

Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219945
Inspection date	06/10/2010
Inspector	Sue Rogers
Setting address	The Grange School, Staverton Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire, NN11 4HW
Telephone number	01327 705785
Email	
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).

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.

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 Childcare is a well-established setting, managed by the head teacher of The Grange Primary School in Daventry. The setting operates from a refurbished and extended bungalow, a foundation stage classroom and the school hall. It serves children who attend the school and also attracts some families from the wider area. There are currently 59 children on roll and children attend for a variety of the sessions available. The group is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week. Sessions are from 7.30am to 8.40am in the morning and from 3.15pm to 6pm in the afternoons, during term times. During school holidays the setting opens from 8am to 6pm, excluding the Christmas break.

Five staff work with the children each day, one of whom has an appropriate level 3 qualification and three have level 2. One member of staff is working towards a level 3 qualification. The setting receives support from an early years mentor from the local authority and works in close partnership with the primary school. It is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The committed and well-motivated staff team ensure that children make strong progress in their development and learning by providing a wide range of activities. All required documentation, policies and procedures have been recently reviewed and children's welfare and individual needs are supported. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are improving systems for recording children's progress. A broad range of interesting activities are delivered that encourage children to work together as a team and help them forge friendships. The setting successfully engages in self-evaluation and furthers the drive for improvement by consulting with all stakeholders and using feedback to draw up action plans, ensuring that children learn and develop in a safe place. The setting demonstrates good capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems for observing and assessing each child's achievements, interests and learning styles to identify priorities and plan for children's next steps in their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to protecting children. Safeguarding policies and procedures reflect current legislation and are accessible to parents. The setting is well supported by the school staff, who offer their advice and expertise in respect of concerns. There are thorough systems in place for the recruitment of staff, with records being maintained of vetting procedures and individual suitability. Staff training and development of professional qualifications is actively encouraged by the well structured management team. Detailed risk assessments and daily checks are well documented and reflect the needs of the children and any potential risks. Risk assessments take place prior to each outing, protecting children's safety. Staff are vigilant in their care of the children and ensure they both support children's play and ensure that risks are minimised. Policies and procedures are effective and have been recently reviewed. They effectively protect children's welfare and contain all of the necessary legal requirements. The organisation of the setting and the allocation of resources are extremely well managed, which strongly support and extend children's opportunities. Younger children enjoy free-flow activities as they are cared for within the foundation stage classroom at the commencement of the session. Older children are able to enjoy activities well suited to their maturity, with children being cared for as one group in the bungalow at the end of the session as the numbers of children decrease. Staff are keen to develop current systems for observing children's interests and progress in order to extend and enhance the outcomes for children.

Staff positively measure the effectiveness of the setting and confidently drive forward planned changes and improved provision for children. Regular consultations with children, their parents and other agencies makes sure action plans meet children's needs and are realistic. Therefore staff, parents and children are becoming actively involved in the systems for evaluating the quality of the practice. Therefore, the drive to improve outcomes contributes to the positive promotion of partnerships with parents and carers. Children are wholly supported by identified key workers who recognise the uniqueness of each child. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their individual needs met as staff liaise positively with other professionals and parents. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported through the good awareness of staff and sound strategies.

Parents are actively involved in their child's care and learning, as they are free to exchange ideas and have discussions with staff as their child is collected. Parents speak highly of the setting and an informative notice board and regular newsletter keeps them up-to-date. The system for recording children's progress through observation and assessment has just commenced and is currently being developed; consequently, evidence to support planning for children's next steps is not as detailed as it could be.

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

Children are well supported by motivated staff. Children's individual play preferences are integrated into the planning and are supported by generous resources and equipment. Activities that suit the broad age range of children that attend are carefully managed so that children's learning is promoted through age specific activities. For example, older children are cared for in the homely surroundings of the bungalow and enjoy their play as they learn to work together. They enjoy board games and develop their individual creative ideas through accessing interesting art and three-dimensional modelling materials. Younger children communicate well as they listen to and discuss the content of a story. They compare what happens in the story to their own lives at home, considering different outcomes to the ending. They learn about the world around them as they explore the gardens at the setting and experience outings to local venues during the holiday sessions. Children really enjoy learning how to problem solve through trial and error. Children spend time assembling a train track, experimenting with various possibilities and discussing which part goes where. They use their numeracy skills throughout their play, counting the number of children in a group and how many more pieces of building material they need to finish their model.

Children are skilfully supported by staff who work with children to find solutions. The staff ask well placed questions which encourage the children to think about and sort out their own solutions, thus promoting and supporting child-led play. They form firm friendships as they play, recognising that the inclusion of other children in their play makes learning more fun. Children are learning about healthy lifestyles as they play football outdoors and experiment with hoops, balls and bats and understand the need to eat nutritious food. They enjoy healthy snacks of fruit, yoghurt and water and are served a nutritious breakfast during the morning session. Lunch boxes are stored safely and parents are given advice on healthy snacks that are suitable for their child.

Staff encourage children to act safely and responsibly. They explain to children about safety outdoors as they move from one area of the setting to another and children learn to play safely as they develop an understanding of risks. For example, a group of children are supported in their play as they jump from the play train, assessing the risks and deciding how to land safely.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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