

Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	142977
Inspection date	28/09/2010
Inspector	Christine Huard

Setting address	Paradise Crescent, Evercreech, Somerset, BA4 6EH
------------------------	--

Telephone number	01749 831338
Email	acorns@evercreech030303.fsnet.co.uk
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Acorns Pre-school opened in 1971. It operates from a purpose built building, which is situated in the grounds of Evercreech Primary School in Somerset. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00am until 1.00pm during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and regularly use the school gymnasium. There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children who attend are from the local area and surrounding villages. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with English as an additional language. The pre-school is run by a committee, who employ six members of staff. Four of whom work full time and two work part time. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and continue to attend ongoing training courses.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Acorns Pre-school makes outstanding provision for children. There is a wide variety of exciting and stimulating activities which ensure children's learning and development are outstanding. The highly effective team working with the manager ensures that individual children's needs are met. Partnership with parents and carers, and relationships with the school in whose grounds it is sited are excellent. All recommendations from the last report have been fully addressed. There is a good focus on monitoring and evaluating practice and staff are actively involved in developing their practice and adding to their qualifications. Training programmes are very well targeted to meet the needs of the staff. There is an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- fully completing the setting's self-evaluation form.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were extremely comprehensive and there is a great emphasis on ensuring that children are kept safe at all times. All procedures for ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children are fully in place and staff have first-aid and child-protection training. At the start and end of each session, the inside and outdoor areas and equipment are

thoroughly assessed for risks and the assessment sheet displayed. The quality of written risk assessments is high.

The setting is very well run by a skilled and experienced manager and a well-established mature team. They use a good range of strategies to identify the strengths and areas for development to drive further improvement of provision although the self-evaluation is not fully collated into one easy to access document. All the recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Monitoring systems to ensure the quality of provision and care are fully in place and all staff receive regular feedback on their practice. Planning is now of high quality and demonstrates extremely well how more-able children can be extended and support provided for those who find things more difficult. Weekly staff meetings means that practice is evaluated on a regular basis and all are committed to improvement.

The setting is fully inclusive and equal opportunities are promoted extremely well. Diversity is celebrated and discrimination not tolerated in any form. Parents and carers receive regular newsletters and a wide range of information about activities taking place. They are active in raising funds to support the setting and are extremely happy with the provision for their children. Parents and carers are invited to share information about their child's learning and development at home by 'Wow Sheets' for the 'Wow Tree'. They receive regular feedback about their children and staff make themselves available to speak with them at any time. There are more formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress, and next steps in learning and development, at regular intervals.

The pre-school has close links with the local toddler group and enjoys sharing a wide range of activities with the school, for example they attend services with them on special occasions, so that children moving to school are familiar with the school environment. The setting has many links with local businesses and shops and utilise links with public services, such as the fire brigade, to reinforce key learning so children understand better how to keep themselves safe.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The children are very well cared for and very happy. They settle quickly in the morning and enjoy singing their morning greetings, discussing the date and weather and getting ready for play. They rapidly become absorbed in a wide variety of activities which enable them to develop and learn effectively. A visual timetable ensures they understand the programme for the morning's activities. Social and personal skills are developing extremely well. Children are very sociable. They gain in confidence and learn how to share and work together. They cooperate willingly with other children and adults.

Since the last inspection, there have been several improvements made to the learning environment so that children can freely access equipment both indoors and out and take more responsibility for their own learning. The environment is stimulating. Maximum use is made of limited space. For example, a sensory board

gives children access to a wide range of excellent tactile and visual experiences in a very small space. Because activities are imaginative and exciting, children really enjoy their time at pre-school even more and make excellent progress in their learning and development. Good attention is paid to ensuring that the needs and interests of all children are met. At the time of inspection children were happily making collage pictures or creating models from re-cycled materials. Staff took every opportunity to discuss with the children what they were doing. One child spent some time re-iterating that they were going to make not one, but two dinosaurs. They took great care in cutting out the paper for the spiny back in a series of immaculate zig zags and really concentrated well on their task. There is a good-sized enclosed outdoor area for the children and they often choose to be outside. They enjoy riding bikes, playing in the sand and using the hoist to lift buckets of bricks.

Planning shows coverage of all areas of learning and specific activities planned for the week, based on the children's interests and needs. It clearly indicates what knowledge and skills are to be gained from the activities, particularly those planned and led by adults. Regular observations are made of children's progress and these are recorded in the 'Learning Pathways'. These are excellent records of children's achievements and are enhanced by photographs and samples of children's work. Next steps in learning are clearly identified and show clearly what the child needs to do to reach the next stage in learning and development.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks and through discussions with adults gain an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children have plenty of exercise and fresh air in the outdoor environment, which they access freely. All activities are well planned to ensure children understand the need to stay safe. They all fully understand the importance of playing safely together and moving around the premises sensibly. Behaviour is good and children respond well to consistent use of positive praise. Children are all well supported. There is plenty of positive reinforcement, use of signing, and action songs to ensure they are fully included. Relationships are very good and children support each other well and share resources. They enjoy taking responsibilities, such as giving out the drinks and snacks and willingly help to wash up afterwards. Self -registration and the use of a 'choices board' means they learn to take responsibility for their own learning and make excellent progress towards achieving the necessary skills for the future.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met