



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY278160

DfES Number: 542156

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/12/2004
Inspector Name Jane Rea

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name Acorns Pre-School (Cockington)
Setting Address Cockington Primary School
 Old Mill Road
 Torquay
 Devon
 TQ2 6AP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Deborah Stephens

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

Acorns Pre-school (Cockington) was originally registered in 1999 and was owned and run by the present owner as part of a partnership. She became the sole owner, and therefore re-registered the pre-school, in 2004. The pre-school is situated in a pre-fabricated temporary classroom in the grounds of Cockington Primary School. The out-of-school club has the additional use of the school hall, playgrounds and associated facilities. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. The pre-school is open for children aged three to five years and operates Monday to Friday from 08:45 to 15:00 term-times only. It offers two funded nursery education sessions per day, with the option of children staying over the lunch period. Out-of-school care is offered from 08:00 to 08:45 and 15:00 until 18:00 during term-times and from 08:00 until 18:00 during school holidays. Priority for places for out of school care go to children attending Cockington Primary School or Acorns Pre-school. The setting supports children with special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language, providing one-to-one support where required. Eight staff are currently employed with an additional member of staff available for emergency cover. The owner and majority of staff have level three qualifications in childcare. The pre-school is currently undertaking accreditation with the Pre-school Learning Alliance and also receives support from the Foundation Stage Advisory Teachers and Playlines.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Acorns Pre-school provides high quality nursery education and children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of how young children learn. They plan a very good range of practical activities that take account of children's age and ability. Very effective use is made of time and resources to maintain children's interest and motivate them to learn. However, resources to support children's understanding of cultural diversity are limited. Productive links made between areas of learning, help children to practise their skills in a range of situations. For example, children practise writing when involved in creative role-play. Staff involve themselves extensively in children's play and adapt their teaching to ensure all children receive the support and challenge they need to learn very well. An effective assessment system ensures children's progress and achievements are recorded. This information is used well when planning future activities.

Leadership and management are very good. All staff share the leader's aims and high aspirations for the pre-school. Very effective communication between staff enables them to work very well as a team. Effective monitoring procedures are in place and staff regularly complete additional training to improve their knowledge and skills. They are committed to developing further their procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the provision to ensure it continues to improve.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are very confident in the provision made by the pre-school for their children. They talk to staff daily and are kept well informed about what their children are learning and the progress they are making. Communication with parents is welcomed and they receive advice and support from staff to help them support their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Very effective teamwork and staff involvement in children's activities support children's learning very well.
- Staff manage children well and productive relationships ensure children's personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- Communication, language and literacy are very well supported and children make very good progress in learning about letter sounds, writing and reading.
- Children make very good progress in their understanding of numbers and their ability to solve mathematical problems.
- Very good opportunities are provided for children to explore and investigate their world and to use their imagination.

What needs to be improved?

- further development of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the provision so that they continue to identify clearly what it does well and what it needs to improve
- the range of resources used to support children's knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff training and the purchase of resources have improved the opportunities planned for children to listen to and appreciate music and to develop their climbing skills which were raised as issues in the previous report.

Staff have attended training to improve their knowledge of how to support children's learning in music. Regular opportunities are planned to develop children's appreciation of a wide variety of music and their musical skills. Staff know what they want children to learn and use good resources very effectively. Children sing confidently and use instruments to create their own music in their everyday play. They dance to a range of music with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Children have regular opportunities to develop their climbing skills as they play on the outdoor climbing frame. This activity also supports children's co-ordination and their balancing skills.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, enthusiastic and enjoy learning. Staff manage children well and children develop very good relationships with staff and each other and behave very well. Children develop good levels of independence when completing tasks such as putting out and clearing away cups and plates at snack-time and choosing activities. They concentrate well and persist with tasks when working alone or together. Children share and take turns and are considerate of each other's needs.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's language development for communication and thinking is very good. They enjoy sharing books and retelling stories that are familiar to them. They understand that print carries meaning and read some familiar words such as their own names and those of their friends. Children recognise letters and the sounds they make. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise forming letters correctly and to use writing for different purposes such as shopping lists in their role-play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently use numbers and mathematical vocabulary because staff support them very well in many practical activities. Daily routines such as snack-time are used very well to support children's understanding of numbers. Children count to 10 and tackle problems linked to addition and subtraction as for example they count, then eat segments of orange. They recognise and create simple patterns when threading beads. Children describe flat and solid shapes when involved in creative work.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children eagerly use their senses to explore and investigate their world. Their curiosity is encouraged as for example they watch a block of ice thaw. They confidently use everyday technology and when making models they learn how objects can be joined together. Visits support children's awareness of their environment and the natural world very well. They develop an awareness of other cultures by celebrating festivals such as Diwali although resources to support their learning are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move confidently and with good co-ordination inside and outside. They control large wheeled toys skilfully and have a good awareness of space and each other. They use small equipment such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes with good control for children their age. For example they form letters and cut out shapes accurately. They understand the effect exercise has on their bodies and develop a good awareness of how good hygiene helps keep them healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

A wide variety of activities provide very good opportunities for children to explore colour, shape, texture and form. They respond enthusiastically and use all their senses to express themselves through imaginative play, painting, music and dance. Children listen to a broad range of music and sing songs and rhymes from memory. They accompany themselves using instruments and record their own music using tape-recorders. Children perform confidently and dance with uninhibited pleasure.

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:
- the further development of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision
- improving the resources available to support children's awareness of cultural diversity.

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.