recruitment procedures and effective ongoing suitability checks that ensure staff are suitable for their role. Staff undertake an inclusive induction procedure, which clearly identifies their role and responsibilities.

The superb partnership with parents contributes significantly to meeting children's learning and development needs and promoting their well-being. Therefore, this ensures they are confident to leave their children in the nursery's care. There is excellent communication with parents, which ensures continuity of children's care, learning and development. The effective two-way sharing of written and verbal information enhances parents' experience and extends children's learning. In addition, the nursery is proactive in providing opportunities for parents to be involved in monthly events. Also, they hold regular parents' evenings, social and charity events.

Children's well-being is promoted strongly as the nursery has excellent monitoring and evaluation in place. Leaders constantly pursue excellence within all areas of the nursery. They are inspirational to staff as they drive further improvements and achievements to maintain their high levels of practice. All staff are involved in the many self-evaluation processes of the provision. Parents' views about all aspects of the nursery are sought by questionnaires and by a 'voice of the parent' document which is readily available. Children have an active voice in sharing their ideas and opinions about the nursery. For example, a

questionnaire seeks their views, which are listened to and acted upon. All of this ensures that parents and children have a real say and effectively, alongside the nursery management and staff, ensure the nursery continues to provide the highest quality learning opportunities and care for children.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
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 inspected again within 12 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>	509195
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	915428
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 16
<b>Total number of places</b>	36
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	54
<b>Name of provider</b>	Associated Nurseries Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21/11/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 346088

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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