

Acorn Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY345531
Inspection date	08/06/2010
Inspector	Bridget Copson

Setting address	25 Wessex Place, Somerton Business Park, Bancombe Road, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6SB
Telephone number	01458 273705
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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).

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

Acorn Day Nursery is privately owned and has been registered at the current premises since 2006. It operates from a purpose-built building situated in the business park, on the outskirts of Somerton, Somerset. Children have use of an open plan room with segregated areas for the Little and Big Acorns.

A maximum of 41 children aged from birth to eight years may attend at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group, but of whom no more than 10 under two years may attend at any one time. The nursery is registered to receive funding for early years education and is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open every weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 50 weeks of the year. There are currently 90 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The group cares for children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff, all of whom hold or are working towards appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual care and learning needs are met well through effective team work and excellent links with parents, other settings children attend and external professional. Children are cared for with equal concern and their individuality is reflected throughout the setting to promote their sense of belonging, although not always their home language. Children's learning is planned and promoted successfully and on an individual basis, and as a result children are making good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting has made many improvements to the quality of provision since the last inspection to further promote the Every Child Matters outcomes for children. However, the self-evaluation systems do not successfully monitor the organisation of the environment in all areas.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure a suitable environment is provided for the younger children's cloakroom
- provide children with more opportunities to use their home language within the setting
- improve the organisation of the environment during busy times within the pre-school area to ensure all children's needs are met.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who have highly effective systems in place to assure their safety and well-being. Thorough employment and vetting procedures are carried out to monitor staff suitability, with an induction programme and appraisals to monitor on-going suitability. Detailed risk assessments, daily checklists and regular fire practices maintain high standards of safety. In addition, staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of their child protection responsibilities and the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns to safeguard children. Staff routines and practices ensure good standards of hygiene are maintained in most areas. However, the youngest children's bags and coats are hung on low pegs within the staff bathroom close to the toilet which has no seat.

Staff work efficiently in consistent teams in organising the environment and activities and maintaining younger children's care routines accurately. They create a cheerful and positive environment with close support and supervision. They act as good role models and raise children's self-esteem through lots of encouragement and praise. Older children are developing an awareness of diversity through respecting others around them, tasting different foods from around the world, exploring multi-cultural play provision and some festivals. However, there is limited reflection of the languages of other children attending for whom English is not their home language.

The nursery has successful systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and to promote continuous improvement to the benefit of all children. This includes a self-assessment record reflecting the views of all staff, evaluation sheets and links with the local authority. Documentation is well-organised and kept up to date to ensure all requirements are met and parents and staff are well-informed.

Staff have established excellent partnerships with parents and others involved in children's care and learning. Comprehensive information is provided to parents to support them in making an informed choice. Parents provide staff with information regarding their child's needs, preferences and care routines to promote consistency. Parents are kept well-informed through notice boards, newsletters, home books, daily communication and open evenings. Successful links are established with the other settings children attend to further promote their welfare and development. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and key persons links effectively with both parents and external professionals to ensure children's additional needs are met consistently and well. In addition, visits are organised with the reception teachers from the local schools, which most children attend, to aid their transition to school.

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

Children enjoy a good range of play provision and learning experiences to support their areas of development, which are easily accessible to promote independent play. This includes a balance of adult led activities, free play and regular free-flow sessions to the outdoor play area. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which they use to promote children's learning and development on an individual basis. Children's progress is monitored and assessed through regular observations which are recorded to reflect their progress within the six areas of learning. This information is used to prioritise and plan children's next steps of learning each week to ensure experiences are purposeful. Staff interact with interest and meaning to support, observe and challenge children further.

Children demonstrate a good sense of well-being through their cheerful dispositions, exploration of the activities and the warm and affectionate interactions with staff. They focus well on the activities which capture their interest, such as exploring treasure basket objects, role playing in the home corner shop and mark making at the table. However, some older children become distracted and frustrated when they have insufficient space at busy and noisy times of day, preventing them from playing with their chosen activities. Children behave well and are learning about positive attitudes, good manners and independence. Children communicate confidently to express themselves, for example, babies shriek, babble and smile. As they develop their language is extended through discussion, questioning, joining in stories and repetition of new words through planned activities and singing. Children have opportunities to write and mark-make in purposeful situations, both indoors and outside. Children are developing a good understanding of number, shape, size and position and problem solve in completing puzzles, activity toys and practical activities, such as fastening their shoes. Children use their imaginations very well exploring many different media and materials without restriction, regardless of creating lots of mess. For example, exploring the textures of baked beans, dry oatmeal, sand, water and glue. They sing with enthusiasm and play imaginatively with small world resources, constructional activities and in changing role play environments. They are encouraged to extend their imagination through moving resources around the indoor and outdoor areas. For example, a group of pre-school children spontaneously line up chairs around a floor mat 'swimming pool' which they dive into off the chairs under supervision.

Children feel very safe and secure within the nursery, which they demonstrate through their self confidence, developing attachments to key staff and their desire to explore and investigate. Children learn about keeping safe through regular fire drills, safe play rules and alert staff when they feel others are not playing safely. Children are developing a good attitude to healthy lifestyles. They benefit from extremely nutritious and well-balanced meals which are freshly cooked on the premises every day by a dedicated chef, using locally sourced produce when possible. Children's health is promoted through the provision of a generally clean and hygienic environment in which staff follow and promote good hygiene

practices and routines. Children enjoy a well-resourced outdoor play area, which is used in all weathers, to promote their physical development, and to allow more active children to run freely.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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