



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 139451

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	06/05/2003
Inspector Name	Janet Butlin

SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name	Acorn Pre-School & Out of School Playscheme
Setting Address	Acorn Centre Torquay Devon TQ2 8ET

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Ms Marilyn Martin
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name
Address

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting
Acorn Pre School has been established for a many years and forms part of a wider provision which includes out of school and holiday care. It is located within the Acorn Community Centre in Barton Village in Torquay and the provision is managed by the committee of the centre. The pre-school operates sessional care form 9:30 to 12:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and is registered to provide for 26 places for children aged 3-5 years. There are currently seven children on roll, all of whom are three-years-old and in receipt of funding. There are no four-year-olds. Children who attend are mainly from the local area and will attend Barton Primary School. There are no children who have English as an additional language. The group supports children with special needs. Sessions operate mainly from the large hall with the occasional use of the sports hall and there is an outdoor play area. There are four regular members of staff who work a variety of full and part time hours in the pre-school. There is a supervisor who co-ordinates the pre- school and works every session. Two staff members hold early years care and education qualifications. One staff member is due to complete her NVQ level 3 in Childcare and Education this term. There is a Centre Manager who has overall management responsibility who is accountable to a management committee. The management committee is made up of local councillors and members of the public. The group receives the support of the Foundation Stage Advisory Teacher from the Torbay Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The Acorn Pre-school offers acceptable nursery education where children are happy, secure and enjoying their time. However, children's progress towards the early learning goals overall is limited by some significant weaknesses. They make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development, co-operating well and forming good relationships with staff and each other. Children take a particular delight in the use of books. Overall staff have a satisfactory awareness of the foundation stage of learning but teaching has some weaknesses which are mainly due to missed opportunities to extend learning and ineffective use of time and resources. Overall children are polite and their behaviour is good, although occasionally some staff use unhelpful strategies to manage behaviour. The group supports children with special needs and is experienced at working with local supporting agencies. The planning of the provision has improved. Reference is made to the stepping stones and plans would help staff if they all managed to look at them in good time. Assessments are regularly done but not linked to planning for children's individual progression. Staff would like to develop this. Leadership and management of the setting has weaknesses with more emphasis needing to be given to the importance of appropriate resourcing, support and time management within the educational provision. The staff are sensitive to the children's needs and take advantage of training opportunities. The partnership with parents is generally good. They are welcomed to have informal discussions with staff about their children's progress at any time and are welcomed to stay and take part in a session. Although there is a newly created Parents Handbook available to view the parents are not provided with information about the forthcoming educational programme. This means that parent's opportunities to discuss the activities and support their children are limited.

What is being done well?

Children are confident and secure in the setting. Children have an affectionate relationship with staff who know them all well. Children are polite, able to co-operate, share popular toys and concentrate at their chosen tasks. Children's enjoyment of books and stories is well fostered. A warm welcome is extended to parents.

What needs to be improved?

the assessment system in order to plan the next steps for children's learning. the effective use of time and resources. the information available to parents regarding the educational provision, including details of forthcoming activities. the understanding and awareness of all staff regarding the effective presentation of the six areas of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?
<p>The setting has made limited progress since the last inspection. The group have worked hard to improve planning and have arrived at a clear and helpful method. The system of assessment has also been improved but it is not yet used effectively to plan for the next steps in children's learning. The staff have attended courses to support their understanding of the six areas of learning but they are not yet all secure in their effective presentation.</p>

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is generally good. They are confident and secure in the environment. They co-operate well, sharing popular toys and concentrate hard at their chosen tasks. They help each other, for example showing less confident playmates how to hold scissors appropriately. Children are able to sit quietly to listen to stories and are polite. They enjoy confidently sharing their experiences in whole group discussion.	
COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is limited. They enjoy handling books and listen attentively to stories. They also enjoy discussing aspects of their lives. Good emphasis is given to the sounds letters make but clear links are not made between the sound of the letter and what the letter looks like. Children's attention is not drawn to examples of their names or simple words and there are insufficient opportunities to make notes, write or draw whenever they want to.	
MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children make limited progress in mathematical development. They are encouraged to order and sort according to colour and to count out objects but staff do not encourage children to check whether they have counted accurately. Children also enjoy singing number rhymes and count down on their fingers with confidence. Staff do not make full use of opportunities to consolidate maths through everyday play activities such as thinking about position, quantity and difference of size.	
KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children are making generally good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Opportunities are provided for children to observe change and growth and good support is given to their observations of events in their lives. The children are effectively enabled to become aware of features of their local environment and have helpful visits from members of the community. Appropriate technology is used occasionally but opportunities to develop awareness of cultural diversity is limited.	
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children's progress in physical development is limited. They move with control and confidence during well led movement sessions but they are not encouraged to become aware of the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. Tools and malleable materials are used to good effect to develop small muscles. The climbing frame is large and difficult to access so there are insufficient opportunities for children to climb, slide and balance.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children make limited progress in the area of creative development. They enjoy singing along to well known songs and delight in exploring the texture and form of play dough. The children are keen to initiate role play but there are insufficient opportunities for the children to enjoy well supported and resourced role play and dressing up activities. Opportunities for the children to explore colour or express themselves through free drawing and painting are not presented often enough.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately:	Y

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION
The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT
Ensure the assessment system is used to plan the next steps for children's learning. Make effective use of time and resources to help develop children's learning. Improve the information made available to parents regarding the educational provision, ensuring that it includes details of forthcoming activities. Improve the understanding and awareness of all staff regarding the consistent and effective presentation of the six areas of learning.