

Acorns Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160622
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Sandra Laura Bates
Setting Address	Meadhurst Club, Chertsey Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, TW16 7LN
Telephone number	01932 762844 or 07843 358406
E-mail	acorns.bp@brighthorizons.com
Registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd.
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorns Nursery is managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions for British Petroleum and has been registered since 2001. The Nursery occupies purpose built premises set within the grounds of BP's Meadhurst Club. It caters solely for the children of BP staff and their contractors. The nursery is open from 08:00 until 18:00 Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 46 children at any one time and there are currently 54 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Of these, 14 children are in receipt of nursery education funding.

The accommodation is arranged on one level and is divided into two main rooms for children aged under two years and children aged two to five respectively, plus associated offices, washing and toileting facilities. There is a small area of integral outdoor play space, plus access to adjacent outdoor play facilities which are within the grounds of the club.

There is a high ratio of staff, the majority of whom have a relevant childcare qualification and a current first aid certificate. The setting is accredited to receive nursery funding and currently there are 18 children in receipt of funding. There is appropriate support for children with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the setting supports a number of children who use English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive their care in extremely clean, well maintained and hygienic surroundings. Staff pay scrupulous attention to hygiene in daily routines to ensure that children are very well protected from contamination and infection. Children begin to learn how to manage their own personal hygiene needs due to the effective support of staff who are excellent role models in this respect. Older children often anticipate the need to wash their hands before a meal or snack for instance, and babies are carefully prepared by staff for their own snacks and meal times. There are well maintained records and resources to ensure that children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident, or if they require individual medications. Parents have detailed information about procedures should a child become unwell, which ensures that children are well cared for and protected from cross infections.

Children enjoy an excellent range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks that are prepared on the premises by a very experienced and well qualified cook in meticulously maintained kitchens. They are served at least five fruits or vegetables each day, in line with national recommendations. For example, children explore the taste and texture of grated carrot and celery, or fresh pineapple and banana at snack time. They tuck in enthusiastically to a meal of roast chicken and freshly prepared vegetables or a mild chilli, for instance, at the mid-day meal. Children help to set the tables with their individually made place mats and table centre decorations of dried flowers. Older children serve themselves from the dishes set out on each table, and some help to serve their less able peers. Young babies are encouraged to learn to feed themselves and staff assist wherever necessary to ensure that they eat appropriate amounts. Children with food allergies are very well catered for and staff ensure that children are not exposed to the possibility of eating unsuitable foods by careful labelling. Meal times are sociable times with staff in close attendance. Soft music plays and children talk about how they have enjoyed their morning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play and rest in a very safe and secure environment. There are separate areas geared to the specific needs of the children accommodated therein. Regular risk assessments ensure that all potential hazards are identified and addressed appropriately in order to reduce risks to children. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children carefully. There is an extremely good level of security within, and outside, the premises. All parents and visitors are greeted individually at the door. Children's areas inside the premises have high level, child proof latches. The area outside the entrance benefits from CCTV surveillance by British Petroleum for whose staff and contractors the setting provides the service.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe within the setting. For instance they talk about walking feet and what may happen if they run indoors. Children begin to learn how to behave in the event of an emergency and there are regular fire drills to reinforce this message. Records demonstrate the regularity and effectiveness of such practices.

Children use equipment and resources that are of extremely good quality and are maintained in excellent condition. Children choose freely from easily accessible and attractively displayed play materials that are safe and suitable for their age and stage of development.

Staff have a very good understanding of child protection issues and current referral procedures. They know the children very well and are alert to any causes for concern. They are clear about the steps to take to ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the setting. They interact with staff and each other in a positive and affectionate manner. Staff offer appropriate levels of support and encouragement to ensure that children feel secure and cared for. Children enjoy a wide and varied play experience. They have interesting and stimulating materials to use and activities that are planned to provide opportunities for them to learn and develop new skills. Children play happily together or individually. They enjoy sharing a book with a friend, 'reading' from a familiar story as they follow the pictures. They use the 'office' role play area co-operatively and make links with their occasional visits to the setting's actual office. Children benefit from regular visits from specialist teachers such as a French teacher, a sports coach and a signing teacher. Even the youngest babies enjoy the experience of linking signs with familiar songs and rhymes. Children have fun and there is a happy atmosphere throughout the nursery.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan using children's recorded prior, or developing, skills and knowledge and evaluate outcomes effectively. However, written planning sheets are not always comprehensively completed. Staff use a variety of effective teaching methods such as demonstration, child led or initiated activities, role play and imagination, with or without physical resources, but sometimes miss opportunities to extend thinking and learning through everyday routines and activities.

Children are keen to learn and participate enthusiastically in activities. They develop new skills and knowledge in all areas of learning.

Children learn about mathematical concepts such as counting and sorting as they stack plastic buttons on rods in colours and numbers. They recognise shapes and sizes and use language such as smaller and bigger to describe items. They compare sizes of bears and place them in size sequence. Most children count confidently to 10 and beyond and many of these can count in French also. Staff use some everyday situations to introduce a variety of mathematical concepts informally.

Children enjoy lots of opportunities to play energetically both indoors and outside. Specialist sports coaches plan activities that encourage children to run, hop, balance and throw for instance. They begin to choose to use their left or right hands to throw and link this to the hand they use to write their names. Older children show a good degree of control as they enact being running or jumping beans, and they begin to understand the effects of exercise and the environment on their bodies as they pretend to be chilly beans, comparing how they feel in sunshine or shade. Children manipulate small construction materials and mark making equipment with care and skill.

Children self select and share books together and enjoy listening to familiar stories. Extensive use of labelling helps children to recognise their own names and those of everyday items, some in a variety of languages. Children write their names on posters that they have made about the importance of washing their hands. A well equipped writing and mark making area is well used by children who access this independently.

Children use the art and craft area to paint, stick and make models. They use musical instruments and enjoy singing together and listening to music during the sessions. They use the role play area in an imaginative way.

Children enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks such as laying the table for meals and setting out the sleeping mats. They are eager to help and demonstrate their proficiency. Children show care and consideration for each other. For example, a child pats the back of her friend and says he needs a rest because he is tired and she is looking after him. They become aware of the effect of their behaviour and health on others as they make posters about the importance of washing their hands to prevent germs spreading to their friends.

Children use lots of materials that depict a variety of positive images of social diversity. They benefit from French lessons from a specialist teacher and learn about that country. Children learn about the natural world as they plant flowers and tomatoes and scatter gathered seeds at the nearby park. They watch the development of tadpoles and talk about releasing them into a lake to turn into frogs. Children freely access the IT area and use the office role play to demonstrate their knowledge of everyday technology.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop an understanding of the wider world as they use a variety of resources that depict positive images of social diversity. They take part in extra curricular activities such as a sponsored pedal push that helps them to make links between nursery and the community. Children participate in some activities linked to cultural or religious festivals but there are no clear themes to promote this aspect of equality. Children access all the materials suitable for their age or stage of development freely and independently. There are appropriate policies and strategies to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are likely to be well cared for.

Children generally behave well. They are respectful and eager to please. They understand the boundaries and the reasons for the ground rules. Staff support the setting's strong focus of creating a 'yes' environment. they are good role models, demonstrating a polite and respectful demeanour to one another and the children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive detailed initial information about the setting which introduces them to the policies and procedures including the complaints procedure. Information about how the children spend their days, and their achievements, is shared regularly through individual conference meetings with parents. These are opportunities to share information and develop consistency of care and education. Regular newsletters also help to develop the links between the setting and the child's home life. Parental feedback is very positive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the way in which the manager and staff organise the space, resources and routines to ensure that all children can participate fully. They are well supported by a high ratio of qualified and experienced staff. The manager ensures that all the necessary checks are completed for all staff to make sure that they are suitable to have the care of young children.

There is a comprehensive induction procedure for new staff and they feel well supported by this system. The setting is committed to on-going training to enhance staff's knowledge and to help them stay up to date with new practices and legislative matters.

There is a comprehensive range of supporting documentation and all the regulatory records and documents are in place and properly maintained.

Leadership and management are good. The parent company gives a clear overall vision for the setting which is interpreted very well by the day to day manager. The manager is experienced and effective, and enjoys the support and respect of the staff team. She ensures that staff have regular opportunities to develop as individuals. The manager is committed to enhancing the links between care and education to create a positive, inclusive learning environment for children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was asked to up date staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Discussion with staff members at this inspection indicates that they have a good grasp of current procedures and are confident in their ability to recognise any signs and symptoms of abuse, and to take appropriate steps to protect children from harm.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to improve staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Discussion with staff indicates that they understand their roles in delivering early education. They are aware of the coming changes and the creation of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting was also asked to improve the way in which activity sheets are used. Individual sheets for each child are well maintained and are used effectively to plan for children's future development. However, weekly and daily planning sheets are not always comprehensively completed. This weakness is reflected in the current recommendation for improvement.

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.

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 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):

- develop the ways in which children's understanding of all aspects of social diversity is promoted within the setting

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):

- maximise opportunities for extending children's thinking and learning through everyday situations and routines
- improve the way in which planning sheets are used to ensure that they are clear and comprehensively completed

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