



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 510074

DfES Number: 524668

INSPECTION DETAILS

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| Inspection Date | 01/11/2004 |
| Inspector Name | Shirley Ann Jackson |

SETTING DETAILS

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| Day Care Type | Sessional Day Care |
| Setting Name | Acorns |
| Setting Address | Churcham Primary School Churcham Gloucestershire GL2 8BD |

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

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|------|-------------------------|
| Name | The Committee of Acorns |
|------|-------------------------|

ORGANISATION DETAILS

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| Name | Acorns |
| Address | Churcham Primary School Churcham Glos GL2 8BD |

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 opened in 1996. It operates from a room in Churcham Primary School. The group serves the village and surrounding rural area. It is run by a voluntary committee of parents.

There are currently five children from three to four years on roll. This includes three funded three-year-olds and two funded four-year-olds. The group can support children with special needs. There are no children currently attending who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens three days a week during school term times. Sessions are on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:30 until 12:15. It will open for more days in the spring term.

Two staff work with the children. The leader is a qualified primary school teacher, who also has a recognised qualification in early years. The setting is a member of and receives support from Gloucester's Playgroup and Toddler Association (PATA).

How good is the Day Care?

Acorns offers good quality care to children.

The staff work well together as a team. They work directly with children to support their play and learning. They are also aware of when to let the children take the lead. Children are cared for in premises which are clean, bright, and welcoming. Displays on the walls show and value children's work. A range of good quality and well maintained toys and resources are available for the children to play with.

Staff are vigilant about children's safety at all times, indoor and outdoors. Clear procedures are in place for administering medication. Children are aware of and implement good hygiene procedures throughout the session. Adults are aware of each child's individual needs and offer the appropriate care. They understand the child protection procedures.

Children are offered an interesting range of activities and spontaneous learning is well supported. Staff have good relationships with children. Children are settled, secure and comfortable in their company. Adult interaction with children is good. They listen to and value what the children say and respond accordingly. Children are treated as individuals and encouraged to be as independent as possible. Staff are positive role models for children. They have a calm, re-assuring manner and children follow this lead. Staff use praise and encouragement to raise self-esteem and promote positive behaviour.

The partnership with parents is strong. Parents are given good quality information about the setting and this continues through regular newsletters and a current notice board. Daily informal exchanges of information take place between parents and staff. Parents are happy with the care given to their child.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to:

develop an operational plan.

The group have put an operational plan in place which is appropriate.

develop resources to promote positive images of people with disability.

The group has purchased books and posters which reflect positive images of people with disability. In addition the school have had a visit from a blind man with his guide dog. The pre-school group were invited to join in with this.

keep a record of any significant incidents.

The group now has somewhere to record significant incidents, but to date have not had to do so.

develop the behaviour policy.

The group have expanded and developed their behaviour policy. This is appropriate and is consistently implemented by staff. It is shared with parents via the parent's handbook.

update the complaints procedure to include the name, address and telephone number of the regulator.

The regulator's details have now been added to the group's complaints policy.

What is being done well?

- Staff are skilled, experienced and supportive. They work directly with the children to support their play and learning. But they are also aware of when to let the children take the lead in activities.

- Staff offer an interesting and occasionally spontaneous range of activities for the children. Plans show that a topic was changed to incorporate children's interest in a particular subject.
- Children have good relationships with staff and with each other. Children are settled, secure and comfortable in their environment. Adult interaction with children is good. They listen and value what the children say and respond accordingly.
- Staff are consistent in their expectations and management of behaviour. They are positive role models for the children. They have a sticker system to promote positive behaviour and to raise self-esteem.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures to develop the risk assessments

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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

| Std | Recommendation |
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| 6 | develop risk assessments to minimize identified risks |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Acorns offers good quality provision which helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. In the areas of personal, social and emotional, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world, children are making very good progress.

Teaching is generally good. The play leader has a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. An interesting range of activities are offered to the children, and the good use is made of spontaneous opportunities that arise to extend children's knowledge. However, older/more able children are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly in developing their writing skills, linking sounds to letters and simple problem solving. Relationships with children are good. Staff provide positive role models and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They set clear and consistent limits. Staff promote children's self-esteem and confidence through praise and encouragement.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff and the committee are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Good links have been developed between the staff and committee. They are constantly reviewing and updating their practice following training and monitoring visits. Monitoring of the group's strengths and weaknesses is carried out informally and has not identified some weaknesses. Staff, committee and parents are working together to improve the quality of the care and education which the playgroup provide.

Partnership with parents is generally good. They feel able and welcome to share any information verbally at any time. They are given good information about the Foundation Stage and feel able to approach staff with any questions. Staff seek prior information from the parents before the children start at the group. There are limited opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- Staff work directly with the children to support their play and learning. They interact when needed, but also know when to step back and let children take the lead.
- Staff give children the freedom to express themselves creatively, for example, when building rockets, one child wanted to make a bus. This was encouraged by the play leader who incorporated this idea into the scene she was building to display on the wall.
- Children develop confidence with information technology and know how to operate simple functions on the computer, such as changing from text to drawing tools, and then back again. Some three-year-olds know how to print their pictures off the computer.

What needs to be improved?

- the plans to include challenges for the older/more able children, especially in regard to learning letter sounds and undertaking simple problem solving in practical mathematics.
- the opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group have made generally good progress since the last inspection.

At the last inspection the group were asked to:

ensure that children have opportunities to climb and balance regularly and that equipment is appropriate for three-year-olds to develop their skills.

The group have fundraised to buy a balance beam that is appropriate for use by all the children. This is used regularly along with the schools equipment and outdoor climbing apparatus. The group work around the school's use of the hall and outdoor playground, and this is inevitably somewhat restricting.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a strong exploratory impulse and a positive approach to new experiences. They show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities. Children talk freely about their home and community. They show a strong sense of self as a member of their family. Children relate to and make attachments to members of their group, for example the four-year-old who wanted to show a friend what she'd built. Children take initiatives and manage appropriate tasks well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children listen to others in small groups when conversation interests them. Children listen to stories with increasing attention and recall. They are beginning to describe main story setting and principal characters. Children handle books carefully. They hold books the correct way up and turn the pages. Children draw and paint. They use one-handed tools and equipment. More able children are not always encouraged to develop their writing skills or gain awareness of linking sounds to letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They use number language spontaneously, for example the four-year-old talking about a birthday in "two weeks". Some children recognise numerals to ten. Older children are beginning to represent numbers with fingers. Children can describe sizes. they show an interest in talking about shapes. More able children are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly with solving simple practical problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show an interest in how things work. They describe simple features of objects, such as the oven being hot. Children construct with a purpose in mind. They join construction pieces together to build and balance. Children show an interest in ICT. Older children perform simple functions on the computer. Children show interest in the lives of people familiar to them. They show an interest in the world in which they live, when going for walks, farm visits and playing in the snow.

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| PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT | |
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
| Children move freely with pleasure and confidence. They adjust speed or change direction to avoid obstacles when playing on trikes. Children show respect for other children's personal space when playing among them. They show awareness of own needs with regard to hygiene. Children demonstrate increasing skill and control in the use of mark-making implements and small world activities. Opportunities to raise children's awareness of healthy practices are limited. | |

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| CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT | |
| Judgement: | Very Good |
| Children are beginning to differentiate colours. They are beginning to describe the texture of things. Children imitate and create movement in response to music. Children sing a few, simple, familiar songs. Some children sing to themselves. Children talk about personal intentions, describing what they were trying to do. They respond to comments and questions entering into discussion about their creations. They understand that different media can be combined. | |

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

- develop plans to include challenges for the older/more able children, especially in regard to learning the letter sounds and solving simple mathematical problems
- improve opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning

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.