

Acorn Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY405936
Inspection date	29/06/2010
Inspector	Christine Stimson

Setting address	Wimbledon Chase Middle School, Merton Hall Road, LONDON, SW19 3QB
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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).

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 nursery is one of two nurseries run by an individual proprietor who took over the existing ownership of the nursery in March 2010. The nursery operates from a self-contained and purpose-built building in the grounds of Wimbledon Chase Primary School in the London Borough of Merton. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in a residential area and is open each weekday with sessions from 9am to 12.30pm and 12.30pm to 3pm, term-time only. They also offer wrap around care for children attending the school's nursery on a part-time basis.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 30 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part time places. The nursery currently supports children with English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are four members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are supported in their play by staff who know them well and, as a result, children are happy and confident within the secure setting. Children are making some progress towards the early learning goals, but the lack of individual planning and monitoring of observations does not help children to their next step of development. Relationships with parents are warm and trusting, with information verbally exchanged each day. However, partnerships with outside agencies, although established, do not include sharing information about children's learning and achievements. The nursery has not yet self-evaluated their practice to establish strengths and weaknesses, but have plans to do this as part of their continual improvement. Staff's awareness of how to safeguard children is sound, but some regulatory documentation and requirements are not fully met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure the setting has a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager (Suitable people) 13/07/2010
- keep a written record of medicines given to children (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (Also applies to the Childcare Register) 13/07/2010
- request written permission from all parents for seeking 13/07/2010

emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (Also applies to the Childcare Register).

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

- plan activities that offer physical challenges and plenty of opportunities for physical activity
- ensure children's starting points are known at time of placement to enable staff to move children forward in their learning. Make sure progress records, based on observation and assessment, are kept for every child attending the nursery
- develop the planning of activities to include individual planning for each child based on their interests and abilities and make sure next steps are noted and acted upon
- ensure practitioners regularly share children's development and learning records and any other relevant information when children attend other settings
- review the risk assessments that are conducted daily on the premises so that any hazards found and action taken are indicated
- make sure an effective self-evaluation system is organised so outcomes are monitored through regular quality checks and self assessment, leading to clear identification of targets for further improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and protected as staff implement safeguarding procedures and policies. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and new staff are not left alone with children until their vetting procedures have been completed. Risk assessments are in place for the indoor and outdoor areas of the nursery. However, the form used does not have details of any hazards found and action taken, even though there have been occasions when this has arisen. Regular fire drills ensure children learn how to leave the building quickly and safely, but management need to monitor this to ensure any children absent on the day are aware of the procedure. Staff supervise children at all times and the building is safe and secure with all visitors monitored. Children's well-being is compromised as medication records are not consistently maintained and not all parents have been requested to give written permission to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

Information about how staff meet children's personal needs is relayed to parents verbally and at this time work is sent home and information exchanged about what children have been doing. The nursery does not have a system in place to establish children's starting points, but staff make observations on children's achievements and this information is kept in a learning journey. However, within this record there are limited details of how staff move children to their next step of development. Planning is based on group activities with a list of resources to be

used and has been linked to the six areas of learning. However, it is not always adhered to and children do not improve their physical skills due to a lack of planning for this area. Children's individual abilities and interests are not taken into account when staff plan activities. As a result children are not monitored to see how much progress they are making towards the early learning goals. Formal arrangements for parents to look at their children's records have not yet started.

Staff are well deployed within the setting, but there is no deputy manager in post to take over if the manager is absent. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection stated their children are happy and staff are caring and attentive to their children's needs. Furniture, equipment and resources are suitable for the ages of the children attending and the environment is conducive to their learning and development requirements. The nursery promotes inclusion through their partnership with parents and children. Some children attending have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are welcomed by staff and in particular by children, who initiate play and conversation with them. Children are able to self-select toys, some of which reflect diversity.

Staff have established links with the school nursery which some children attend. However, exchanges of information are limited to messages sent from parents and does not extend to sharing information about children achievements, interests and abilities. Some children's records have not been updated since April 2010, because staff made the presumption that now they attend the school nursery part-time their progress would be monitored there. They are now clearer in their understanding that both nurseries need to monitor children's progress and work in partnership. Self-evaluation of the nursery has not yet started, but the owner and manager are aware staff, parents and children should be involved in this process. The registered person encourages staff to embrace training opportunities and has future plans for continuous improvement of the nursery.

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

Children are happy and settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff set up the playroom to incorporate activities and children make a choice in what they do. They are active and select some resources for themselves from clearly labelled boxes in an organised environment. Children are supported by a caring team of staff who take steps to ensure the welfare needs of the children are met. Adult activities such as gluing and sticking are supported by staff, but the lack of resource planning means children have to wait to use the glue and the glue stick, which results in children losing interest.

Children love the book corner, which is made cosy by the use of cushions with books kept at child height. Children are familiar with many stories and love to re-tell them to their friends. For example, one child held three other children's attention as she re-told the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. She had the book open and facing them, turning the pages to show them the illustrations as she narrated the story.

Children spend a lot of time in the small garden and enjoy activities such as painting fences with large brushes and buckets of water. They are enthusiastic users of the sand and water trays and some children bring books to this area to share with staff. A gazebo protects children from the sun and staff make sure children have sun cream on before they venture out to play. Children help staff to tidy away toys accompanied by a tidy up time song they are all familiar with. They busy themselves collecting things from the floor and putting them back into boxes. During this time some children run around and are asked to stop this by staff. However, no explanation is offered to children as to why this is unacceptable behaviour.

Children are learning to keep themselves healthy as they have nutritious snacks and drinks provided for them by the nursery, and tuck into a lunch prepared by their parents. Information is given to parents by the nursery about what to put in lunch boxes, which are stored in the foyer of the nursery. The lack of regular physical activities does not help children to understand the benefits of exercise. Children follow routines of hand washing before meals, after using the toilet and after messy play. Hand washing guidance in the form of photos help children to follow this procedure and many are becoming independent in this skill.

Children are becoming aware of how to keep themselves safe and demonstrate they feel secure and confident following familiar routines. For example, they take part in fire drills and talk to staff about why they should not go beyond the gate of the nursery unaccompanied. The premises are secure with doors locked when children are not playing outside. The glass panel in door enables staff to see who is ringing the bell.

Children make a positive contribution to the setting with their willingness to make choices in their play. They are well behaved, polite and cooperative. They join in and share with each other, making friends and accepting each others differences. Children are confident to approach those not familiar to them. For example, many children introduced themselves to the inspector, asked the inspector's name and then questioned the inspector about what she was doing.

Children have regular opportunities to mark make, using crayons and pencils and enjoy rubbing crayons over objects to produce the image on their paper. However, on occasions staff miss the opportunity for children to attempt to write their names on their work. Children enjoy using the computer and are confident in their use of the mouse and the keyboard. Staff are on hand if they have a problem and oversee this area of play to ensure all children have use of it. Children count as a group when the morning register is taken to establish how many children are present and work in children's folders indicates when children are confident in recognising and naming shapes.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	4
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report. 13/07/2010