

Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Brian Evans

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Acorns After School Club opened in 1999. It is a voluntary, committee run group that operates from the art room in Walton Oak School in Walton-on-Thames in Surrey. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the out of school club and a maximum of 48 children may attend the holiday play scheme, at any one time. The out of school club is open each weekday from 7.45am to 8.45am and 3.10pm to 5.30pm, term time only. The holiday play scheme is open for two weeks at the end of the summer term and for a short time at Easter from 9am to 5pm. Children from surrounding schools are welcome at the holiday play scheme. In addition to the art room, children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and toilet facilities. There are currently 39 children on the after-school club roll. One child on the roll is under five. Children come from Walton Oak School for the breakfast club and after-school provision. The out of school provision currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The club employs 14 members of staff at various times. Five of the staff, including the supervisor holds an appropriate National Vocational Playwork qualification. Five members of staff hold a current first aid certificate. The setting receives support from the Early Years Childcare Service.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children of all ages make good progress in their learning and development because they are provided with good levels of care and activities which build on their work in the mainstream school. Good partnerships with parents and feeder schools enable the setting to be fully inclusive and to provide well for the individual child. Children feel safe and secure and have access to a wide range of indoor and outdoor play experiences and activities. Staff work together as a close, well-knit team and continually strive to improve the provision through careful reflection on their practice. The provision is inclusive and demonstrates a good capacity to develop further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan specific ways to check children's progress towards the early learning goals
- build further on the current assessment and profiling expertise in collaboration with Early Years Foundation Stage staff at the school.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The supervisor is a good leader and manager. She is supported well by her staff. Safeguarding procedures are robust. No adult or visitor is allowed to be alone with a child unless they have undergone rigorous checks with regard to their suitability to work with children. Policies and procedures are followed and implemented consistently by staff, including those on equality and diversity, and are updated annually to ensure that they reflect the best practice. Staff have a high profile on awareness and training on child protection and safeguarding procedures. Well organised documentation and good risk assessments ensure that the children are well cared for. Parents confirm that their children feel very safe in the setting.

Many adults, including the supervisor, work in the school as support assistants. This background enables them to contribute to continuity in the learning and development and the welfare of individual children. The setting supports children's learning effectively through providing a variety of play opportunities that cover all areas of learning. There is a good professional development plan which gives good training opportunities for all staff to develop their roles and extend good practice. The current priority is on planning activities for children's early years learning. The staff in the setting have recognised that the Early Years Foundation Stage children's profiles and assessment are a priority for further development, so that they can be certain how well children develop the skills expected for their age. They are continuing to work closely on this aspect of their work with the specialist early years staff at the mainstream school.

The self-evaluation process is good and involves all staff at the setting. The impact of new initiatives are closely monitored. Staff listen to parents' views and they respond well to their ideas. The setting's success reflects a good partnership with parents through planning a well structured programme of learning activities which are fun. Partnerships with the mainstream school and external services are good. Resources are deployed to their best advantage and accessible for all ages including early years children. The available indoor and outdoor spaces are well managed and supervised at all times. All the above factors underpin the setting's good capacity to sustain improvement.

Discussion with parents during the inspection confirms their appreciation of how well staff enable their children to settle into the routine of the setting. Parents value highly their support for them in helping their children develop as individuals. The setting's focus on welfare is good. Parents are very appreciative of the positive ethos of the setting and its impact on the enjoyment of their children.

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

As soon as they arrive at the club, children settle very happily, relate very well with one another and have fun. They are confident and respond and contribute well to the carefully planned and stimulating activities, which are set out for them each

day.

Boys and girls enjoy equally the full range of resources from the very well supervised computer software to activities from the cupboards in the base. Staff unobtrusively ensure that no child is left out and offer themselves as very good role models by guiding children in the tasks they want to complete. For example, all children were given the opportunity to make a 'smoothie' from strawberries and bananas. The pleasure with which they drank the result made it well worthwhile. Children are very appreciative of the staff. Each child has a good relationship with their key person and all staff, and in turn are treated and guided as individual personalities. Social and emotional needs and additional needs are met very well by sensitive adult intervention. For example, in Lego construction an adult stepped in when a conflict was beginning to develop between a boy and a girl and helped them to negotiate a solution with which they were both pleased. Children make suggestions which are taken up by staff. Children independently choose their activities and which groups they join. However, staff skilfully guide them away from an activity when a child is beginning to disrupt the strong cooperative ethos in the setting.

Brief written observations by staff on early years children in the setting are recorded well in their learning profiles. Activities in the setting cover all aspects of the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage but staff recognise that they need more expertise in planning and recording outcomes in the children's profiles more precisely against the early learning goals. Nevertheless, they have made good progress since the beginning of the autumn term. The activities observed during the inspection confirm the care with which staff provide suitable experiences for early years children across all areas of learning and how they complement the work in mainstream school. As a result, all children make good progress in all aspects of the required early years curriculum.

The setting's focus on welfare is excellent. Hygiene and health are emphasised and reviewed. For example, all children washed their hands thoroughly before and after food preparation. Staff keep up to date on current health issues. Children enjoy their healthy snack times and use the occasion to confidently talk with adults and with each other. Discussions with children confirm that they have a good understanding of effective hygiene routines and the benefits of an active lifestyle. Whenever possible, most children play in the well-equipped secure outdoor playground. Behaviour throughout is good and activities are characterised by a willingness by older and younger children to share and cooperate with each other. By the time they leave, children are well prepared for their future learning.

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	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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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