

# Acorn Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY318095
<b>Inspection date</b>	03/06/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Kerry Iden
<b>Setting address</b>	The Rise, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex, BN41 2PY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 293980
<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 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 Nursery is part of the local authorities children's centre. It opened in 2006 and operates from purpose built premises and is situated within a housing development in Portslade. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 60 children at any one time, of whom no more than 15 may be under two years. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to an enclosed, outdoor play area.

There are currently 112 children in the early years group attending the nursery. Of these, 49 children receive funding for early education. Children attend primarily from within the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports 18 children with special educational needs/learning difficulties, and also supports two children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff, including one member of qualified teacher status. All other staff hold appropriate early years qualifications with some staff members working towards furthering their qualifications. Acorn Nursery receives support from the local authority and works very closely with the children's centre to whom it is linked.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children's individual needs are fully met by the commitment and enthusiasm shown by the management and staff. The one to one support offered to children with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language is exceptional and offers a totally inclusive service. Staff develop their knowledge via the many visiting specialists that attend the nursery to help ensure all children are making good progress given their individual capabilities.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continuing to develop the outside learning environment to offer children a rich and fulfilling experience.

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is exceptionally well led and managed by a team of people who know their areas of expertise and respect other's knowledge. The management team show themselves to their staff as team players and are actively involved with the daily routines in each of the areas of the nursery. They are incredibly enthusiastic,

display real passion for their work and their commitment to improving services to children and their families. They have made extensive links with other agencies within the community to fully support all aspects of the lives of the families using the setting. All staff are monitored, both informally on a daily basis and through formal procedures, including annual appraisals. The management respect their staff and value their opinions, resulting in staff who stay working in the setting for long periods of time. Training is identified as an ongoing role, in order to further enhance the expertise of staff and the rich experiences offered to children.

The management and staff within the setting are constantly reviewing all aspects of the nursery and have the ability to critically evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the setting to ensure future developments. Through the comprehensive systems in place and the constant review, the setting has made many changes and the excellent long term planning focuses on the areas for development that will have the greatest impact on the children.

Children are well protected because staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement nursery and local safeguarding procedures. The management team have extensive knowledge of child protection and very clear expert links are in place. The clear security arrangements, recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the nursery, detailed policies for the collection and non-collection of children and arrangements for recording pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm.

There are extensive systems in place for working in partnership with not only the parents but also other agencies to firmly put the child's needs central to everyone. Parents are asked for their views of the nursery and asked to contribute towards their child's development records as they supply staff with valuable information of their child's starting points through the celebrating me booklets and ongoing feedback through the centre of interest requests. With daily discussion, parents meetings and termly reports given to parents, they gain an excellent overview of where their child is at in each of the areas of learning. Children with specific needs are greatly supported by the secure links the management team have established and effectively work with to ensure progress is individual to each child.

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

Children are making massive strides in their progress from their starting points, mainly due to the enormous variety of opportunities they receive on a daily basis. This, added to the clear knowledge that staff have about their own key children, means that children are challenged effectively to their own abilities and they are all making great progress. All areas used by the children, including outside, offer children an enabling environment where everything is at child level without restrictions of steps or barriers. Further development of the outside area for planting and growing will enhance this area further. Staff take a huge pride in the way they set play equipment up in all areas of the nursery to make it look inviting and inspiring to children. Play equipment is of a very high standard and ever changing to keep children's interest alive. All the babies and children throughout

the nursery are incredibly busy and focused on their chosen activity. They display high levels of confidence as they make their independent choices in a child inspired environment. Therefore, behaviour from children is incredibly good as they move around their base rooms or their outside space with direction and purpose. The interaction observed between all the staff and the children is very warm and affectionate. This is very apparent in the Sunshine room where staff cradle babies as they have their milk feeds and give them affectionate cuddles as they wake from sleeps. The interaction between the children is also very warm, babies take notice of new arrivals and children greet each other as they enter the nursery and skip off to play together.

Communication, language and literacy is a particular strength of the nursery, which stems from the Sunshine room where staff make very good eye contact with babies as they play or have milk feeds and babies babble and coo and make sounds with their voices in social interaction. Older children communicate very well with staff members and also have the ability to listen to instructions given to them which they are able to complete with ease. Children understand that print has meaning as they share books and stories by themselves and in group time. The introduction of the nursery library promotes reading and sharing stories at home with their parents. Children learn to communicate not only by speech but also by signing as this is a regular part of the nursery day. Children are introduced to this through activities such as singing and sometimes in conversation. Children can also express themselves through their mark making, their attempts at emergent writing and through the vast array of creative activities either pre-planned by staff or more impressively child inspired. For example, as babies are able to access paint they delight in squelching the paint on their hands, feet and half way up their legs; as they crawl off on hands and feet staff praise them as they look together at the hand and foot prints on the floor. All three rooms offer the children and babies an environment that is rich in signs, photographs and posters on the walls, which are often used as discussion points for the children.

Children in the rainbow room and starlight room have a good understanding of time. They know the routine of the day very well and know what's happening next. Staff use visual aids to help children understand time limits, such as sand timers as children wait to have a go with a favourite item of play equipment. Through many routine activities in both rooms children consolidate their knowledge of numbers and colours. Staff challenge their thinking to extend their mathematical concepts such as comparing sizes and use mathematical language such as more or less when counting objects. The open access arrangement for the most part of the day allows children to make choices about their learning environment and many spend a lot of their time outside. This successfully contributes to the children's physical development as they coordinate themselves incredibly well on bikes, through tunnels, up the mini climbing wall and on the slides. The layout of the furniture in the baby room enables the babies to also make excellent progress in their physical development, as they pull themselves up, coordinate themselves up and over the little stairs and access their own safe outside space. Some planned trips are organised out of the nursery, such as the recent trip for those in the sunshine room who went to the nearby farm. Other times visitors are brought in to the nursery to share their expertise with the children, such as the musician who visits weekly and 'The museum man' who regularly comes in to share some artefacts

and read relevant stories to the children.

The incredibly comprehensive approach towards the planning of children's activities events and experiences is developed through a triangulation approach. Parents, children and key persons are all involved in planning for each child, which is all coordinated by the qualified teacher in the setting. Planning stems from the planned and spontaneous observations made of the children through their play to ensure that activities are from the children's likes and preferred learning styles. The many systems in place fully ensure children are making great progress in every aspect of their learning and the development records offer the parents a jargon free account of the children's fulfilling time in the setting.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

### Leadership and management

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

### Quality and standards

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

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## **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