

Acorn Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Christine Snowdon

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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Acorn Family Centre was re-registered in 2009. The nursery is managed by Barnardo's Yorkshire Region as part of a service agreement with the home office. It operates from a purpose built nursery situated in the grounds of Her Majesty's Prison and Young Offenders Institution, Askham Grange. Within the nursery there is a large open plan playroom, with defined areas. There is a fully enclosed secure outdoor play area, which includes a range of surfaces and a sensory garden.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to provide day care for a maximum of 22 children between birth and three years. There are currently 11 children on roll. The nursery is open throughout the year, Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm closing for statutory bank holidays and one week at Christmas.

Six members of staff are employed, which includes the manager and deputy. Four are qualified to level 3 and one member of staff has a level 2 qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a unique setting, providing excellent care and support for mothers and their young children residing within the prison, along with nursery provision for staff and the local community. The key worker system is highly effective and a clear strength of the setting. As a result, there is a genuine bond between the children and staff, which ensures the uniqueness of each child is fully recognised and promoted with the utmost success. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting and are making good progress in their learning and development. There is a wide range of resources, which are generally used well to support their play. There are excellent working relationships in place with the parents to provide support, advice and up-to-date information on their child's progress. The nursery has plans in place to support their on-going development and progress. However systems to monitor and evaluate their practice are not yet fully effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to independently draw and make marks in all areas of play
- develop further the labelling within the setting to provide more opportunities for children to see and make connections to written numbers
- extend the strategies used for self-assessment and reflective practice to identify strengths and priorities for ongoing development that will improve the provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that all staff working with the children are suitable to do so. Policies and procedures for safeguarding children are robust, up-to-date and adhered to in their practice. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of their role in protecting children, gained through experience and training. There are high levels of security and safety on site, to ensure no one enters the premises uninvited. Risk assessments covering the nursery and outdoor play areas, along with visits and outings, effectively reduce the possibility of accidents. Regular emergency evacuation drills are carried out and recorded.

The stable nursery team works effectively together, benefiting from the strong and positive leadership. The manager is very much 'hands on' and works alongside the staff to compliment and support them throughout the day and at busy periods. Staff are well-qualified, skilled and enthusiastic in their approach and strive to provide quality care and education for all children. The weekly staff meetings along with supervision and appraisal sessions, are used well to identify additional training needs and discuss children's progress and planning. The nursery demonstrates their commitment to continual improvement. For example, they have several projects in mind to improve the outdoor area as part of their future plans. The manager is very receptive to inspection and sees it as a way of building on their already good practice. However, they do not have a clear self-evaluation system in place which monitors and records their on-going progress in order to ensure continual improvement in the outcomes for children.

There are highly effective systems in place, which ensure close working relationships with the parents are established. The manager describes the 'Triangle of care' approach within the nursery, which includes staff, children, and parents all working together to ensure the best care and learning outcomes for the children. All mothers spend time in the nursery with their child and staff. These 'Stay and Play' sessions are used effectively by the staff to give helpful support and advice on all aspects of childcare, in a confidential and sensitive manner. Information is actively shared with parents so they have a clear understanding of their child's daily routine and the activities they take part in. For example, in addition to verbal feedback from their key worker, sleep times, nappy changes and other necessary information is recorded.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The nursery is an inclusive provision where equality and diversity is fully recognised and valued. The highly effective key worker system is a clear strength within the setting and as a result, each child's individual care and learning needs are discussed at length, recorded and fully supported by the staff. For example, staff spend time with the parents completing their child's care plan, which ensures their individual needs are fully met and supported. Each child's key worker takes

responsibility for all their personal care tasks, settling them down for sleeps and recording their progress and development throughout the day. As a result, children have a very close and trusting relationship with their key worker and this is clearly evident as they hold out their arms to be picked up, cuddled and comforted. Children rest and sleep according to their individual routine and personal needs. Some go off to sleep in their cots, whilst others prefer to be cuddled to sleep. Within the nursery a cosy and homely environment is provided with large soft seating, here babies snuggle up on their key workers knees, feeling emotionally secure whilst being bottle fed.

The nursery is very child-orientated, bright and welcoming to everyone. A wide range of good quality, resources and equipment, most of which, is made of wood or natural materials are available on site. These are arranged effectively, along with items, such as, drapes and sensory materials, to create exciting and inviting areas of learning. However, drawing and mark making opportunities are limited and not fully promoted in areas, such as, role play. Instead they tend to be done at planned times and restricted to the defined creative area. Young children clearly enjoy the singing and music sessions, they are keen to take part and are learning a wide range of songs and action rhymes. They rattle and shake the various instruments and are encouraged to choose their favourite songs. Staff promote early mathematical understanding through the rhymes as they sing 'one, two, three, four, five' and hold up the corresponding fingers. Children are developing a very positive interest in books and stories. They self-select their favourite ones and enjoy looking at them independently, as well as, with the staff, who sit and read to them. Children have good opportunities to see and recognise their name in print. For example, they select their name card to self-register and each have their own named coat peg. Whilst there is effective labelling on wall displays and posters throughout the nursery setting, those depicting number are limited.

Children benefit from regular fresh air and the many outdoor play opportunities provided for them. They have great fun in the snow as they run around the area stamping their feet and making lots of footprints. They have built a snowman and photographs on display portray them happily engaged in this lovely activity. The wide range of resources provide lots of physical challenges and experiences in a safe environment. For example, children pedal and steer the wheeled toys, climb and balance on the apparatus and enjoy planting bulbs and seeds in the sensory garden area. Children's good health is further promoted through the nurseries excellent hygiene practices. Children learn about the importance of hand washing from an early age and follow the daily routines without question. For example, after having their nappies changed, young children are taught to wash their hands afterwards and as they do so staff explain the importance of this task. Their understanding is further promoted through the pictures displayed above the sink. Children's dietary needs are discussed at length with parents and provided for. Formula milk is prepared in the nursery kitchen in conjunction with parents wishes and babies needs. All meals are freshly prepared and cooked by the prison kitchens and transported across to the nursery. Although, the majority of children have their lunch together with their mothers in adjoining unit.

Children's progress and learning is well documented in their 'Learning journey' folders. These are readily available to parents and their input is valued and

welcome. Staff's written observations and assessments are effectively supported through the many photographs and children's next steps in learning are clearly recorded, supported and shared with parents. This helps the children make good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. The nursery has good systems in place to share information and work in partnership with other early years providers, which the children may attend.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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