

Alderton Acorns Pre-school Toddler and Baby Groups

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101702
Inspection date	14/05/2009
Inspector	Angela Cole
Setting address	Alderton Village Hall, Dibden Lane, Alderton, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 8NT
Telephone number	07842 161159
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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 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

The setting, Alderton Acorns Pre-school Toddler and Baby Groups, is run by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the group. It was registered in 1994 and operates from the village hall at Alderton near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. Local amenities include the post office, church and village school. The pre-school uses the main hall and small room, and children have access to an enclosed garden with paving and grass. The group is open during term time on Monday to Thursday from 09.00 until 12.00. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 28 children in the early years age range, aged from two years nine months, on roll. The children currently attending live in Alderton or in the surrounding villages. There are five members of staff who are supported by parents on a rota. Of these, one has qualified teacher status and two hold appropriate qualifications in early years or childminding. There is one member of staff currently working towards a Level 3 qualification in childcare and another enrolled to begin. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. Operational links are in place with other early years providers, including local schools.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. The pre-school mostly meets the needs of children who attend and enables them to make progress in their learning and development. Staff promote many aspects of children's welfare with success, ensuring that they are safe in practice, though some required documentation is not completed. Staff recognise that each child is unique and are developing the assessment and key person systems to enable them to meet children's individual needs. The partnership with parents and carers is sound, and the group is beginning to build links with all of the other early years settings attended by children at the pre-school. Members of staff and committee are involved in evaluating a range of strengths and areas for development to support the pre-school's continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the observational assessments of individual children's achievements and interests and use these to plan and provide relevant and motivating learning experiences that meet each child's needs
- consider the routines and presentation of indoor and outdoor resources to maximise children's involvement and independent learning
- support children to show emerging autonomy in wider aspects of self-care, such as hand washing
- extend the guidance to staff in developing a consistent approach that best

meets the behavioural needs of individual children.

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

- assess the risks to children in relation to security to prevent intruders entering the premises and take action to minimise these (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 15/05/2009
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and obtain their written permission before administering medication to children. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 15/05/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is generally well organised. Required policies are reviewed to reflect the setting and made available to parents and carers. Following significant changes in staffing, systems are being developed so that adults work together as a team and are clearer about their roles and responsibilities during sessions. Children are soundly safeguarded through staff understanding of aspects of child protection and of the procedure to follow in case of any concern. In practice, thorough risk assessment is undertaken for outings and areas in which children play. The leader carries out daily checks and records aspects that require attention to show areas have been assessed as safe before children arrive. Staff are aware of persons entering the spacious hall, though written risk assessment does not include the entrance area where an intruder could gain access and compromise children's safety. Detailed health plans are devised with parents. As a result, staff know of children's possible medical needs, though consent is not sought for emergency medical advice or treatment, or obtained for medication that may be required.

Systems for recruitment, ongoing vetting and appraisal are in place with staff professional needs being identified and training opportunities offered. Some processes that involve parents, committee and staff are in place for evaluating the pre-school's strengths and areas for development. From these, action plans are in place to identify areas that the play leader would like to improve. For example, the group wishes to increase staff involvement in the planning processes and to extend their roles as key persons to support children's welfare and learning needs. Recommendations raised at the last inspection have been worked on to improve outcomes for the children.

Positive working relationships are being established with parents and carers. New families receive a detailed welcome pack and provide an informative summary about the children and their stages of learning. Pictorial and written information is offered to families so they may gain an understanding about the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents have opportunities to actively contribute to their children's learning through management and valuable daily support. They read

about daily activities from a display board, easily access children's preschool diaries with captioned photographs and are invited to comment on termly summary sheets. Parents speak highly of the quality of care their children receive from the caring staff, and of how well they settle to be happy. Some children attend other registered settings. Links of varying strength are being developed with these providers, for example, through shared visits and information to foster consistent, continuous care for the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All children take part in a range of activities, which, over time, helps them to learn and develop. Staff show a satisfactory knowledge of child development. Under the capable guidance of the play leader, they are working with the Early Years Foundation Stage to gain a sound understanding of the areas of learning. Systems are in place to observe and assess the children as they play. Staff note children's responses and are beginning to use this information to plan the next steps in their learning. However, not all adults are able to base activities at a level which is suitable for each child's understanding or to build on children's individual knowledge and self-care skills so that they are appropriately challenged to progress. Children form amicable relationships with adults and increasingly play together in small groups so they learn to cooperate and begin to negotiate the sharing of toys. As assisting staff are still developing a consistent approach that best meets the behavioural needs of individuals, children are being supported to understand what is right and why through the play leader's skilled response. Children benefit from a range of adult-organised and child-initiated activities, including spring lambs brought into pre-school and play based on a super heroes theme.

Children settle well at the pre-school and, after registration, are soon involved in a range of activities for as long as these are set out. The leader and deputy are the only key persons for the older and younger children respectively. This impacts on the setting's ability to ensure that each child's individual needs are fully met. Children confidently select what they want to do from the considerable range of activities initially available. These include role play with woodworking 'tools', real logs and pipes, or in the 'surgery' after learning about items in a visiting doctor's bag. Opportunities for them to independently access a wide range of creative resources to develop and carry out their own ideas are more limited. Children have opportunities to show care and concern for living things and the environment as they, for example, help to water the 'bug city' and sow seeds in the growing area. Children show a strong sense of self as they talk freely about their families and tell staff how they feel. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, are beginning to write their names and use mark-making material in the 'office' for their own purposes. Children develop their understanding of the local environment as they enjoy search for 'treasures' on walks around the village.

Overall, children's health and well-being are soundly promoted, satisfactory steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate action is taken when they are ill. Children are offered healthy snacks throughout the session and have independent access to drinking water. They know that they should wash their

hands because 'they've got germs on them', but do not always use positive hygiene routines after toileting and before eating. Staff develop children's understanding of how to stay safe as they explain, for example, why a broken tool must be removed and conduct occasional emergency evacuation drills. All children take part in daily physical exercise as they develop their large motor skills to climb, rock, balance and pedal. Children have immediate access to an attractive outside play area, giving them the opportunity to enjoy a free flow, indoor and outdoor environment.

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

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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