

# Acorn Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137751
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Pauline Nazarkardeh
<b>Setting Address</b>	School House, Oakington Manor Drive, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6NF
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<b>Registered person</b>	'The Board of Governors, Oakington Manor School'
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorn Nursery opened in 2000; it is based in a purpose built building in the grounds of Oakington Manor School in the London borough of Brent. The Board of Governors of Oakington Manor School is responsible for the nursery. The head teacher is the nominated person for the Board.

A maximum of 33 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 49 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children from one to five years old on roll. This includes five funded three year olds and seven funded four year olds. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, six hold an appropriate early years qualification and three are working towards a qualification. The co-ordinator is a qualified teacher.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because the staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. All areas of the nursery are kept very clean and the staff wear gloves when nappy changing to minimise possible cross infection. There are seven members of staff who hold a current first aid certificate which enables them to confidently deal with any accidents and to administer medication.

The children are provided with healthy food from the school kitchen; two qualified cooks are employed to prepare meals on site. Excellent food and hygiene procedures are in place, such as probing food to ensure it is cooked and served at the required temperatures. Children enjoy an interesting menu which offers a wide range of tastes, such as chicken, rice and peas as well as vegetables and fruit. Children's individual dietary requirements are known and adhered to by staff. They learn about healthy eating through cooking activities, for example, making fruit salad and on going daily discussions.

Children are excited by the attractive and interesting range of outdoor play activities. Staff have an excellent understanding of each child's stage of development. This means that the youngest children are confident to try out new skills within the safe environment. They are encouraged to crawl and extend their physical skills through interaction with the caring staff. Older children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise. The outdoor area is used as an extension of the indoor area and the activities provided are interesting and fun for children. They thoroughly enjoy the extensive range of outdoor activities, such as balancing on the beams, climbing on the fixed equipment and manoeuvring the bicycles.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and child-friendly environment, where their individual needs are met effectively. There is an extensive range of very good quality furniture, toys and equipment which is very well maintained. The children enjoy their time within the setting which is bright and attractive. They are able to explore the environment safely and freely and experience lots of good play opportunities.

The children are extremely well supervised due to the excellent deployment of staff. The staff are either seated at activities with children or are close by to offer support when required, they encourage children to move and explore materials and equipment safely.

A strong emphasis is placed on children's safety and security. Staff use a range of equipment to ensure children's safety, for example, the evacuation cot in case of fire and the use of sealed thermal cups for hot drinks. Thorough risk assessments are carried out periodically to reduce possible risks on the premises. Staff ensure that children have access to toys and equipment that are safe and in good condition.

Children are thoroughly protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff are aware of the reporting procedures to follow if abuse is suspected, and the necessary documentation is in place to support their practice. There are clear procedures in place to ensure that those persons not yet vetted do not have unsupervised access to the children.

There are effective procedures in place for the safe collection of children, this further ensures the safety of the children.

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

The provision is good.

The children are divided by age into two groups, each having a separate base room. Staff provide a nurturing environment and all of the children are very happy, secure, developing in confidence and self-esteem. Babies and toddlers enjoy lots of physical contact with the staff which enables them to play contentedly. The quality of younger children's learning experiences is being fostered as staff plan an exciting range of activities based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. There are many activities which encourage babies to learn through using their senses, for example, exploring treasure baskets which contain various objects. They enjoy their own outside decked play area and joining in with the older children for water play.

Children are engaged and enthusiastic and have good levels of concentration as they explore the activities and make choices. Continued praise is given to all children and their achievements are celebrated and shared. This encourages the children to feel confident. They have opportunities to make good progress in all areas of their development. They clearly enjoy their day in this very warm and homely environment.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. Children experience a well balanced curriculum which is very exciting and tailored to their individual learning needs. However, the organisation of snack time does not extend children's learning experiences. Staff monitor and record the children's involvement in activities. The information recorded is securely linked to the stepping stones of the early learning goals and is used when planning the next steps for children's individual learning. Staff encourage children to make decisions and to self-select resources and equipment. Children play independently, explore and have a positive approach to new experiences and are very well supported by the staff.

Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children are able to work as part of a group, take turns and share. They are confident speakers and they engage in conversations with each other and adults. Children listen attentively at song and story time as staff use puppets and props to provide further interest and excitement, for example, when reading 'Dear Zoo'. This also provides good support for children who speak English as an additional language. Early writing is promoted extremely well and some children have begun to write correctly formed letters. Children's interest in early reading is supported by the use of books to promote themes and the good labelling around the nursery. Children are drawing recognisable pictures, for example, mini beasts with features such as legs, eyes and body segments.

Children enjoy a wide range of problem solving activities indoors and out and staff ensure this is fun. They have many good opportunities to sort objects, explore simple addition and subtraction, and floating and sinking. They begin to understand the value of money during role-play in the supermarket. They use mathematical language in their play 'look he's got a long tail' referring to the wild animals.

Children are developing their imagination as they engage in role-play, for example, in the home corner and supermarket. Children are exploring many different textures as they use paint, glue, sand, water and play dough. They are learning about their local community when they go for walks observing and recording what they have seen. Children are learning how things work and why things happen. They are increasing their computer skills as they click and drag the mouse. They are finding out how and why things work as they use cash tills and water wheels. Children are making good progress in all areas of their development.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Children have a good understanding of the boundaries and behavioural expectations of the setting and share and take turns well. They are learning to be respectful of one another and to be aware of each others feelings. This is due to the sensitive and calm manner in which staff approach children's behaviour. Staff have a great deal of respect for the children and this is influenced in the children's behaviour and the calm relaxed atmosphere created by the staff. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are provided with an excellent range of meaningful resources and visual images that reflect positive images, such as puzzles, books, posters and small world play equipment. These resources and planned activities are increasing the children's awareness of diversity and understanding of others within the wider community.

The nursery has a comprehensive understanding of the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator worker who has completed relevant training. Children benefit from the way in which staff work with parents and other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, they are willing to adapt the service in order to meet the individual needs of the children who attend. There are extensive written policies, statements and procedures in place to support staff, parents and those involved in the care of the children.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. There are excellent systems in place to keep parents informed about the nurseries polices; procedures; planning and the progress of children. The provision has devised informative handbooks for parents with relevant policies and procedures, notice boards display detailed information on the activities provided and daily written diaries log what the child has participated in during the day. These systems help to strengthen the relationships between parents and the staff, and as a result this then benefits the children.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

This nursery is very well organised because managers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the care of the children and lead the staff team very efficiently. The premises are well organised and excellent use is made of the space available, particularly the secure and stimulating outdoor space. All staff work well together and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a safe and secure learning environment that stimulates children of all ages.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place which supports the safe and efficient management of the setting. Staff continuously improve and develop the service for children. Staff are not fully aware of the regulatory requirement to notify Ofsted of certain events. Effective systems are in place for the recruitment and employment of new staff and an effective induction procedure has been developed which includes health and safety and understanding of the child protection policy.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are good. The provider, managers and staff work well as a team and share ideas for the future of the setting. The planning and delivery of activities generally is to a very high standard, however, there are some minor weaknesses in the organisation of snack time. The managers ensure that the curriculum is well-balanced and that effective teaching methods are implemented. All staff members make incidental and planned observations of the children and use these effectively to monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals. The staff knowledge of the children in their care is very good which enables them to effectively challenge the children in their learning. Staff also effectively monitor and evaluate the care and education through regular meetings and have opportunities to exchange information within the team to improve practice.

All documentation is in place to support the setting and is regularly reviewed and updated. The documents are stored to ensure confidentiality. Children receive a high standard of care in the nursery. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to improve on documentation by providing parents with the address and telephone number of Ofsted and to extend on the child protection procedure. There is now an Ofsted poster displayed near the parents notice board and the child protection procedure has been updated in line with current regulations.

At the previous education inspection a point for consideration was made in relation to providing a wide range of art and craft materials to offer children opportunities to implement their own ideas in a creative and imaginative way. Children now have access to a range of resources which they can self select from.

### **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**

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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):

- increase knowledge and understanding of those event events that should be notified to Ofsted

### **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):

- extend on children's learning opportunities during snack time (also applies to care).

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)