

Early years self-evaluation form

For provisions on the Early Years Register

Age group: Birth to 31 August following a child's fifth birthday

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Contents

Introduction	5
Completing this form	6
Part A. Setting details and views of those who use the setting	6
Section 1. Your setting	6
Section 2. Views of those who use your setting and who work with you	8
Part B: The quality and standards of the early years provision	11
Section 3. Effectiveness of leadership and management	11
Section 4. Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	16
Section 5. Personal development, behaviour and welfare	19
Section 6. Outcomes for children	24
Section 7. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision	27

Setting name	Little Acorns Pre-School	
Setting unique reference number	EY296220	
Setting address	Purford Green	
	Harlow	
	Essex	
	Postcode	CM18 6HP
Completed by (name and role)	Sarah Carter	
	Deputy Manager	
Date completed	24.9.2015	

Introduction

This optional self-evaluation form is for providers on the Early Years Register. You may prefer to record your self-evaluation on a different form, for example:

- a children's centre self-evaluation form that includes the registered part of your provision
- a local authority form
- a quality assurance scheme system.

If you submit this form online or send it to Ofsted as part of your planning cycle, the inspector will use it when planning your inspection. If you choose not to send it to Ofsted, or you complete a different form of self-evaluation, please make this available to the inspector at the start of your inspection.

Whatever way you choose to record an evaluation of your provision, the inspector will expect this to include:

- the views of children, parents and any staff or assistants you employ
- the views of other professionals who may work with you, such as local authority advisers/development workers; health professionals; children's centre staff and any other early years provision
- your strengths, any areas for improvement and the actions you propose to tackle them.

You may find it helpful to use the following to evaluate your provision:

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance¹
- Early years inspection handbook²
- Common inspection framework³
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundations Stage⁴
- Early years outcomes.⁵

¹ *Early years self-evaluation form guidance* (120342), Ofsted, 2015;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-online-self-evaluation-form-sef-and-guidance-for-providers-delivering-the-early-years-foundations-stage

² *Early years inspection handbook from September 2015*, 150068, Ofsted 2015;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015

³ *Early years inspection handbook from September 2015*, 150068, Ofsted 2015;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015

⁴ *The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundations Stage*, DfE, 2014;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundations-stage-framework--2.

⁵ *Early years outcomes*, DfE, 2013: a non-statutory guide for practitioners and inspectors to help inform understanding of child development through the early years

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-outcomes>.

Completing this form

Please make sure that you have completed the setting details at the beginning of the form, including the name of the person who completed it. Please make sure that any additional sheets you might use have the name of the setting and unique reference number (URN) at the top.

The form is in two parts. Part A tells us what those who use the setting think of the quality of the provision you offer. Part B gives you an opportunity to evaluate your provision using the same judgements as used by the inspectors.

Part A. Setting details and views of those who use the setting

Section 1. Your setting

In this section, describe the main characteristics of your setting and the culture and backgrounds of the children who attend, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or speak English as an additional language.

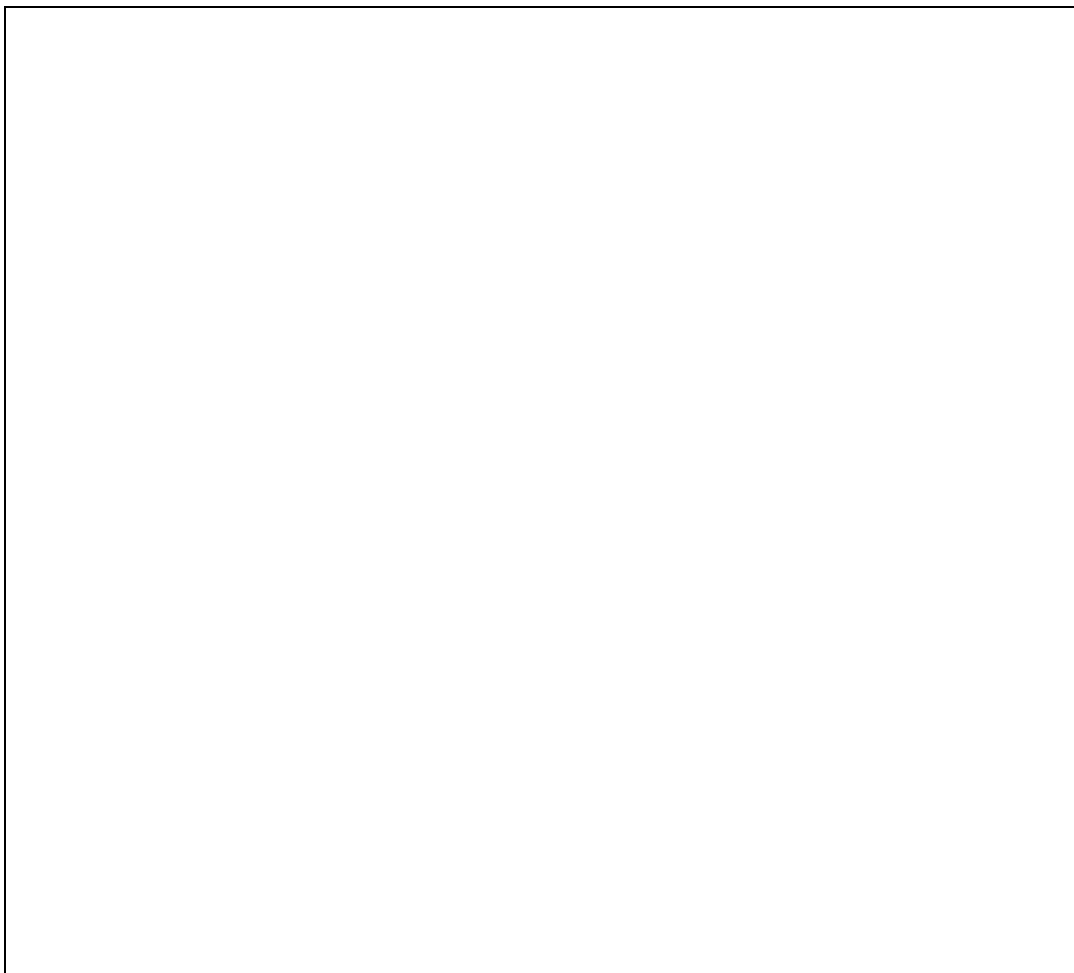
Refer to the Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 5.

The Manager/ Owner runs little Acorns Pre-School. She has been running the Pre-School for over 10 years. The Pre-school is situated in a purpose built building in the area of Harlow in Purford Green School. Little Acorns are very proud that they have a new state of the art premises for all children and staff to be comfortable and happy in. The new building allows the children to be more independent helping them to grow and gain more skills.

Inside the building we have a welcoming reception area, where parents and carers can view all policies and look at any information about Little Acorns and its staff. In our offices all files and personal details are stored away securely. We have a private meeting room where parents may come and discuss anything they need regarding their child. Our playroom is spacious and bright. The children have free independent play in our inside and outside area's, which is secure with perimeter fencing. We have a safe kitchen area where children are able to use certain equipment with supervision. At Little Acorns Pre-school it is extremely important to us that all children are safe on our premises. We have a high security procedure that all staff follows. All doors have digital locks, and only staff may let visitors in and out of the building. Visitors have to sign in and are kept within sight of staff at all times. There is CCTV recording inside and outside of the building 24 hours a day. Parents and carer's may come and view our premises at any time during our opening hours. We are open from 9.00am-12.00pm and 12.15pm-3.15pm term time only. The Pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 48 children can attend the Pre-School at any one time. There are currently 48 children under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The Pre-School is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years and also accepts children claiming two year old funding.

Children come from a wide catchment area. The Pre-School currently supports a range of children with English as an additional language.

The Pre-School employs 7 members of staff who all live locally. The Manager and Deputy have an Level 5 qualification after completing a Foundation Degree in Children's and Young People's Services. All Practitioners are qualified to a Level 3.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for recording information.

Section 2. Views of those who use your setting and who work with you

This section should record:

- the views of the children who attend your setting and those of their parents or carers
- the views of any professionals who work with you, especially the local authority, your local children's centre or any health professionals
- details of any quality assurance scheme you participate in.

Include examples of the ways in which you seek views and any action you have taken to improve as a result of those views.

Refer to the Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 6.

Little Acorns use various methods to access the views of children and their parents or carers.

Children's Responses/Views

The children's opinions are valued and are promoted through the daily activities planned for the children. All about me sheets are provided as useful indicators to practitioners of the child's interests, preferences and views when they first come into the setting. Young children's responses/views are sought through their responses to activities and these are recorded in their own learning journey's. For older children it is nice to hear their opinions on what interests them we like to encourage them to share their ideas and interests with their key person. Children's feedback during the day's activities are built on and used as an opportunity to extend their learning. Children's views are included in their children's learning journeys and development wheels. Where a topic is introduced and the children are given the opportunity to add their ideas.

Parents Views

Parents/Carers are encouraged to be involved, with the Pre-School as much as they would like to. When a child starts, they are asked to complete forms and are given a welcome information book containing all the information they need.

Parent's views are sought on a daily basis through conversations and the children's travel books/learning journeys. The Pre-School operates an open door policy where parents/carers are always welcome to discuss any issues, both positive and negative at the end of the session. Any issue requiring urgent attention is dealt with as soon as possible.

We like to give parent's/carers questionnaires to fill in throughout the year. The responses are evaluated, fed back to parents and are used to improve the quality of our practice. This exercise enables us to gain an insight into what we are doing well so that we can build upon it. Blank questionnaires are now available on our parent's notice board for parents to help themselves to at any time. We give parents/carers opportunities to come in to view their children's work this will be made by each keyworker.

Practitioner Views

Practitioner's views are offered through daily informal conversations at the beginning and end of each day and more formally during staff meetings. We hold Staff appraisals annually and these are well documented; they are kept in the practitioner's personal files. Regular practitioner meetings provide opportunities for practitioners

to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress or any difficulties. We support the work of our practitioners and identify their ongoing training and development needs with continued monitoring.

We have recently introduced a practitioner questionnaire to listen to more ideas to help improve the Pre-School. This will enable the practitioners to contribute to the development plan, express any training that they would like to and their views can be included in the SEF. The Manager and Deputy have 1:1 supervision meetings, these have been well received and will be continued.

Local offer

Little Acorns Pre School is dedicated to provide a high quality of learning it is our priority, enabling every child to achieve their full potential. We are an inclusive, accepting and caring Pre School that welcomes all children into their setting. We are committed to enabling all children to participate fully in all aspects of their time with Little Acorns.

Part B: The quality and standards of the early years provision

This part of the form covers the judgements the inspector will make when evaluating your provision. It is important to have your own judgement about how well you are doing in these areas.

Section 3. Effectiveness of leadership and management

This section is about the effectiveness of your leadership and management; or if you are a childminder how well you organise your service. It covers:

- meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and other government requirements
- self-evaluation and improvement planning
- performance management and professional development
- safeguarding
- the curriculum
- your vision for the setting
- partnership working.

You should refer to:

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 7
- Early years inspection handbook, page 30–34.

Evaluation

At Little Acorns Pre-school, our philosophy is that children are miracles. We believe that children need to feel safe; safe to explore their world, and try new things. Second, they need to feel nurtured. They need to know that they are special and unique. Their hurt feelings count, their sadness is comforted, their joy is shared, and their accomplishments are praised. Children need to be stimulated academically. They need to be exposed to age appropriate curriculum that will allow them to be successful. They need to have opportunities to express their creativity. Children are social and as they move from parallel play to cooperative play, they need to be guided towards socially acceptable behaviours. Children need to be children. They need to play and pretend and embrace this sacred time in their lives. At Little Acorns Pre-school, our philosophy is that Every Child Matters, and we embrace our role in providing a nurturing environment. We provide a full, varied and balanced curriculum through a team of qualified and experienced staff members. We aim to provide equal opportunities for all children and

their families.

The practitioners are particularly skilled in building relationships with the children, playing and talking with them, responding and encouraging them to share their ideas. We provide a range of activities such as junk modeling, painting, sharing books and singing to maximise their learning potential. The practitioners encourage the children to plan and initiate their own play in the older group, selecting their own resources whilst the practitioner steps back to observe how the idea develops but interacting occasionally to extend the child's learning.

Safeguarding

The Pre-School Designated Safeguarding Officer has been trained to ensure that safeguarding concerns are dealt with promptly, sensitively and appropriately. The practitioners have all received an induction book containing all policies including the Safeguarding Children Policy. The practitioners then receive internal training in the correct procedures they should follow should they have a concern about a child. Through their training, practitioners are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Positive Development

We encourage the children to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others by giving clear and consistent messages, which we share with parents/carers. We help the children to stay safe by providing consistent positive management and giving them time to talk, listen and explore boundaries.

Accident and Incident policy

If a child has an accident before they come to Pre-School, the parent will be asked to fill in a medical form. This form may include an outline of a body where parents can identify with a cross where the child is hurt if needed.

Should a child have an accident at Pre-School, it will be recorded; noting the date, time, the practitioner who helped the child, what action was taken and whether first aid was administered. The collecting parent will be asked to countersign each form. If the child has received a head injury, however slight, the parent will receive a form notifying them of this. Accident reports are kept in the child's confidential file.

All practitioners have a Pediatric First Aid certificate. A qualified first

aider will be available on the premises at all times.

Sickness policy

The practitioners are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practice in order to prevent the spread of infection. The Pre-School recognises the need to reduce the possible risks of children becoming ill. We take positive actions to prevent this by keeping the Pre-School clean through a regular cleaning schedule. When nappies are changed, the practitioners wear disposable gloves and aprons. Parents are encouraged to bring their own nappies and wet wipes in. The changing table is wiped down after each use using sanitizer and then is wiped with a paper towel. For children using the toilet these are also wiped using the sanitizer to prevent the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

A strong sickness policy is in place to care for children who are ill. This is available to parents in the information book distributed on enrolment. If the child becomes ill in the Pre-School the practitioners ensure they are cared for appropriately whilst waiting to be collected by their parents. Permissions are sought on the children's enrolment form to administer medicines as necessary. Records are kept which the parents have to sign if the child has been administered medicine. It is the policy of the Pre-School that parents must sign to give permission for medicines to be administered. Any medication is administered by a qualified practitioner and is witnessed and recorded on a medicine sheet and then countersigned by the parents. Medicines will be labeled with the child's name, have clear dosage instructions and be kept in a lockable cabinet unless otherwise stated.

Healthy Eating The Pre-School promotes children's health through a range of actions to encourage healthy eating. Children are helped to try and enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. Snack times are an enjoyable occasion where the practitioners can sit with the children and are able to encourage eating and conversation between the children. Practitioners are aware of the many learning activities that may occur throughout the day to teach the children about healthy eating such as role play, books to look at and planned activities around healthy eating such as fruit tasting.

Routines

Children develop a good knowledge and understanding of personal hygiene through routines such as washing their hands, before eating,

after going to the toilet and after craft activities. We have child friendly soap dispensers and paper towels are provided for drying.

Physical exercise

Children are encouraged to take part in regular physical play using our outside play areas through adult led and child-initiated opportunities. Children are provided with a variety of resources to encourage physical development such as, bikes, scooters, the climbing frame, kicking and catching balls and more. Opportunities are planned that encourage children to be aware of danger and what is unsafe and to give them the confidence to take risks.

Your priorities for improvement

We are currently developing our outdoor provision. We have made an excellent start with providing playhouses, a big open sand box and a wonderful pirate ship.

We will be having additional resources to provide a nature garden within the front of our grounds.

My practice (is):

Outstanding: my practice is exemplary	
Good: my practice is strong	X
Requires improvement: my practice is not good enough and I know it needs to improve	
Inadequate: my practice requires significant improvement	

Section 4. Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

This section is about the effectiveness of your assessment and teaching mechanisms to ensure that children are showing the characteristics of effective learning.

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 8
- Early years inspection handbook, page 34–38.

Evaluation

Within in our Pre-School we take every effort to offer a wide range of stimulating activities and ideas. These activities are designed to encourage development and will be age appropriate.

The practitioners provide a calm environment where children are happy, confident and enjoy themselves. Positive relationships are built up between the practitioners, children and parents through the key person system, which encourages children to thrive.

Practitioners help children to feel valued by providing positive support through their language, praise and encouragement, which helps to build the children's self esteem.

Children come into the Pre-School happy and settled most of the time and want to spend their time with us. They are encouraged to work together by taking turns, sharing and building friendships with each other. Children are challenged in line according to our policy. The children enjoy a variety of activities these help them to learn new skills and if able to talk through their experiences. Children explore confidently through hands on learning experiences that encourage their investigative skills. The children are given the space to develop their own ideas and interests enabling them to build on their knowledge. This is taken into account when planning for individual child and all children as a group. Children are encouraged to use the opportunities to ask questions and build on what they already know.

Children's sense of belonging to the Pre-School is visible throughout and reinforced throughout the day. On entry children self register by either writing their name or posting their name through our big red box and demonstrate good levels of security by separating confidently from parents and carers. Children are greeted every morning by one of the practitioners and quickly and confidently select activities to play with. Children engage confidently with all practitioners and often seek them out to engage in their play and learning. Children play and learn together sharing resources and negotiating during child-initiated play experiences including role-play

and imaginative play. Celebrations of achievements, birthdays and other events such as new additions to families take place regularly. Children are encouraged to be kind and thoughtful towards each other through the encouragement of sharing and taking turns. The practitioners model positive displays, which, is quite often copied by the children. Children are encouraged to be kind, considerate and thoughtful to each other.

Children are given the opportunity to choose for themselves whenever possible, and so encourages their sense of independence. Choices available include which activities are undertaken; what to eat and drink at snack time and which toys they would like to play with. In the first few days of a child being in the setting, the practitioners support the children to make their own choices by showing them the choices available.

Children are given the opportunity to experience other religious and cultural experiences and are encouraged to value differences. The Pre-School promotes diversity through displays, resources and attitudes that are encouraged by the practitioners. We have a strong equal opportunities policy that all the practitioners are aware of. The practitioners encourage positive links with home, welcome families from other religious or cultural backgrounds to the Pre-School. The practitioners ensure that the individual needs of all of the children in their care are met. This sometimes involves learning familiar words in the child's language, or translating the needed information into the appropriate language. By using photographs to share with the parents about what their child has been doing that day can help a family who may not speak English as their first language. All children are able to participate fully in the activities provided because they are tailored to the individual needs of the children.

The practitioners are committed to every child and are more than willing to attend relevant training courses to support a particular child. The Pre-School promotes inclusion for all children through its policies and records of each child's individual needs and progress. We have 3 designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) who help to ensure that each child's needs are fully met. We liaise with parents and outside agencies such as educational psychologists and Speech therapists to provide the best possible support for the child.

Your priorities for improvement

Our role-play area needs to change on a more regular basis to reflect children's interests.

Policies are to be reviewed to ensure that our practice reflects our policies.

Review our risk assessments for new areas.

My practice (is):

Outstanding: my practice is exemplary	
Good: my practice is strong	x
Requires improvement: my practice is not good enough and I know it needs to improve	
Inadequate: my practice requires significant improvement	

Section 5. Personal development, behaviour and welfare

This section is about helping children feel emotionally secure and ensuring children are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. It is also about ensuring that children are prepared for learning, they attend regularly, and become self-aware, confident learners.

You should refer to:

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 9.
- Early years inspection handbook, page 38–41.

Evaluation

All children have the right to feel happy and emotionally secure in the setting. By attending the setting regularly, children will be prepared and become confident learners.

We do this by using the seven areas of development.

Communication and Language -We encourage children's communication, language skills through activities such as show and tell times, ring games, singing and photos on their pegs. Our Pre-School environment has been designed and organised reflecting the Communication friendly spaces approach.

Literacy- Mark making is encouraged by providing the children with a range of writing tools such as paints, crayons, chalks and pencils. There are plenty of stories to share and read.

Personal Social Emotional Development -We encourage children and parents to build a strong relationship with their key person. We encourage children to share how they are feeling and any special events that encourage them to feel valued. We display children's work and take photos of the children and place them in the learning journey, which helps to encourage a sense of belonging. We talk regularly to the children about how they should behave towards each other. The Pre-School has a Challenging Policy, which the practitioners adhere to when dealing with unhappy behaviour. The practitioners actively encourage positive behaviour, but manage unhappy behaviour in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development. The children are given clear boundaries that they understand.

Mathematics-Numeracy development is supported at every opportunity, for example during snack times the practitioners and children join together to count 'how many cups they may need at snack time'. Children are also encouraged to explore problem solving activities in role-play area, where they have access to a telephone, money, shapes and other items. These resources offer children learning opportunities that will help them to develop useful skills for the future. We encourage skills through jigsaws, dice, tape measures, number rhymes and encouraging children's questioning skills.

Understanding The World

ICT awareness is supported with the use of computers with basic programmes such as counting, matching and shape games. ICT toys

are also provided that involve lifting flaps, sliding and turning knobs to make something move or pop up. Practitioners help children by encouraging exploration skills and inquisitiveness, by stimulating thinking, problem solving, predicting outcomes and helping children to achieve their goals. Practitioners encourage children to reflect on their play by talking with them. Children's personal and social skills are an important part of their independence in our setting. These skills are promoted through sharing, interaction, group experiences, and turn taking games and working together. We also encourage independence and self-care through activities such as putting on our own shoes and coat on.

Physical Development

Children's physical development is very important in helping them to achieve early learning goals. There are daily opportunities for children to engage in play, which challenges their fine and gross motor development, and to consider healthy lifestyle choices. We encourage children's physical development across the Pre-School by dancing and moving to music. Children physical needs are encouraged until they are independent such as washing hands after having their nappy changed to taking themselves to the toilet and washing their hands.

Expressive Arts and Designs

Children are encouraged to explore all types of creative play such as jelly, rice, pasta and shaving foam. We plan a range of activities that encourage sensory exploration such as light and dark, sounds, tasting and smelling different kinds of fruits. We encourage our Children to express themselves with all different types of activities through their expressive design.

We approach each new term with a theme suggested by the team and ideas based on this to cover the seven curriculum areas. We use our experiences of children's development and the children's interests and needs, to ensure we provide a relevant and appropriate curriculum. Ideas and plans are adjusted as we get to know the children and staff observations further inform our planning.

Your priorities for improvement

My practice (is):

Outstanding: my practice is exemplary	
Good: my practice is strong	X
Requires improvement: my practice is not good enough and I know it needs to improve	
Inadequate: my practice requires significant improvement	

Section 6. Outcomes for children

This section is about the progress of different groups of children from their starting points.

You should refer to:

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 9.
- Early years inspection handbook, page 41–44.

Evaluation

The practitioner takes steps, which we call a child's starting point to find out what interests the child, what they know and can do. This information is gathered through our partnership with the child's parents and talking to the child. Practitioners observe the children as they play and use these to monitor the children's progress and to plan for the next steps in their learning. The practitioner's observations provide useful evidence that the children are progressing and becoming more independent. This will enable practitioners to provide additional support or extension activities when deemed appropriate.

Achievements can be seen from looking at the child's Learning Journey, which contains observations and progress of their learning and these are celebrated through the reward of stickers, high five praises and verbal rewards.

Your priorities for improvement

My practice (is):

Outstanding: my practice is exemplary	
Good: my practice is strong	X
Requires improvement: my practice is not good enough and I know it needs to improve	
Inadequate: my practice requires significant improvement	

Section 7. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

This section brings together the evaluation of all aspects of your practice, including teaching and safeguarding, your identified priorities for improvement and the grades you have awarded yourself.

You should refer to:

- Early years self-evaluation form guidance, page 9
- Early years inspection handbook, pages 28–30.

The overall quality and standards of my early years provision (is):

Outstanding: my practice is exemplary	
Good: my practice is strong	X
Requires improvement: my practice is not good enough and I know it needs to improve	
Inadequate: my practice requires significant improvement	

Any further comments you wish to include

Safeguarding

The Pre-School designated Safeguarding Officer Angela Dee has been trained to ensure that safeguarding concerns are dealt with promptly, sensitively and appropriately. The Managers and Practitioners have all received an induction book containing all policies including the Safeguarding Children Policy. The practitioners then receive internal training in the correct procedures they should follow, should they have a concern about a child. Through their training, practitioners are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the procedures for reporting their concerns. We have a Safeguarding Policy that we adhere to at all times. Safeguarding is a big part of Little Acorns Pre-School.

Practitioners at the Pre-School work consistently hard to improve the quality of the education and care provided by the setting. Practitioners work within the framework of the EYFS. Children are valued as individuals and encouraged to develop positive attitudes to learning and achievement and to maximise their potential.

