

Acorns Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY346310
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	St Johns Centre, St Johns Road, Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG23 7DX
Telephone number	07717 504 878
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Registered person	Oakley Acorns 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 was registered in 2007. It operates from the St John's Centre in Oakley, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. The nursery uses the main hall as a playroom and there is a large outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children aged between two years and five years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 9:10 and 11:40 and on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:10 and 15:10, during school terms only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 34 children on roll, 25 of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs eight part time members of staff to work directly with the children, of these six hold a level three qualification or equivalent.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care and can independently access the toilet and washing facilities. They know to use the antiseptic gel to keep their hands clean before they eat at snack time. Their physical needs are well met because staff follow effective procedures and practices, such as regularly cleaning surfaces and wearing gloves when preparing or handling food. They consult with parents about the children's health needs and keep appropriate records on site. Most staff have training in first aid.

Children help themselves to a good range of healthy snacks such as fruit and plain biscuits at each session. They talk about healthy eating as they snack, discussing which foods will help them to grow. Drinks are always available and children help themselves to water from the dispenser at snack time or from their own bottles which they can access at all times.

Children take part in a wide range of activities which promote their physical development. They delight in their outdoor play time in the playground or large field area when they practise a variety of skills such as running, balancing and jumping. Children move confidently and are gaining in control, for example riding the tricycles carefully around the indoor track and stopping at the traffic lights. They are gaining in bodily awareness as they talk to staff about how funny it feels when they go down the slide with their eyes shut. They confidently use a wide range of small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors, pencils, brushes and cutters and are gaining in control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe and secure environment, where entrance to the building is monitored at all times. Staff make good use of the available space, setting up resources in well defined learning areas, such as a role play area and book corner, which enables children to move freely within the nursery, confidently accessing well maintained toys and interesting activities. Staff are alert and reduce the risk of accidents by carrying out daily risk assessments on the premises and equipment. Children are protected by staff who follow effective procedures, such as recording accidents or the administration of medicines, and sharing these records with parents. Children are familiar with the fire evacuation procedure which they practise regularly.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and share these with parents. They are aware of the need to protect both the children and themselves, although the nursery policy lacks clarity in some areas.

Staff regularly share information about accidents and incidents with parents. They keep local child protection team telephone numbers available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show an enthusiasm for learning and enjoy their time at the nursery. They are happy and very involved in their learning and play. Children are keen to take part in the wide and stimulating range of activities and move confidently between the learning areas, which they

have named themselves, for example the messy making area or the crazy corner. They are secure and settled and are able to form positive and caring relationships with each other and the staff.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are motivated to learn by the provision of a wide range of stimulating resources and activities closely linked to the six areas of learning. They are able to operate independently within the learning environment, confidently selecting new activities or initiating their own play. Using the play based learning environment created by the staff, the children are able to set their own challenges and progress at their own pace. The new planning system ensures coverage of all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and includes targets for individual children, although it does not as yet identify the next steps in children's learning. Regular observations and assessments made by all staff, help assess children's interests, skills, and learning needs, although some are not correctly dated.

Children are confident speakers conversing easily with adults and each other. They enjoy using language to initiate and organise their play, for example talking to each other as they complete programmes on the computer or role play in the gym. They eagerly and confidently join in with familiar rhymes and stories. All children use marks to represent their ideas and some children are beginning to write recognisable letters.

Children take part in a good range of games and activities to develop their number skills and many count and recognise numbers to 10. Children use mathematical language such as bigger, smaller, taller and shorter, during planned activities such as grading themselves by height. They learn about shape, size and quantity through practical activities such as playing with sand and dough or when threading beads. They enjoy singing number songs and are beginning to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction as they talk about the number of currant buns left in the shop. However, they have fewer opportunities to use their knowledge of numbers to solve simple number problems during daily routines, such as snack time.

Children use their imaginations well in numerous play situations, for example during role play at the seaside or in the gym, or when creating art and craft work. They explore colour and texture when hand or marble painting or when using collage materials. Children are interested in the world around them. They look at the marks on the sea shells or watch their cress seeds grow. They investigate the changes which occur in the natural world as they watch the tadpoles change into frogs. Children are interested in information technology and most are confidently able to complete simple programmes on the computer to support their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are fully included in the life of the setting. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language are provided with extra support and have individual education plans. Children benefit from clear rules and routines. They respond well to musical instruments played to remind them about tidying up or snack time. They are gaining in self-confidence and form good relationships with staff and each other. They concentrate well and are learning to share and take turns, for example, waiting patiently for their turn on the computer. Children are keen to learn and are interested in what they are doing. They take time to learn how to operate the water dispenser or to cut carefully around a flower they have painted for their mum. Children are becoming independent as they help themselves to drinks

and choose their own food. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are kept well informed about the policies and procedures, topics and activities provided, through regular newsletters and clear information boards. They are involved in their children's learning as they share books they have borrowed from the nursery or take Linford, the nursery bear on holiday. Parents are consulted about the running of the nursery through questionnaires. They feel able to approach staff and discuss their child's care and welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are fully included and happy in the well organised and welcoming pre-school environment. Staff are all appropriately checked, well qualified and enthusiastic. They work effectively as a team, are well deployed, have clear roles and responsibilities, and ensure that children's individual needs are well met. Good essential records are kept for each child and shared with the parents, ensuring that children's welfare and care are of a good standard. Staff get to know the children well through the use of information obtained on the children's registration forms and through daily communication with parents. They complete daily registers for children, staff and visitors, although these do not include times of arrival and departure. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which are shared with both staff and parents, enables the nursery to meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. There is a clear management structure and all staff and management are committed to providing care and education of a good standard. Staff regularly access new training opportunities and management have implemented a system of annual appraisals. Some monitoring and evaluation of activities takes place but is not yet completed on a regular basis. Although there is a good range of policies and procedures, some are in need of updating.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable. This is the first inspection.

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 that registers include accurate information about children's arrival and departure
- update all policies and procedures

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):

- continue to develop and evaluate the planning system to ensure that assessments are accurately dated and that they are used to plan the next steps in children learning, with particular regard to problem solving and reasoning

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