

# Acorn Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY345531
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Michelle Tuck
<b>Setting Address</b>	25 Wessex Place, Somerton Business park, Bancombe Road, Somerton, TA11 6SB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Katryn Bennett
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorn Day Nursery is privately owned. It opened at its current location in 2006 and operates from a purpose-built building. It is situated in the rural town of Somerton in the business park, on the outskirts of the town. A maximum of 41 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery employs 12 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early use qualifications including a teacher.

There are currently 105 children on roll of whom 35 are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health and well-being is effectively promoted and given a high priority by all the staff. For example, children learn how to keep themselves healthy through regular discussions about hygiene and staff are constantly striving to improve their hand washing practices to prevent the spread of infection. Children spontaneously wash their hands before meal times, and after partaking in messy play. Children access tissues and know to put them in bins after use. However, staff do not always wash their hands after they assist children with this task. Clear and informative medical records are maintained and all accidents are recorded appropriately, however, not all are counter-signed by parents.

Children benefit from the provision of cooked meals and are encouraged to taste a variety of meals such as vegetable stir fry, and spaghetti. They enjoy a range of fresh fruits and vegetables daily. Children know to sit patiently as they are served their meal and are well behaved using snack and lunch time to chat happily to staff and friends. Clear recorded information is held of family preferences and individual dietary requirements.

Children learn to enjoy physical activity and make healthy lifestyle choices through the nursery education curriculum. Daily outside play is planned into each session so that children enjoy a full range in all weathers. Children eagerly put on their shoes and choose to ride wheeled toys or play in the outside sandpit. Children know when to relax, they choose to sit quietly and look at books or sit at a table after vigorous play.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a friendly, and welcoming environment. Staff carry out ongoing risk assessments to identify and reduce potential hazards to the children. Staff are vigilant about children's safety. For example, the premises are secure and effective use of gates keep the children contained. Children participate in regular fire drills to ensure they know what they must do in the event of a fire. The class rooms are well set out, allowing children to move around safely and enjoy a wide range of play opportunities within safe surroundings. The children can self select from the activities and resources which are stored at child height. Appropriate adult to child ratios are always maintained, making sure that children receive good adult support to help them feel safe and secure. Babies are well cared for. Separate play areas for the babies and toddlers ensures their safety, and sleeping babies are monitored at regular intervals.

Children are very knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they line up and wait their turn well, they walk around safely inside, ask for help when needed and understand the rules of the setting. Children know why they need to wear sun cream and hats outside. Children can independently and safely access the toilet facilities and good staff deployment ensures they are carefully supervised at all times.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are knowledgeable about child protection issues and know the correct procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child in their care. The child protection policy is up to date and includes all relevant information to ensure the setting follows correct protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Board.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. Children under the age of three years have their individual needs met in a highly effective way as the staff are so well tuned in to their starting point and their favourite activities to engage them in age appropriate, stimulating play. Memory books are kept, these show photographs of each child engaged in activities during their time at the nursery and comments relating to their developmental progress provide a record for parents to keep. Much of their play is child led, with opportunities for freedom of expression. The Birth to three matters framework is used effectively to plan and record children's development. There are times when the babies and toddlers are grouped separately and other times when they play alongside each other. This is very successful as the staff are very skilled at supporting them so that they thrive and relish their experiences. For example, a group of toddlers play in the water tray alongside a baby. When a toddler scoops the water out and pours it onto the babies legs, she smiles and kicks her legs in delight. Children are learning to count in everyday activities from an early age. For example, they sing 'five little monkeys' and staff hold up the number of corresponding fingers. Babies and toddlers have rich experiences using all their senses. For example, they make t-bag pictures from different flavoured t-bags, exploring the colour and smell each one produces. They enjoy touching and smelling shaving foam and using feathers to tickle each other with.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children learn through rich, varied and meaningful experiences, which are linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum and the stepping stones. All six areas of learning are incorporated into each topic in the most natural way, allowing children to develop exceptionally well at their own pace. Staff are skilled at planning activities to meet the individual needs of all ages and abilities. Each activity is split into the stepping stones, highlighting how to support those children who need extra help or to challenge and extend the older, more able child's learning. Children's development is recorded using observations and then transferred into their individual files to show their progress. Their progress is then shown on the stepping stones, with examples of their work, which is a comprehensive way of recording and evidencing individuals progress toward the early learning goals.

Children are very confident and well motivated to learn. Children contribute well in a group answering questions about what they have learnt. For example, they know that caterpillars turn into butterflies and they know that the eggs they had at the nursery hatched with the help of an incubator into chicks.

Children have excellent opportunities to explore numbers and practise calculating. For example, at circle time, one child counts the number of girls present and finds the number on the number line, then the boys are counted. Children are then asked which number is the highest and whether there are more boys or girls? Children count how many are cooking to work out how many pastry circles they need to cut out, and with the help from staff they calculate how much the items in their shopping basket cost.

Children enjoy looking at books either in small groups or as a whole. They understand that print carries meaning and that books are to use for reference as well as to tell stories. For example, children talk about a recent trip to the beach, discussing the creatures they found living there. A child said he found a creature that wasn't a crab. He described it as black. A

member of staff suggested using the books to see if they could find a picture of the creature he found.

Children thoroughly enjoy role play, they take on different roles and play co-operatively. Children lie in bed and pretend to be babies, they use the kitchen utensils and pretend to cook and eat food. Children build with various construction, making various vehicles and using them in their role play. Outside children pretend they work at a car wash as they wash the wheeled vehicles with soapy water.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain a well-developed respect for others and their beliefs, cultures and traditions through discussion, planned activities and resources, which promote positive images of diversity. For example, children learn about children living in Africa with the use of photographs, discussions and costumes. Equality is promoted in all the children do. For example, boys and girls have equal opportunities in their play and access to resources. Children's individual needs are understood and met exceptionally well by dedicated staff who ensure they support younger children and sufficiently challenge and extend older, more able children. Although there are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities the staff have prior experience in meeting these children's individual needs. They use signing to say good morning to the children and remain vigilant when monitoring individual children's progress and development. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is very good as they are so engrossed with exciting, stimulating activities, which are supported so well by staff. Children clearly know and respond to the daily routine by helping to pack away toys spontaneously, ready for the next activity. They show kindness and respect to each other and to staff. Children help each other with tasks, take turns and play well together. Staff are excellent role models in the way they speak to each other and the children. Staff promote good manners and reward children with lots of praise and encouragement. Children gain a sense of belonging, feel listened to and are respected. For example, when a child arrives and announces it's her dad's birthday she is given the opportunity to make him a card with the support of a member of staff. She is very proud of her creation and eagerly shows other members of staff what she has done.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit greatly from the effective sharing of information between staff and parents. For example, an informative notice board has the activity planning, and the policies and procedures for the parents to view. News letters are produced regularly and children's individual progress files are readily available for parents to look at and there is always an open door policy for parents to come into the nursery. Informal conversations with parents keep them informed about their child's progress, with the recent introduction of a 'parents evening' to discuss progress on a more formal basis. Staff have an excellent understanding of family situations from informal, yet professional links built up within the community, which enables them to meet children's individual needs in a highly effective way.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff work harmoniously together to provide a highly effective routine which impacts greatly on the children's happiness and their opportunity to play and learn in an effortless way. The

successful organisation of the room is a credit to the staff's dedication to ensuring all children's needs are met. Ideas have been trialled with the organisation of the rooms and how they are used, adapting them accordingly. Each activity is carefully linked to one of the six areas of learning. Detailed documentation and highly effective communication between staff ensures a wide range of appropriate resources are accessed by the children on a daily basis. Excellent staff deployment ensures the children are well cared for both inside and outside. All aspects of the daily operation of the setting is very good, each activity moving at a pace which ensures the children remain interested.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The proprietor and manager are extremely conscientious and always striving to improve the care and education for all children. There are very good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. Staff work very well as a team and individuals' strengths and training is given the highest priority to further enhance children's care and education. Documentation is clear and professional. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration, 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 accident record is always countersigned by the parent
- consider ways in which good hygiene practices can be further promoted, with particular regard to nose hygiene.

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