



Acorn Wood Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	200479
Inspection date	14 December 2006
Inspector	Janet Ann Keeling
Setting Address	Bretts Hall Farm, Ansley Common, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV10 0QJ
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Registered person	Kevin Ford and Deborah Ford
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorn Wood Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from the ground floor of a farmhouse in Ansley Common, Warwickshire. The group uses the whole of the ground floor, which consists of a nine- place baby unit with separate sleep room and a large pre-school classroom, a kitchen and toilet area. There are three separate outdoor play areas with hard and grassed areas as well as fixed climbing equipment over bark chippings. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The setting is registered to provide care for 36 children at any one time. There are currently 59 children from five months to five years on roll. This includes a number of three and four-year-old children who are in receipt of nursery grant funding. The group have strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is open five days a week all year round, except for public bank holidays. Sessions are from 08:00 until 17:30. Children attend a variety of sessions.

There are 11 staff available to work with the children. All of whom have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level two or three. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well-maintained environment. They are actively and consistently learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through very well established daily routines. For example, children begin to understand why they must wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. When asked, a pre-school child said " we wash our hands so the germs don't make us poorly". Children's health is further safeguarded through the staff's current knowledge of first aid and their clear awareness of how to minimise the risk of cross-infection throughout the nursery.

Children have access to a wide range of activities which effectively contribute to their good health and well-being. They have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, as children enjoy music and movement sessions, negotiate the climbing frame, learn to pedal bikes and throw and catch balls. Children enjoy the fresh air and explore their local environment as they go on nature walks to collect leaves and look for mini-beasts, post letters and visit the local Primary School where they participate in the Forest Schools Project.

Children actively learn about healthy eating through regular discussion with staff and through the completion of topic work. They are offered drinks and healthy snacks throughout the day, however, children are not able to independently access drinking water. Children enjoy nutritious meals which are prepared on the premises using fresh organic ingredients. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered on a daily basis, most are grown locally or picked fresh from the children's vegetable patch.

Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children calmly and comfortably fall asleep as they feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Children's health and dietary needs are competently met at all times because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. For example, children's individual requirements are discussed fully with parents on admission, recorded and shared with all staff. Children's accident, medication and emergency consent forms are all fully completed and well maintained by the group.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised, safe and secure environment. For example, visitors to the group are required to formally identify themselves, sign the visitors book and are accompanied at all times whilst in the setting. Children are able to move around safely and freely as identified hazards have been minimised through the completion of risk assessments. However, risk assessments do not clearly identify what action has been taken to ensure children's privacy is respected at all times whilst using the bathroom area.

Children have access to good quality equipment and resources which are appropriate to their developmental needs and which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for the children to use. Children are encouraged to access the well-organised resources which are clearly labelled and stored in child-height furniture. They learn about safe practices whilst using equipment as staff gently remind the children to sit down whilst using the scissors and to tidy away their toys so other children and adults do not trip or fall over them.

Children are kept safe because staff take positive steps to promote safety within the setting and whilst on outings. They benefit from the very experienced and caring staff, who are very well informed of the groups health and safety procedures, for example, children engage in regular fire drills, learn about 'stranger danger' and follow the highway code whilst out on walks. However, whilst staff in the baby room have an intercom system in place to alert them when babies wake-up there are no procedures in place to check sleeping babies and to ensure appropriate records are maintained.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect because the very competent staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities whilst protecting children in their care. Staff are extremely well informed and very confident in following the group's child protection procedures and have a designated child protection co-ordinator who would follow through any issues of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, confident and actively enjoy their time in this vibrant group, children are eager to learn and participate enthusiastically in the outstanding range of stimulating and challenging activities. Children are able to build on knowledge and skills already acquired because staff know the children very well and because staff provide a wealth of first hand learning experiences for the children which are both adult-led and child-initiated.

Babies and young children benefit from the staff's sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which enables staff to plan first hand learning experiences based on children's individual needs. Babies receive excellent support from staff who spend time holding, talking and playing with them. Babies develop their early communication skills as they engage with staff who respond to their non-verbal sounds during play. Babies have good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore a variety of objects and textures such as, ribbons, pasta, soft toys and brushes, and explore sound as they listen to soft music

and shake a variety of musical instruments. Babies are encouraged and supported in their early physical development as they begin to roll, crawl and take their first steps.

Children aged two to three are beginning to develop very positive relationships with both their peers and adults. They show delight and enthusiasm at the wonderful range of stimulating and challenging activities that are made available to them. Children have superb access to toys and resources which enables them to develop their independence and make choices. Children's learning is supported well through an excellent balance of both adult-led and child-initiated play.

Children's personal and social development is exceptional. Children enjoy excellent relationships with both their peer group and staff and their communication skills are inspiring as they effectively engage in discussion with adults and their peers. Children become engrossed in a wide range of purposeful, challenging and fun activities which they all enjoy enormously.

Children's behaviour is excellent, children are actively and consistently praised by staff for their effort and achievements, consequently their self-esteem is carefully fostered. For example, children were praised for putting on their own outdoor clothes in preparation for outdoor play, whilst less able children were sensitively supported to complete the task. Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They speak confidently and share their personal experiences within the group. Children listen carefully to each other, they take turns and show care and concern for others.

Nursery Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teaching effectively promotes children's learning towards the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The staff are caring, patient and supportive of the children; they have high regard for the children and know them well. The staff demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work and provide good role models for the children. Staff stimulate and motivate the children to learn through creative teaching methods which are varied and exciting. Staff manage children's behaviour sensitively and consistently; they encourage children's good behaviour through regular praise and encouragement, consequently, the children's behaviour is excellent. Planning is thorough, activities are varied and learning outcomes are clearly identified. Interaction between the staff and children is excellent; adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration. Assessment is rigorous and information gained is effectively used to inform future planning and guide teaching.

All children have equal opportunities for learning; staff ensure that both full and part-time children are able to access the full range of activities and special project work. Children make outstanding progress as a result of the wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, and through the excellent first hand learning experiences provided by the staff. The children benefit from the staff's constructive questions which encourage them to express their feelings and develop their ideas and interests. Children learn through an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. They have excellent opportunities to use their own initiative and develop their independence whilst engaged in both indoor and outdoor activities. Children with special educational needs benefit from a trained and very effective Special Educational Needs

Coordinator (SENCO) who helps to ensure that each child's needs are fully supported. The coordinator works closely with key workers, parents and other professionals to ensure that all children continue to develop well.

The extremely welcoming and outstandingly well-organised accommodation provides a happy and stimulating learning environment in which children are able to access resources independently. Resources are very good quality and are used effectively and imaginatively to support the children's learning and enjoyment. Children's work is valued and their achievements are celebrated through the splendid displays of work which can be seen around the nursery.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and very interested in all the activities available to them. They are eager to learn and settle quickly into the group, children's relationships with adults and their peers are excellent. Children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate festivals throughout the year; they express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively. Children engage easily in conversation; during group discussion time children participate enthusiastically, they listen carefully to adults and to each other, and talk about past and present experiences. Children learn how print carries meaning; they are able to identify their labelled work on displays and enjoyed looking at the Christmas cards together. More able children are able to write recognisable letters on their own work as they freely access the well-resourced writing table, they competently use stencils, write lists and label envelopes. Children enjoy story time and have regular access to a wide range of books; many of the children show a keen interest in books and use them independently, carefully turning the pages and discussing the illustrations with each other and staff.

Children are encouraged to use number as part of every day routine and are beginning to grasp the concept of addition and subtraction as groups of children increase and decrease as they sing songs such as, 'Six little snowflakes' and 'Five current buns'. The children use mathematical language effectively in activities and are familiar with words to describe size, position, shape and quantity. They confidently name shapes such as square, triangle, circle and rectangle and have opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts. Children have good access to a range of toys, resources and planned activities which promote their awareness of diversity, for example, as they enjoy celebrating different cultural festivals throughout the year such as, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas. Children freely access a good selection of programmable toys and technical equipment which they use competently and with increasing skill. Children use the computer keyboard and mouse confidently and were supported appropriately by staff whilst using the different programmes. Children learn about their natural environment and develop an understanding of living things, as they talk about how the weather changes, look for mini-beasts in the fields and observe seeds as they grow.

Children show good control and co-ordination as they move confidently and safely around both the indoor and outdoor areas. They take part in regular music and movement sessions where they develop an awareness of space and others around them. Children have access to a secure outdoor space where they are able to develop their climbing, pedalling and balancing skills; for example, as they negotiate the climbing frame, pedal bicycles and kick balls. The children use a wide range of small equipment, including scissors, paintbrushes, glue sticks and pencils which they handle with increasing control. Children begin to develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work and regular discussion with adults and their peers; they learn about where

their food comes from as they see their vegetables growing and help to harvest them before making soup. Children have daily opportunities to paint, draw and make collages using a suitable range of media including chalk, felt pens, pencils, fabric and malleable materials. Children use their imagination in activities such as painting, music and movement and various role-play situations; for example, as the role-play area changes regularly into a post office, café, shop, house and baby clinic. Children explore sound effectively through playing a range of musical instruments and listening to a variety of musical sounds. They enjoy singing and maintain a good sense of rhythm when joining in rhymes. There was enormous excitement as the children sang 'Twinkle twinkle little star', 'Whoops-a-daisy Angel', 'We wish you a merry Christmas' and 'Six little snowflakes'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are respected as individuals and are encouraged and supported to play an active role in the nursery. Their individual needs are competently supported by staff who know them very well and who respond sensitively to their needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are fully included in all activities and their differences are acknowledged and valued. Children are able to access a wealth of exciting activities, toys and resources which actively raise their awareness of diversity and promote their understanding of others. For example, through access to role play equipment, books, posters and by welcoming visitors from the local community. Children's understanding is further promoted as they complete topic work on Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, and through positive discussions with the staff.

Children's behaviour is excellent. Children are fully aware of the groups boundaries and expectations for good behaviour. They learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's understanding of right and wrong is further developed as they respond to gentle reminders from staff, to care for their environment, resources and each other.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The superb partnership with parents and carers contributes significantly to the children's well-being within the nursery. Children's individual care and educational needs are fully discussed with the parents before the child starts at the setting, enabling staff to be fully aware of children's needs. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of each day; they share information about the children's progress on a regular basis, and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Parents receive regular written reports regarding their child's progress and a magnificent 'Record of achievement book' when the child leaves the nursery. Parents and carers have access to an excellent range of good quality information regarding the group, including a prospectus, policies and procedures, the educational programme, current topic work, daily planning and monthly information sheets on how parents can support and extend children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and the very focused leadership and management of the group. Staff are knowledgeable, they fully understand the settings policies and procedures and ensure children are protected, kept safe and that children's individual needs are supported effectively.

The premises are extremely welcoming with good quality displays and the environment is very well organised and effectively maximises children's learning and development. Children benefit from qualified and skilled staff, who follow an effective induction programme and who are committed to on-going training and development. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through regular staff meetings and yearly appraisals. All legally required documentation is in place.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They work effectively together to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the early years programme, consequently, excellent standards are maintained. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss daily issues and the planning and assessment of children's learning. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and in-house development workshops. Managers and staff are fully committed to ensure they maintain the excellent standards that are already in place within the nursery.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were asked to update the complaints procedure to ensure it included the name and address of the regulator.

Since the last inspection the setting have updated their complaints procedure and have made the information available to parents and carers. Consequently, parents and carers are now aware of Ofsted's address and telephone number, therefore, children's health, safety and well-being are further supported.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children have access to drinking water at all times
- make sure risk assessments clearly demonstrate what action has been taken to ensure children's privacy is respected whilst using the bathroom and ensure sleeping babies are checked regularly and that records are maintained.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk