



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 199426

DfES Number: 530377

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 19/04/2004
Inspector Name Abigail Langmead

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Acorns Playgroup
Setting Address Church Road
Christian Malford
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 4BW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Acorns Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Acorns Playgroup
Address Church Road
Christian Malford
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 4BW

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Acorns Playgroup opened in 1972.

It operates from one room, toilets and a kitchen in the grounds of Christian Malford Church of England Primary School. The playgroup serves the local area.

There are currently 26 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 6 funded three-year-olds and 13 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children who have special needs.

The group opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 on Tuesday's and Thursday's and 09:00 until 15:00 Monday's and Wednesday's.

Three full-time staff work with the children. All have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Acorns Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children.

There are sufficient procedures in place for staff recruitment and vetting. Staff are vigilant regarding the supervision of children when unvetted parents are helping. Staff are generally aware of the policies and procedures for the setting. These are comprehensive, but lack detail in some areas and are not always specific to the group. There is no record of medication administered to children kept on the premises. Some records are not maintained confidentially. Staff help children to feel welcome through greeting the children and helping them settle. Children have excellent access to all equipment which is stored at a suitable level for them to select. Space is well organised to support the children's play.

Staff are vigilant with regards to children's safety on and off the premises. Most areas of safety have been given consideration. Staff practise good hygiene through

regular hand washing procedures and appropriate parental consents have been obtained in the event of children becoming unwell. Children have regular access to water and enjoy a range of healthy snacks. There are effective arrangements in place for children with special dietary needs. Staff have an adequate knowledge of special needs. There are limited resources available that reflect culture, race, gender and disability.

Staff and children have positive and caring relationships. Children enjoy their play and are stimulated well in most areas of development. Staff question the children effectively to encourage their thinking. Staff are excellent role models for the children who behave well and understand what is expected of them.

There are adequate arrangements to involve parents in their children's learning and keep them informed of their children's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to take action regarding the following:

To devise a policy in the event of a child being lost or uncollected, to devise an equal opportunities policy, to provide a statement of arrangements regarding special needs, to provide a procedure for sick children, to submit an action plan regarding how minimum staffing qualification requirements will be met and in what timescales, to ensure the daily attendance register includes hours of attendance of staff and children, to ensure a no-smoking policy is in operation, to maintain a record of visitors, to undertake a risk assessment of the premises, to make a policy available regarding the administration of medication, to ensure the paving slabs and ladder do not pose a risk to children, ensure children only have access to the kitchen if being used for a supervised cooking activity, and ensure the designated staff member for child protection attends a training course,

The group have responded well to the previous actions raised and have made satisfactory progress. All required policies and procedures are now in place although some lack detail. All staff have a suitable child care qualification. The daily records of attendance for children, staff and visitors are on place, although there are some gaps. A risk assessment has been recently carried out and safety arrangements are regularly reviewed. The supervisor has completed child protection training as the designated person, although the knowledge of all staff needs extending. The school kitchen is only used under supervision for cooking activities. Children have access to the small kitchen off the main room but does not have any cooking appliances and all hazardous substances are out of reach.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide excellent role models to the children. Children behave well and understand what is expected of them.
- Staff are very caring and supportive of the children's needs. They question the children well to encourage their thinking. Children are well stimulated and enjoy their play.

- Toys and equipment are very well organised promoting children's choice and independence. Children are developing good self-care skills as a result.

What needs to be improved?

- written records of medication given to children
- staff knowledge and planning regarding children with special needs
- the range of resources available that reflect culture, race, gender and disability to support the children's learning
- confidentiality of some record keeping
- the complaints procedure
- staff knowledge of child protection and the child protection statement.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
14	Keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children.	20/04/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
10	Increase staff knowledge of the code of practice for children with Special needs.
13	Extend staff knowledge of child protection and update the child protection statement to include details of the designated person and how confidentiality will be managed.
14	Include the regulators details in the complaints procedure.

14	Ensure records relating to accidents and staff details are kept confidential.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The teaching of children is generally good.

Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan for children to make generally good progress across most aspects of the six areas of learning. Plans are not always evaluated effectively or indicate how they will be adapted for children of different ages and abilities. Staff have positive and affectionate relationships with the children. They provide excellent role models and manage the children's behaviour positively and calmly. Staff are highly effective in building children's confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are deployed well and support children appropriately during play. Resources are well organised to help children to be independent. However, there are limited resources available that reflect culture, race, gender and disability to support children learning. Staff generally ensure that large group activities are planned to help children's concentration.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. Staff work very well together as a team and tasks are effectively delegated. Staff show a commitment to the improvement of the education provision through regular training and some areas for improvement have been identified through self-evaluation.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good.

Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting, the Foundation Stage and policies. Parents have some opportunities to be involved in their children's learning through the parent helper rota. However, there are limited formal opportunities for parents to share what they know about their child and to be kept informed of their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children demonstrate a high degree of care and concern for others. They have positive relationships with staff and respond well to their praise and encouragement. The ability of staff to build children's confidence and self-esteem is excellent.
- Children are confident communicators. They are enthusiastic when participating in rhymes, songs and stories. They ask appropriate questions to extend their knowledge and enjoy using books and technology to support their learning.

- Children have good counting and problem solving skills due to practising these on a daily basis. They are developing adding and subtraction skills very well.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to learn about a wide range of cultures and beliefs and access to resources that reflect culture, race, gender and disability.
- opportunities for children to express their imagination independently.
- the partnership with parents and carers.
- the planned use of the outdoor playground for physical play.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to address the following key issues:

Develop short-term planning to ensure learning objectives of main activities are clear, children are grouped where appropriate to facilitate learning and indication is given of how activities should be adapted to meet individual children's needs.

Expand the assessment system to provide more detailed coverage of children's progress in each of the six learning areas. Use information gained to plan for individual children. Provide opportunities for parents to contribute to formal assessment.

Increase the challenge within the programme for older children by (i) providing more planned opportunities to develop early writing skills, including writing names regularly onto work; (ii) including more demanding stories in group story times and; (iii) encouraging them to discuss and investigate projects in 'more depth'.

The group have made generally good progress since the last inspection. Plans for structured activities now indicate the learning intentions, staff responsibilities and resources. The assessment system provides details of children's progress in all six areas of learning which is used to plan for their learning. Children are provided with regular planned opportunities to develop early writing skills and regularly write their own names on their work. They enjoy a range of stories and staff extend their vocabulary. Children also discuss projects in depth, for example, the current mini beast topic. However, plans do not indicate how the activity will be adapted for children's individual needs, including SEN. There are limited opportunities for parents to contribute to formal assessment.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are motivated to learn and explore their environment. They show a high degree of care and concern for others and living things. They speak confidently in large groups and have positive relationships with staff and each other. Children operate independently demonstrating good self care skills. Children's ability to manage their own behaviour and concentration is sometimes affected by the length of group activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children enthusiastically participate in rhymes and songs as part of their daily routine. They enjoyed listening to the story 'Beetle in the Bathroom' on the day of inspection. They speak confidently in the large group and ask questions to extend their learning. They link sounds and letters well and have regular opportunities to identify their own name, reinforced by labels in their environment. They use books to support their learning and are developing early writing skills well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children demonstrate good counting skills and are able to recognise and draw numbers, placing them in correct sequence. They enjoy singing songs with numbers and use mathematical language in their play. Children are confident in problem solving and practise this through the daily routine. They are able to add together different numbers to make a total number. Children can identify basic shapes and match items with similar features. They can state if an item is heavy or light.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to explore and investigate a range of man made and natural materials and demonstrate a strong sense of curiosity during play. They observe living things and show an awareness of change and pattern. They are able to practise their ICT skills on a daily basis using technology to support their learning. They can identify features of their local community and talk about events in their lives. Opportunities to learn about a wide range of cultures and beliefs are more limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to move safely and with control around furniture and during play. They can hop, skip, march and change direction. They can stop and go safely. They learn about the effect of exercise on their bodies through planned activities although this is not always reinforced through the daily routine. They are able to manipulate a wide range of small and large equipment and handle tools safely. Older children are not always able to extend their large muscle skills during outdoor play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use their imagination well to explore texture, colour and form using a variety of different media. They enjoy participating in well organised role play using props to enhance their play. Children enjoy exploring sound and rhythm using musical instruments. They sing familiar songs with enthusiasm using actions and use musical activities well to shape everyday routines. Children's planned creative activities are sometimes limited by expectations to create a pre-defined end product.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- Extend opportunities for children to develop their awareness of a wide range of cultures and beliefs. Provide a wide range of resources that reflect culture, race, gender and disability to support their learning.
- Plan opportunities for children to express their imagination spontaneously using a wide range of materials.
- Consider how to more effectively encourage parents to share what they know about their children and be kept informed of their children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.