

# Acorn Pre-School Committee

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 253622  
**Inspection date** 21/10/2010  
**Inspector** Aune Turkson-Jones

**Setting address** The Portacabin, Whaplode CE Primary School, Mill Lane,  
Whaplode, Lincolnshire, PE12 6TS  
**Telephone number** 01406 373400  
**Email**  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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.

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## **Description of the setting**

Acorn Pre-school is managed by a committee and has charitable status. It operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Whaplode Church of England Primary School in the rural village of Whaplode, Lincolnshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area, part of which has overhead covering.

There are currently 40 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs five staff. Four of the staff, including the supervisor, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The supervisor has completed an Early Years foundation degree and is working towards completing a bachelor's degree.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Acorns Pre-school provides a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all of the children who attend. The setting is fully inclusive and is able to cater for children's individual needs. Activities are set out at the start of each session and planned so that they meet the needs of the early years children well. Staff are largely effective at using the resources and space available to promote children's learning. The supervisor and her team are passionate about creating memorable learning experiences for all of the children and the commitment and dedication amongst staff for driving improvements means that the setting has an outstanding capacity for progress in the future.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further the layout of the outdoor area by creating specific zones where children can enhance their learning when selecting resources and activities.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management of the setting has improved greatly since the last inspection, and the stable, yet relatively new team, have brought about several improvements to practices. Improved and rigorous self-evaluation has facilitated highly inclusive,

thorough planning. Practitioners plan for their key children, based on the child's interests and defined learning needs at the time. Staff help children to develop positive attitudes towards people's differences by providing a range of resources which reflect diversity. The setting displays positive pictures depicting cultural variations and different types of families. There are plans to further harness the linguistic skills of parents, so that more of the setting's written information is accessible. Staff lead by example and are good role models, which the children emulate.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are excellent because staff use their substantial knowledge and training to ensure that children are and feel extremely safe. A member of staff is the designated health and safety officer and carries out very thorough risk assessments of all areas on a daily and weekly basis, ensuring that all aspects of the setting provide a safe environment for children to learn and play in. The site is fully secure and the only access is via the main school entrance. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place and all staff have been subjected to the necessary checks. Staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and have clear procedures to follow should concerns be raised. Knowledge is kept up to date through regular training and children are encouraged to adopt safe practices. The setting reacts quickly to make additional improvements to its practises to ensure that the most effective safeguarding measures are in place. For example, a parent's photographs from a recent farm visit included other children in the background, and the supervisor swiftly enhanced the photograph policy to ensure that the children are protected from potential harm via exposure to any internet or social networking sites. The setting has implemented a rigorous absence log, including an out of hours answer phone, to improve their knowledge of the children's whereabouts at all times.

Parents are positive about the setting and express their views through daily conversations. Each child receives a comments books, along with literacy and activity packs, which families borrow from the setting. Parents are actively involved in several events and activities and a parent commented that the setting 'was recommended to me and I prefer to travel further because the staff are excellent.' The setting has very good partnerships and links with a number of different agencies, ensuring that all of the children receive good support as and when they need it. The setting's special educational needs advisor works closely with the host primary and other feeder primaries to ensure that information is shared effectively. The staff recently collaborated with parents and extended family members in a Makaton training session, to improve the provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children receive the extra support required so that they are all fully included in the predominantly child-initiated daily activities. A clear vision of improvement, coupled with an enthusiastic, established, close working team, ensures that the setting is driving up the quality of provision and this delivers good outcomes for all of the children who attend. Children also benefit from sharing the school's facilities, such as the field and outdoor play areas and from opportunities to socialise with some of the older children.

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

Children are engaged and busy throughout their time in the setting, which provides a varied range of activities each day. While there is an overlying routine for each session, there are ample opportunities for children to move between indoor and outdoor activities and make their own choices. Children are well supported in their learning and a key worker system is in place. Parents are aware of this and can speak regularly with staff regarding all aspects of their child's development. Each child also has their own information book, which moves between home and the setting, creating an essential open dialogue between staff and parents. This helps staff with their planning, which can be tailored to suit the learning and developmental needs of each individual child and any relevant information is added to the child's 'All About Me' book. Regular observational assessments are carefully recorded and entries into children's learning journals are referenced alongside aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The journals are passed onto Reception teachers when children move on to school, providing essential, detailed information about each child's development. Literacy and activity packs are available for parents to sign out and use at home, so that they can encourage children's communication, language and literacy skills, as well as encourage and promote health awareness for the whole family. Each pack also contains a comments book which staff use to monitor, evaluate and refine their activities.

The range of strategies used to promote learning and development results in children becoming more active, creative learners, with increasing critical thinking skills. Children are encouraged to make their own choices and to take responsibility for themselves. The indoor and outdoor areas are accessible to the children at all times, and children choose their own activities from the range of resources available. Staff are keen to improve the learning environment further to enable children to focus their choices, by organising the outdoor space so that it has more distinctly set out zones with resources to promote literacy and numeracy skills. This setting supports progression towards the early learning goals through play and exploration and learning is both planned and purposeful. Planning of activities is supported by ongoing observation and assessment, used to ensure that children achieve well. Opportunities for early mark making and counting skills are woven through all aspects of the setting and staff question children to deepen their understanding and knowledge.

Staff use open questions to draw out as much information as possible from the children, who are steered towards thinking about their answers and becoming more responsible for their actions. Children register themselves at the start of each session and help to prepare and select their own drinks and snacks. They clear up after themselves, wipe the tables and tend to their own personal hygiene in a highly responsible way. Children have an excellent awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles as the setting is participating in a local healthy childcare award scheme. The scheme has included families and different members of the local community. Children have participated in a variety of activities, such as dance sessions, preparing healthy food and vegetable printing. Children say that they feel safe and have an outstanding awareness of safety because staff use everyday

opportunities to reinforce learning. Children move freely between different activities and show that they can play safely and generally resolve their own disputes. Staff promote good hygiene habits and children know that they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snacks. Appropriate action is taken when children are ill and suitable steps taken to prevent the spread of infection. As resources are deemed ready for replacement, staff are considering a move towards using equipment made from more sustainable materials, depending upon available funding. Staff translate their high expectations in a calm, reassuring way and children respond positively and behave well in this environment.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **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