

Acorn Childcare, Spalding

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY379855
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Inspector Sandra Hornsby

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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

Acorn Childcare is run by a private provider from an Edwardian town house close to the centre of Spalding town centre, Lincolnshire. It opened in 2008 and operates from the proprietors detached home. The setting has an easy low stepped access.

The proprietors husband and grown up daughter also live on the premises and are involved in the business. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time and the provision is registered on the Early years, compulsory and voluntary Childcare Registers. There are currently 39 children on roll of which 36 are within the Early years age range. Children attend on a full-time and part-time basis. The provision supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00, 50 weeks of the year. Children share access to a secure outside play area. The nursery employs nine members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one staff member working towards an early years foundation degree, one a child psychology degree, and one working towards a Level 3 qualification. The manager has a Level 4 certificate in early years development. There is a family cat who lives on the premises.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The overall quality of the provision is satisfactory. Inclusive practice is promoted in a satisfactory way and children's individual needs are known to most staff. Children are treated individually with care and consideration, but observations, monitoring and planning systems are not enabling staff to identify and fully meet children's individual learning needs effectively. This means children, although having a good time, are not progressing as well as they could. Levels of enthusiasm and commitment to improve are high in the staff team and the provider is passionate about the nursery. Through discussion the staff team are beginning to address their areas of strengths and weaknesses. They are now implementing new systems in all areas to make improvements for the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement the equal opportunities policy effectively to support children who have demonstrated signs of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in respect of recording and monitoring observations
- ensure induction training help new staff to understand how the provision operates and their role within it, matters such as child protection should be included
- undertake sensitive observational assessment in order to plan to meet

children's individual needs

- plan and provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure linguistic diversity is valued and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- conduct a risk assessment in respect of the pond, review it regularly-at least once a year or more frequently where the need arises to ensure hazards are kept to a minimum.(Suitable premises, environment & equipment)

01/04/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision has a wide selection of policies and procedures that are shared with parents and mostly implemented by staff. All required documents are in place, including emergency medical treatment permission and parents and children's details. New staff have seen some of the policies and procedures that help protect children during their induction, but the safeguarding procedure and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements have not been shared with them. Consequently, they do not fully understand their responsibility in protecting children. They do, however, know to pass on any concerns they may have and remain vigilant. The recruitment procedure is adequate in ensuring suitability of staff but recent unexpected staff changes mean less than fifty percent of staff are qualified. There is an action plan to improve the percentage of qualified staff that will ultimately improve the outcomes for children. Child records hold basic information about the children's care needs, but information about children's learning and starting points is not gathered. They have not developed effective recording systems to make sure concerns about a child's development is monitored. They do, however, consult with parents and local authority advisors about the concerns, and keep a watchful eye on the child.

The provider is highly committed to her nursery and children and is enthusiastic about making positive changes. She has begun to evaluate the service and is able to identify some of the things they need to do to make improvements. This evaluation system is in early stages but future plans are likely to bring about some improvement to the provision, and training has been undertaken by staff to support their assessment and planning processes.

Parents are welcomed into the setting and a two-way flow of information keep parents and key staff up-to-date with children's daily events. Parents are offered information about the provision and they can view policies and the children's files at any time. Staff complete a photographic diary of the children's time at the nursery which parents and children enjoy seeing, it is well-presented and colourful. A daily log of babies nappy routines and food intake is given to parents at the end

of the day, this means parents are kept-up-to date with their babies routines. Termly newsletters are sent out with current information about the setting including information about staff and details about plans and projects that they are undertaking. Parents complete questionnaires and their views are valued, the provider always feeds back to parents about the views and any changes they make.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the EYFS learning and development requirements. Children enjoy regular outside play and use activities that they get excited about, for example, digging coloured sand, using balls and steering sit and ride toys around the patio. All children get involved with playing outside which helps develop their health and fitness. The setting is warm and welcoming and organised in a way that enables children to make some decisions about their play. It is brightly decorated with posters and pictures and the rooms are comfortable, soothing and calm. Babies are secure and happy in their environment with a key person who knows what they like to do. Soft toys, books, music and cause-and-effect toys keep babies smiling as staff offer cuddles and reassurance. Older children access baskets of toys, books and role play areas. They participate in adult-led art and craft activities and letter writing in work books, this is so staff can see how children are progressing in their literacy skills. Small group work is led by adults and involves children and adults sitting together and working as a team. Children's spontaneous play enable adults to sit with them, ask questions and, for example, help to design vehicles with bricks. All staff are kind and caring and the more experienced staff offer children some open-ended questions. Although staff are keen and enthusiastic they have not yet developed effective systems to observe, reflect, plan for and provide a consistent individual challenging learning environment for all the children. Consequently children's individual learning and development needs are not fully addressed. Although some staff have good knowledge about the children in their care, few records and documents are in place to help inexperienced staff, who also along-side the children, understand their needs and children's progress. Planning is limited and unrelated to the individual children's needs. It is therefore difficult to assess how well children progress. Experiences that are thought provoking, challenging and enable children to develop skills to think creatively and imaginatively are limited because planning is limited. While children's culture and language information is requested and information about their home language available, the information is not used consistently and effectively in planning to support children's varying home language in their play. Children are enjoying their time at nursery and are involved in play and routines they are familiar with helping them to feel secure. Children enjoy handing around beakers at snack time, and bigger children use the toilet independently. But staff tend to take over the simple skills that help children gain independence, such as hanging up coats, washing their faces and finding their shoes. Children enthusiastically talk to visitors and confidently ask staff for toys they want that are not freely accessible, for example dressing-up clothes.

The nursery is a safe and secure environment and most hazards have been identified and risks minimised. Although the pond is protected by a fence risk

assessments do not include this, and although children are supervised well it remains a potential hazard for young children. They are being helped to understand about their own safety as they participate in fire evacuations, and do not run inside. On outings children are reminded about safety when they cross roads. Children are following good habits such as hygiene routines and healthy eating programmes. Staff wash children's hands and faces after their meals and after the toilet, and they have their own cups to drink out of and have regular drinks. Children have healthy home cooked meals and simple snacks that are cooked and served by the staff. The staff are calm and caring and children respond in a calm and considerate way to each other. Children enjoy their play and the time they spend with their peers. Children share toys and take turns in games, they use please and thank you and they play alongside children who have very different needs with respect and consideration. For example, babies join in the play outside and older more able children move about carefully so they don't hurt them. Children are given some opportunities to understand about the world around them through books, projects, role play and discussions.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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 made to Ofsted since registration that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action.

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.