



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 119925

DfES Number: 510345

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 18/03/2005
Inspector Name Lynn Reeves

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Acorn Nursery School
Setting Address Church Lane
 Cranleigh
 Surrey
 GU6 8AR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Pauline Crowder

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

The Acorn Nursery School opened in 1990. It operates from a purpose built classroom, situated in the grounds of Cranleigh Infant School, Cranleigh. It serves the local and surrounding area.

There are currently 50 children, from two to five years, on roll. This includes 33 funded three year olds and 9 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Provision is made to support children who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:45 & 12:30 until 15:00 Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 09:00 until 12.55 & 13:30 until 15:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Six part-time staff work with the children. All staff have early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Partnership (EYCS).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Acorn Nursery School is acceptable and of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and understand how children learn. They plan a well informed curriculum; activities have clearly focused aims and objectives. Good relationships are formed between the staff and the children; strategies are in place for dealing with unwanted behaviour. Staff enable children to build on their existing skills, which ensures they develop at their own rate and promotes their confidence and self-esteem. Staff use effective questioning to make children think and allow children to express themselves in various ways. Excellent use is made of routines, activity time and incidental opportunities to extend children's learning. Clearly labelled, low-level resources encourage children's independence. Assessments reflect children's abilities and used to inform the next stages of planning. Systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management of the setting are very good. A clear management structure ensures that all staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The head teacher values staff input, regular team meetings and staff appraisals ensure teaching and training needs are monitored. Staff work well as team, they evaluate and review practice and have regular access to training.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are informed about the setting via the prospectus, handbooks and notice boards. They are sent regular newsletters regarding the themes and topics. Details of their child's progress is shared through records, termly progress reports and verbal discussions. Children's files are made available for viewing and commenting on and parents involvement in their child's learning is welcomed and valued.

What is being done well?

- A high standard of teaching enables children to make very good progress in all areas of learning. Staff know the children well and value them as individuals, which has a positive impact on children's confidence and self-esteem.
- The nursery benefits from strong leadership and there is a good programme in place to support staff development. This includes regular meetings, staff appraisals and opportunities to attend additional training.
- Children are happy, confident and show a positive approach to learning; they have good levels of self-esteem, develop very good relationships and behave well.

- Children's independence is well promoted, sessions are organised to allow children to initiate much of their learning; they independently select resources and materials and help to pack things away.
- Children's imagination is well developed in the role-play area, children organise themselves and find the appropriate props such as hard hats and torches, to explore the cave. One child becomes the ticket seller, whilst another is the café owner and makes tea for everyone.
- Staff fully support children and use gentle guidance and appropriate teaching methods to ensure children learn and progress. The organisation of sessions ensures a very good balance of adult and child-initiated activities.
- Excellent systems are in place to monitor all aspects of the curriculum; strengths and weaknesses are identified and the involvement of all staff in planning enables the children to receive a well informed curriculum.
- Parents are invited to be involved in their child's learning, for example, supporting children's reading skills, recognising numbers and letters at home and sending things in relating to the current themes and topics.

What needs to be improved?

- increase opportunities for children to explore sound using musical instruments

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection has been very good. The nursery was asked to consider modifying the design of the current record keeping forms in order to ensure that children's ongoing progress is formally recorded and in order to help support staff in the planning of what children should do next.

Since the last inspection, good systems have been introduced which ensures children's progress is recorded. Staff have regular team meetings to support their understanding of what children should do next. This is clearly written on the plans and assessments.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing a positive attitude to learning and are excited about activities like the new cave they have built. They show good levels of independence when helping to tidy up, serve drinks and snacks and when putting on their aprons and coats. Children develop positive relationships with their peers and adults and have a strong sense of what is appropriate behaviour. They express their thoughts and feelings during circle time, role-play and through creative design.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's early reading and writing skills are very well developed, they confidently link sounds and letters when finding their name badges and naming the days of the week. Children practice emergent writing in role-play and on the writing table and use a range of mark makers. They are confident writers; many have well-developed handwriting and all willingly attempt to label their work. They access books independently, enjoy stories and are encouraged to predict the ending.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have many opportunities to practice their counting and are competent to count to 10 and above. They are encouraged to problem solve, for example, working out which worms are shortest and longest and when measuring the shortest route. Children calculate using groups of objects to add and subtract and songs and nursery rhymes support their learning. They develop an understanding of size and position during a ranges of practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children investigate and explore living things, such as plants and insects, they learn about life cycles and observe natural objects on the nature table. Children have regular access to technology, phones, tapes, torches and microscopes are available. They use the computer with ease and competently access programmes. They gain an understanding of the world through celebrating religious festivals, visiting local amenities and seeing a range of visitors.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children demonstrate good spatial awareness when using climbing apparatus, throwing and catching balls, playing with sit on toys and when dancing and acting out actions to songs. They are gaining good manipulative skills when using scissors, brushes and sponges for painting and making collages; they handle tools and objects safely and with increasing control. Children talk about healthy eating and drinking, they understand they need milk to help their bones and teeth strong.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use their senses to explore a range of textures and media, for example, sand, water and pulses in the media trays, soil for planting and paint textures in the creative area. They recognise shape and create well formed designs in two and three dimensions, for example, stalegtites, paper mache spiders and treasure boxes. They express themselves in dance and re-telling stories, although there are missed opportunities to fully explore sounds using musical instruments on a regular basis.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- ensuring children have regular access to musical instruments to encourage their exploration of sound

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.