



## Acorns Club

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY104005
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<b>Registered person</b>	Acorns Club
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Out of School care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorns Club has been registered since August 2002. The club operates from Helmshore Primary School and offers before and after school facilities for children aged between 4 and 11 years. The school is situated in a rural setting and children have access to the main hall, an adjacent classroom set out mainly for snack times and a separate quiet area, namely the IT suite. There is also the provision of an enclosed outdoor play area.

The club operates Monday to Friday during term time only from 8.00 to 9.00 and 15.15 to 18.00 hours. The club serves the children who attend the school. There a

total of 85 children on roll aged from 4 to 11 years old of whom 54 are under 8 years. The club supports children with special needs.

The club employs nine staff in total including the administrator and food handler; four members, including the manager and deputy hold relevant play work qualifications with one member working towards a level three qualification. The club is run by the management committee independent of the school.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise which contributes to their good health. They enjoy energetic activities that include organised football, cricket and parachute games. The use of equipment such as dance mats, skipping ropes and space hoppers enables children to have fun and extend their physical skills. Such activities are suitably challenging and capture their interests well.

Children's health is protected from the setting's good organisational procedures. Staff lead by example and follow good hygiene practices. They wipe down table tops with anti-bacterial sprays and administer appropriate first aid in response to injuries to children. The implementation of the sick children policy helps to minimise the spread of infection. Children learn about the importance of hand washing before snacks and after toilet use. They are secure in the knowledge that this practice prevents the spread of germs. They are familiar with the routines, independently seeing themselves to the bathroom when they need to.

Children develop good eating habits. They are provided with regular drinks and food in good supply to meet their needs. Food and drinks are properly prepared and nutritious in line with the healthy eating ethos. These comply with individual dietary requirements. Children enjoy being able to make healthy choices, self-serving the snacks on offer and independently accessing drinks. They have a growing awareness of the type of foods that keep them healthy such as the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables. In contrast they also have an appreciation of the foods that are bad for you.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, which is clean and well maintained. The rooms and resources available are well organised inviting children's play. They confidently move around freely and safely accessing a wide range of good quality play items and equipment to support their chosen pursuits, for example, board games, construction and role play materials.

Children are kept very safe both on and off the premises. Staff are highly aware of potential hazards and take positive steps to ensure children are kept safe from harm.

A detailed policy on safety is implemented effectively with regular checks carried out before, during and after sessions. Children develop a good understanding about keeping themselves safe on the premises. They are fully involved in the fire practices with staff explaining the reasons behind the need for rules. Children know, for example, not to run in the main hall since this can cause accidents. They know that permission must be sought from staff before going to the toilet. During outdoor play, children do not go beyond the stated boundaries.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff demonstrate a clear understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect; also of whom to contact in the event of identifying a child protection concern. The setting's written statement is well understood by staff and contains all the required elements.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The varied and stimulating programme of activities results in children having a happy and enjoyable time at the setting. The well spread out activities and resources enables children to explore different avenues in their play. They are fully involved in their chosen activities that include art and crafts, construction and role play. Children show great curiosity as they hear the sounds that different musical instruments make including shakers and bongos. They use their imagination well. In the home corner they have fun playing the role of the chef serving food to the customers. They enjoy competing against each other during table soccer, air hockey and dance mat games. Children are able to sit and relax if they wish in the quiet room. Access to computer equipment enables them to build on their existing IT skills.

Children confidently communicate with staff, expressing their needs and proudly showing them what they have made, for example butterfly collages. They play very well together; consistently sharing, taking turns and showing respect for others. They form good relationships with staff who are attentive and speak to them at their level. Children are listened to by staff who encourage them to express their ideas and views. Staff are very much involved in the children's play which makes them feel valued and secure. The individual achievements of children are praised by staff which in turn promotes their self esteem. Children speak very positively of the setting and comment on the good range of activities available. More importantly they enjoy attending the club and are eager to participate. They value and respect the friendly natured staff which makes for a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel very welcome at the setting. They are highly valued and treated with equal concern thus children develop a good sense of belonging. Children enjoy the ability to make choices and decisions about their play with a wide selection of resources on offer. Their experience of the wider world is suitably promoted through planned activities, for example, as part of America's independence day,

children design and make the country's flag adorning it with the relevant colours. They produce dragon masks as part of the Chinese new year celebrations and sample foods from around the world. Occasionally, children engage in activities that helps them appreciate others who are less fortunate. Respecting each child's individuality and background is fundamental to the setting's ethos.

Children are well behaved. They know what is expected of them through the close relationships fostered with the staff. Staff are very good role models. Children develop good manners as they politely ask for things. There is a clear policy for dealing with behaviour and bullying issues which helps to promote children's self esteem. They know they can discuss any concerns with staff which helps them feel secure within the setting. Children with special needs integrate well into the group. Activities and resources are adapted to ensure all children can participate fully, thus ensuring they have an enjoyable time at the club.

Partnership with parents is good. Children's individual needs are met well since staff obtain a good amount of information from parents and keep them up to date with events via verbal and written means. Newsletters are well received by parents. They speak very highly of the setting and its staff commenting on the well structured sessions and excellent range of activities on offer. They appreciate the level of enjoyment children experience at the club.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are at ease within a very well organised environment. They are confident, independent and are able to initiate their own play. This is due to the good attention paid by staff in planning and implementing routines that give children a broad range of experiences. Children benefit from well deployed staff who consistently interact with them and give them effective support and encouragement, thus helping them feel secure and settled.

Children are kept safe and healthy. The setting implements suitable procedures for clearing staff. Staff keep up to date with relevant training including first aid and child protection thus equipping them with the knowledge to follow procedures correctly. Staff have a strong commitment in developing the club. This involves drawing up action plans to improve areas of practice in order to benefit and enhance the quality of care offered to the children. All record keeping documents are up to date, well organised and stored in confidence. The policies and procedures cover all areas and contribute to the efficient and safe management of the setting. Overall the setting meets the needs of the children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to plan a wider programme of activities appropriate to the ages and interests of the children including opportunities for them to learn and appreciate people from different cultures and backgrounds. Very good progress has been made. The manager and the team show a high level of

commitment in offering an exciting range of activities enabling children to make a wide range of choices and decisions about their play. Children subsequently enjoy and benefit from their experiences including culturally based activities.

The setting agreed to develop staff's understanding and knowledge of child protection issues and procedures. Via attendance at relevant training and the setting's well written statement staff have a sound awareness of what to do in the event of identifying a concern, therefore enhancing further children's protection from harm.

The setting also agreed to review and amend certain policies and procedures in order to meet requirements. The behaviour management, complaints and child protection policies contain the required information. These are understood by staff and made available to parents. They contribute to maintaining children's safety and well being on the premises.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

On 13/05/2005 a concern was raised relating to suitable persons under standard 1 of the National Standards. The setting was asked to address the concern as part of an internal investigation. A satisfactory response in writing was received in June 2005 indicating that standard 1 continued to be met. The provider, therefore remains qualified for registration.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide activities that helps raise children's awareness of those that are less fortunate than themselves and give further opportunities for children of varying age groups to represent their ideas and views.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:

