

# Ruardean Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 511782  
**Inspection date** 15/05/2009  
**Inspector** Jeffery Plumb

**Setting address** Ruardean C of E Primary School, School Lane, Ruardean,  
Gloucestershire, GL17 9XQ

**Telephone number** 01594 542461

**Email**

**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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Ruardean Acorns first registered in 1999 and it serves the local area. The pre school operates from a Portakabin within the grounds of Ruardean Church of England Primary School in Gloucestershire. It is accessible for people with disabilities. Ruardean Acorns is managed by a voluntary management committee of parents and a school representative. It is led by a manager who is responsible for the overall organisation and daily management of the group. Children use the Portakabin playroom, the adjoining school hall and adjacent toilets. There is a secure outdoor play area. Children also make use of the school grounds and playing field. The setting is on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 23 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 31 Early Years Foundation Stage aged children on roll, aged between two years four months and four years 10 months. This number includes 18 funded three-year-olds and three funded four-year-olds. Ruardean Acorns is open five days a week during school terms. Sessions run from Monday to Friday between 09.00 to 15.15. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are four staff who currently work directly with the children. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre school achieved the quality assurance award, Bristol Standard for Early Years, in September 2005. There is an effective partnership with the Early Years Foundation Stage teacher in the primary school on which this setting is located.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding and meets the children's needs exceptionally well. It is a fully inclusive setting. Excellent use of signing (Makaton) gives valuable support to children with speech and language difficulties. Outstanding progress has been made in developing an individual learning programme for each child. Planning and self-evaluation are outstanding and children's joy in learning is evident on their smiles as they participate in an exciting range of interesting learning activities. The capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

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

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

- implement the individual learning programme model to further build children's confidence and self-esteem and to increase their ownership of their learning

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

Outstandingly effective systems are in place to ensure children are safe and secure. The outdoor play area is checked at the start of each session. Any slippery material on the decking is cleaned off immediately and the outside table is examined to ensure that it is secure. Overgrown greenery is snipped back, and the hooks and catches on the gates, to prevent children from pushing them open, are checked. Toys are checked regularly and any broken ones are discarded. The children have been trained to report any toys they break and not to be afraid for having accidentally broken them. Fire drills are frequent, and lessons learnt and improvements made by the highly safety conscious staff team. Child protection procedures meet government regulations. There is a safe staff recruitment policy, which is adhered to rigorously when making new staff appointments.

Self-evaluation is outstanding. All staff, parents and children are involved in the self-evaluation within this exceptional setting. Excellent use is made of the Ofsted self-evaluation tool. Following thorough self-evaluation, changes are made which significantly benefit the setting's provision for the children. Monitoring of the learning areas showed that boys were not accessing the writing area, but that they were always enthusiastic to play outdoors. Consequently, numbers were painted on the outside bikes and on the wall to create an extended garage area. Children were given chinks, clipboards and pencils. The boys now pretend to run a garage and make notes as they check the safety of the bikes and take details of addresses from customers.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents say, 'We are delighted with what this setting does for our children'. Parents are informed daily about how their children get on, both verbally at the end of the session and also by a pre school to home book exchanged daily. Parents also write comments in these which are used effectively by staff to enhance the children's learning. Parents are fully involved in the planning to improve their children's learning. For example, parents of one child let the staff know that he is fascinated with Dr Who. The child told other children about the Daleks and together they made a super junk model of a Dalek. This has led to a whole space theme project which has accelerated children's learning.

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

Children make outstanding progress. Their learning accelerates because they thoroughly enjoy participating in a wide range of activities based on their interests. They are challenged through play and have so much fun as evidenced by their wonderful laughter and gorgeous smiles. Excellent planning takes account of their interests and moves them on rapidly in their learning. The setting has rightly recognised that it can further develop children's confidence and self-esteem by further developing the individual learning programme that is in place. Children's fascination with Thomas the Tank Engine is used to increase their number recognition and to match the different train engines to their correct names. Assessment is based on daily observations of the children and is used immediately to plan their next steps in learning and move them on in their development.

Children with speech and language difficulties make rapid gains in their learning because of how they are supported and placed with other children to give them confidence in talking about their interests, such as in zoo animals. Through exceptionally well matched activities children begin to count with confidence and a few recognise numbers up to 100. For example, one child spotted the 100 degree mark on the thermometer outdoors. They know the letter sounds and by the time they are ready to go to school the majority write their names independently with some letters formed correctly. They develop their creative skills through junk modelling and use scissors safely to cut materials into the shapes they want. A stimulating outdoor play area is used for playing games, such as hide and seek, and is used very effectively to develop their language and mathematical skills as well as contributing to their physical fitness. They have so much fun hunting for creatures in the inspirational outdoor environment. There is an excellent balance between adult-led activity and play initiated by the children.

The provision for children's welfare is outstanding. Children's health and safety is promoted exceptionally well. They are shown how to hold a hammer safely and how to use scissors properly. They have healthy snacks daily and help prepare them. As they climb on the outside climbing frame and ride tricycles their cheeks glow because their hearts are made to race. They use so much energy, but always have fun. Through role play activities they learn about money, credit cards and cheque books. At Christmas they visited the local post office to send letters to Father Christmas. Through fund raising activities they make a positive contribution to their community. Cultural diversity is promoted exceptionally well and children love participating in festivals associated with different cultures from their own. The very rich opportunities for children's development in the areas for learning for children of their ages are excellent.

## 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