

# ACORNWOOD PRE-SCHOOL

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 109949  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 17 April 2007   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Hazel Stuart-Buddery / Catherine Hill                                   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | 8 Southwood Village Centre, Links Way, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 0NA |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01252 512430  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | ACORNWOOD PRE-SCHOOL  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Sessional 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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acornwood Pre-School opened in 1987. It operates from the local Southwood Community Centre, in Farnborough, Hants. The group has the use of the main hall, with two smaller rooms and an enclosed outdoor patio area. The Pre-School serves children from the local community.

There are currently 27 children aged from two years to five years on roll, although children do not normally attend before the age of two years and nine months. This includes 23 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are children attending who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during term time. Sessions run from 09:30 to 12:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 12:15 to 14:45 on Fridays.

Six experienced staff work with the children, three of which hold relevant qualifications. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership [EYDCP].

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a clean and well maintained environment. They learn the importance of personal hygiene and are protected against the spread of infection. They routinely wash their hands before snack time and after visiting the toilet. Children confidently explain why they wash their hands and know that washing the germs away keeps them healthy. All medical conditions are recorded and consent is obtained from parents for medical emergencies. Children receive appropriate care if there is an accident as there are three members of staff who are first aid trained. Children benefit from eating healthy snacks. They all bring in their own snacks of fruit or vegetables and understand that eating healthy food makes their bodies strong. Children have independent access to drinking water throughout the session encouraging them to make their own healthy lifestyle choices.

Children have opportunities to play outside to enjoy the fresh air. They enjoy exploring the sand and water and develop fine motor skills as they confidently use spades to fill the buckets with sand. Some children like the feel of the sand and explain how it feels soft on their hands, others explain that it tickles their hand as they try to rub it off. Younger children receive good levels of support and attention. Staff support their emotional well-being and give them the confidence to explore their surroundings and the resources.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children confidently and safely move around the environment. The main room is decorated with children's art work and low level pictures and posters for children to enjoy and give visual stimuli. They have access to suitable, age appropriate furniture. Children are kept safe within the nursery owing to the care given by staff who are vetted and who demonstrate a good awareness of safety. For example, staff are on hand to ensure children play safely while they ride the bikes and push the prams around the large hall. The security of the site is good. Children cannot leave the premises unattended. Regular and detailed risk assessments enable staff to identify and address potential hazards. Children are protected well from the risk of fire. A written fire procedure is displayed and a fire drill is practised regularly to ensure the children know how to get out quickly.

Children's welfare is promoted with regard to child protection. Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know the procedure to follow should they have concerns.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and play with purpose throughout the session. Younger and older children gain much from being together. They learn to communicate and develop good relationships. Older children happily play with the younger children and encourage them to be part of their games. For example, an older child explains to a younger child that they are playing a big boys game, but that he could join in if he wanted to. They children enjoyed running around the outside area to see who could run the fastest. Children use their imagination well. Some enjoy playing shops. They ask adults to play with them and come to the shop to buy fruit and vegetables. They confidently explain what food they have and how much it costs. Staff offer

appropriate levels of help and support to ensure that all children receive maximum enjoyment out of the activities.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children settle quickly and happily on arrival at the pre-school and demonstrate familiarity with group routines as they sit sensibly for registration. They are confident in their own abilities and develop in self-esteem as staff praise and value their efforts. They show a sense of responsibility as they help tidy resources away and grow in independence as staff present them with challenging but achievable activities. Children have excellent relationships with one another and behave very well during sessions, amicably sharing resources with others.

Children enjoy stories and listen attentively as staff read to them. They accurately predict the text using picture clues and show a general interest in books as they independently sit and look at them. They have a good knowledge of letter/sound links and staff use opportunities well to reinforce children's knowledge, for example when completing alphabet puzzles together. Children have good opportunities to develop their handwriting skills and many can write clear, recognisable letters. They are confident with numbers and ably count up to 16 when discussing the date. They show an awareness of shape as they complete puzzles and demonstrate an understanding of size as they correctly identify the smaller of two pieces of play money.

Daily calendar activities develop children's understanding of the passage of time. They confidently talk about what they did during their holidays. They have a very good understanding of the natural world and understand what is needed to make plants grow. They are interested in activities and work diligently to plant their own tomato seeds, preparing their own pot and writing their name label to stick on it. They engage enthusiastically in sand and water exploration and notice how sand feels when water is added to it. They use information and communication technology to support their learning, for example they use the till in a role play shop and a computer to complete counting games.

Children delight in physical play and organise their own racing games outside. They move freely and confidently around the setting and show good spatial awareness as they safely manoeuvre wheeled toys around. They understand that fruit is part of a healthy lifestyle and they have opportunities to further develop their understanding of what is good for their bodies during planned topic work on health. Their fine motor skills are very well developed as they freely use a range of small scale tools and equipment during sessions. They have excellent opportunities for free creative expression during sessions. They freely paint, chalk, draw, colour, make models with dough and from construction. They play together as shopkeepers in role play and speak appropriately in character asking what the customer would like and telling them where to find it.

Staff work together to plan a range of activities for children which allow them to develop in all skill areas. Plans show links to the early learning goals with most also showing objectives of activities. Children's assessment records chart their progress through the stepping stones and staff have been proactive in designing their own assessment system to record observations of children's learning. Staff work hard to effectively organise the learning environment for children setting out a wide range of daily activities. They display children's work alongside educational posters to provide a stimulating and interesting surround for children to play and learn in. Staff make excellent use of open ended questions to make children think. Children receive support as appropriate to their individual needs and staff plan termly for the next steps in children's

learning. Staff have high expectations with regard to manners and behaviour and act as positive role models for children. Children, as a result, play harmoniously together and enjoy the attention of kind, caring staff.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children feel good about themselves and show respect and consideration for others as they play together and share resources. Staff foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children learn about diversity through planned topics and resources readily available to them. Staff support children with specific learning needs. They work closely with parents to ensure individual needs are met. Children benefit from the group's clear guidelines for behaviour. 'Golden Rules' are displayed on the wall and talked about each day. These rules remind children to play safely while inside, look after the toys and be kind to each other. Children are polite, well behaved and know what is expected of them. They respond well to praise and encouragement and display good levels of self-esteem and confidence.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive termly written feedback on their child's progress and have opportunities to add their comments to their child's records. Regular newsletters and information displayed keep them well informed about pre-school practice. Children take home library books on a regular basis to encourage their development at home. Policies and procedures are easily accessible for parents. Parents know who their child's key worker is and staff are always available to talk to parents at the end of each session.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children settle well and are happy within the group. Staff work well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staff organise space and resources well, this allows the children to move around freely and safely. Resources are changed during the session to ensure their interest is kept and to provide greater variety. Staff allow children to lead their own play and are on hand to offer support if needed. Staff training needs are identified at annual appraisals.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work cohesively together to provide children with a good range of interesting activities to further their knowledge and skills. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. All staff are key workers and are involved in planning although, at present, only half the staff have had formal Foundation Stage training. Practice is monitored and evaluated at regular staff meetings and all staff are encouraged to contribute to plans for future development.

Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment. Documentation and written records contain all necessary detail. However, the existing injury records are not kept confidentially. The committee has a satisfactory recruitment procedure in place, although not all areas of suitability are covered in detail. 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 pre-school were asked to: ensure additional staff training proceeds as planned; ensure documentation is reviewed and updated; improve level of lighting in 'quiet' area to assist children's concentration. Staff have completed the training identified at the last inspection, reviewed all policies and procedures and plan to do this on a regular basis and have installed lighting in to the quiet area. These improvements ensure children's welfare, care and learning is promoted.

### **Nursery Education**

Since the previous education inspection the pre-school has addressed both issues raised which related to teaching strategies and record keeping. Staff make excellent use of open ended questions throughout sessions to develop children's thinking skills. Planning, observation and assessment records are maintained which clearly show children's progress and the next steps in their learning.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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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## **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 the 'existing injury' records are maintained confidentially
- improve the recruitment procedures by ensuring information on the applicants health is obtained in greater detail.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

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

- improve staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum so they can confidently maintain planning and assessment records and to enhance their teaching of the early learning goal areas.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)