

# Acorn Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	303430
<b>Inspection date</b>	16/10/2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lindsey Ferrie
<b>Setting address</b>	Kingshead Close, Castlefields, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 576 369
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## **Description of the setting**

Acorn Day Nursery opened in 2000 and is run by a committee. It is situated in a refurbished infant school in the Castlefields area of Runcorn. It serves the local area and is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 70 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday all year round from 07.30 until 18.30. The children are cared for in rooms according to their age, and also have access to secure outdoor areas.

There are currently 76 children on roll from birth to five years. Of these, 20 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 18 full time staff and three part-time staff. All staff, including the manager, hold appropriate Early Years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

At the time of inspection, the newly appointed manager had been in post for a very short time.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Acorn Day Nursery provides a calm and busy environment where children make good progress because of well planned activities which are appropriate and encourage children to be independent learners. They thrive in an inclusive atmosphere that cares for and supports their development. The newly refurbished rooms are bright, safe and welcoming. The nursery works well in partnership with parents, encouraging a two way dialogue and providing them with regular information about their child's progress.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to link observations to development and record next steps in a way that is measurable
- use evaluations of planning to measure impact on learning
- ensure that policies are reviewed regularly and updated where necessary

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

In the short time that the manager has been in post, she has ensured that the leadership and management team provides good direction for all staff. This has already begun to impact on the setting with the redecoration of the whole nursery and opportunities for continuing professional development for all staff. These

improvements have had a positive effect on children's welfare and learning. Staff talk highly of the newly invigorated team who work well together. They are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and are beginning to develop more rigorous systems for recording progress across the setting. The manager articulates a clear vision and ethos, and is beginning to formalise this in a way that will enable all staff to contribute to the continued development of the nursery.

Safety is given a high priority through good security, procedures and supervision. All necessary policies and procedures are in place, although some are at the stage where they need to be reviewed or updated. Rigorous checks ensure that anyone who works with children are suitable. Good induction procedures for students and new staff support them so that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities. As evidenced during the inspection, one new member of staff is well versed in the procedures for taking children on a trip to the woods.

Parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress. The new prospectus is clearly written and informative. Daily sheets from the babies' room and 'one to two' room provide parents and carers with up-to-date information. Key workers chat regularly with parents and carers, exchanging information on a daily basis. Monthly and bi-monthly progress reports add to the growing picture that staff and parents have of children. Staff understand the importance of a trusting relationship with children and how that impacts on their confidence.

Links with the local school have recently been established by the manager who hopes to develop this further in the future.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are happy, confident and extremely well behaved. They are provided with a good range of activities, which enables them to make good progress across all areas of their learning. On arrival in the nursery, one child demonstrated his ability to use a digital camera by taking a photograph and using the back space button on the camera to recall it. Another child, getting ready for a trip to the woods, was keen that the class doll, Sally, was properly dressed for the outing with a waterproof coat and wellington boots. Staff encourage the children to be independent and this is evident in the way in which children select to display their work or choose their own resources to investigate sand and water. Children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary by a very knowledgeable staff who model the use of correct language and positive reinforcement. Because of this, very young children are prepared to 'have a go' and communicate with confidence and they develop good skills for the future. In the sensory room, some clever interaction by a key worker enabled a very young child to say 'fish' and then collect the fish from around the floor. During a play dough session, one child was full of awe and wonder on discovering that he could turn his snake into a snail by coiling his dough and was excitedly proclaiming 'look, it's a snail'. Displays are of a good quality and some Aboriginal work in the babies room demonstrates a very good use of art and vocabulary to convey meaning.

Current planning systems identify areas to cover over the year. Staff files contain details of enhanced continuous provision with activities to ensure a breadth across the curriculum as well as activities planned in response to children's interests. For example, cooked pasta was being used for investigation and exploration in the babies' room because one child had expressed an interest in pasta the day before. Weekly plans are evaluated, although as yet evaluations lean more towards what the children enjoyed rather than what they learned and what they need to do next. Knowledgeable staff are clear about learning intentions but currently it is hard to tell from records kept, whether progress could be even better. Leaders and managers understand that staff must now begin to evaluate the impact of their activities in order to be able to plan the next steps more rigorously.

Along with the support from a dedicated staff, the newly appointed manager has created a safe and welcoming environment in which risk is minimised. Daily risk assessments are thorough and kept up to date. The nursery now promotes healthy eating practices by providing children with a range of freshly prepared and nutritious snacks and meals which are made on the premises. Children are encouraged to drink water and most bring their own water bottle to the setting. As they grow, children demonstrate their independence by selecting their own drink when they are thirsty and replacing their bottle when they have finished.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	Good
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration or the last inspection.

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.