

Acorns Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY243975
Inspection date 09/10/2008
Inspector Vanessa Tomlinson

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Type of setting 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

Acorns Early Years Centre Nursery operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building; one room is specifically for after school care and holiday care. Every room has its own designated secure outdoor area. The provision is situated in the same grounds as a local Community School. Children attend from a varied catchment area, with some children requiring support for their special educational needs.

The nursery is on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for 80 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 79 children on roll, ranging between four months and five years. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. There are 30 children on roll for the after school facility aged 4-8 years and 11 children on roll who are over 8 years. There are 19 permanent staff and 9 casual staff. 20 staff hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 3, while the manager is qualified to level 4. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Acorns Early Years Centre makes good provision for the children in its care, who enjoy a safe and secure environment for both indoor and outdoor activity. The children are happily engaged with appropriate resources and are encouraged to share, socialise and be considerate of others from the earliest ages. There is a good Quality Assurance system in place, the Kent Quality Mark, which identifies strengths and areas for development accurately. An action plan showing next steps in progress is readily available for staff, parents and all other stakeholders to see and is constantly being considered and updated as progress is made. The provision is fully inclusive and the leadership and management is well qualified, making continuous improvement assured.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the extension of language and vocabulary in both literacy and numeracy to further develop understanding and the necessary progression in children's speech and knowledge
- provide vocabulary and numerical displays at child-friendly heights so children can refer to them regularly, in indoor and outdoor areas

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is a clear focus on the promotion of the children's welfare and effective safeguarding policies which ensure a friendly, happy environment. The staff work together well as a team and are committed to improving the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. All staff are qualified to the standards required and training is seen as a priority in order to continue improvements. The manager is part of a Leading Early Years team in Kent and has been actively involved with other providers in arranging visits and observations to share good practice; her expertise and knowledge has led to growing confidence amongst the staff and has supported the nursery action plan. There is fully inclusive practice and all children within the same age range are given the same opportunities throughout the day. Where identification of learning difficulties arises, opportunities are sought to work with external agencies to provide focused support, and individual education plans are written to target areas of need and assess progress. The nursery's partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff are readily available to discuss matters arising from children's life at home and at school with parents. The recommendation from the last inspection to include explanations of injuries from home in existing records has been fully addressed. Parents are invited to share their knowledge and skills and get involved with the activities on offer to the children. In this way, parents are able to support their children's learning and development and are invited to use this experience to provide feedback which contributes to the action plan. Community links are also strong and the surrounding school's facilities are used to extend the nursery children's learning, as are other providers, such as the Kent Discovery Bus. Plans to establish the Maypole Children's Centre, involving the nursery, the primary school and the doctor's surgery are well under way to start in January.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The children are safe and engaged in a secure and pleasant environment where outdoor activities are easily accessible; they are separated by age into rooms, which each have their own outdoor area with age appropriate equipment which is bright, inviting and good quality. Risk assessments are undertaken each day by the staff to ensure the resources continue to be in good condition. The children are happy to be with any of the staff, ensuring they get the attention they require and learn how to feel safe. Every child is provided with a healthy breakfast and lunch which they eat quietly and enjoy. This time is a good socialising activity which allows time for quiet speaking and listening from children and staff interaction. Posters and notices about healthy living around the building encourage parents and children to think about this issue.

The positive atmosphere and high level of commitment support the children well. The variety of activities provided during the day are thoroughly enjoyed by children and aid their development. The interaction between staff and children is easy and pleasant. However, at times there is a lack of challenge in helping children to make the best possible progress in developing their language skills, including those necessary for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. As a result, some opportunities are lost to assess and evaluate children's progress. Displays of words and numbers are not easily accessible to children at their own height to further support their literacy and numeracy. Planning for the EYFS framework meets requirements and is being constantly developed by the manager. However, at the moment, it lacks challenge in its application in order to ensure all children reach their full potential. Good practice is evident in the observation and assessment of

children when next steps are considered to aid progression.

Children make a good positive contribution to the immediate community. The staff's good practice in positive behaviour management ensures that the children share resources, socialise and play well together; this was observed throughout the age ranges and every child was aware of others around. Further links with parents and the local and wider community ensure that the children have an advanced understanding of being a part of the wider community. The skills that contribute to future economic well-being are seen in the encouragement of independence, such as children finding their own coats, washing hands and putting on overalls for painting, as well as the way in which they share the equipment and have a sense of others around them.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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

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 to Ofsted since 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.