

Acorn Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY361455

Inspection date

15/03/2011

Inspector

Jane Shaw

Setting address

Neston Primary School, Burton Road, Little Neston,
NESTON, CH64 9RE

Telephone number

07752 870 607 or 01513382500 ext 4

Email

acornneston@hotmail.com

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 Playgroup is a privately owned and managed pre-school group. It was registered in the current premises in 2007. It operates from designated rooms within Neston Primary School in Neston, Cheshire. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play space. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12 noon, and Tuesday and Wednesday from 12.30pm to 3pm during term time only.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting currently takes children from two to five years of age. There are currently 31 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. The setting is in receipt of funding for early education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are seven members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, one holds Early Years Professional and Qualified Teacher Status, a further member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 3 in early years. Another member of staff holds a qualification at level 2 in early years and one is currently working towards a qualification at level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Acorn Playgroup provides a fully inclusive and welcoming environment. Staff know each child well, respect their uniqueness and individuality, and as a result, children are making good progress in most aspects of their learning and development. Overall, children's care, welfare and safety are effectively promoted as a result of the setting's policies and procedures, routines and team working. Partnerships with parents, carers and other early years professionals are effective and support children's placements well. Self-evaluation is good, and demonstrates the setting's commitment and capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the record of the risk assessment clearly states when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident.
(Documentation)

31/03/2011

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

- extend further the use of assessment systems to consistently plan the next steps in a child's developmental progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the procedures to be followed in order to safeguard children. Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of all staff working with the children. New staff and students are made fully aware of the need to safeguard children at all times. Staff ratios are good and support children's safety effectively. Records, policies and procedures are, in the main, well organised and effective in supporting children's safety and welfare. Staff complete daily checks to ensure the safety of the premises and equipment prior to children's arrival. Full risk assessments are completed; however, a record of this, which clearly states when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident is not maintained as required by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Documentation, such as accident and medication records, are well maintained in order to promote the safe and efficient management of the setting.

Staff are committed to their role and meet daily to discuss the setting and children. They attend regular training courses, and have specific roles within the staff team. For example, one staff member takes responsibility for physical activities whilst another is responsible for the Every Child a Talker programme. In addition, inset days throughout the year give staff time to look in more detail at specific aspects of the setting and their work. The completion of recommendations raised at the last inspection and detailed self-evaluation demonstrates the settings commitment to driving improvement and embedding ambition. Staff organise the space and resources well in order to provide the children with a fun environment where their learning and development are fostered. Staff know the individual children's abilities well, and the implementation of a good key person system ensures that their needs are met well.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. They have access to plenty of information about the setting, the Early Years Foundation Stage and areas of learning, through colourful displays, discussion, and workshops organised by staff. Parents and carers receive clear feedback on their children's progress at collection time, and they have access to their child's 'learning journey' at all times. Partnerships with other early years professionals are good. Staff communicate regularly with other early years professionals and with the local schools, which children will attend, to ease their transition from the setting. Equality and diversity is actively promoted and staff ensure all children have equal access to all opportunities and resources; as a result, inclusion is well promoted.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements and use this knowledge to offer children access to a wide range of activities and experiences. An effective key person system ensures children feel safe and secure, and as a result, they make good progress in their learning and development. For example, key persons' conduct ongoing observation and assessments of individual children's progress and achievements, which are then recorded in their learning journeys. Clear systems have been introduced to monitor children's progress across the six areas of learning, however, methods of planning the next steps in their learning are not consistently used.

Children arrive happy and eager to participate, confidently planning for and independently selecting activities and resources. They freely move between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Children's behaviour is good because they are encouraged to share and take turns with resources, and to develop an understanding of others through fund raising activities. Snack and lunchtimes are social occasions where children sit together with staff and commutate. They have a variety of opportunities to write, make marks and use books, thus promoting their literacy skills. Children understand that text has meaning as they explain that a written caption describes what they are doing in a photograph. Children confidently match and sort objects into groups by colour and number. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted as children access their outdoor play space. They have a sensory garden, and a weather wall where they can check the temperature and see how much rainwater has collected in the jug. They competently use a computer keyboard and mouse. Children successfully negotiate obstacle courses, climb over, under and through which develops their physical skills of coordination and control. Their creative skills are developing well, exemplified when they produce unique individual pieces of free painting for their 'art gallery'. Children are engrossed in imaginary play using a variety of small world resources, for example, acting out a feast. They enjoy a variety of different textures and materials, such as paint and dough and eagerly play in the 'mud' garden. Children enjoy daily access to musical instruments.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and have access to drinks at all times. They are aware of the need for good hygiene routines, and together with outdoor play opportunities, children's health, welfare and physical development are well promoted. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own safety and well-being through discussions, such as reminders about the safe use of tools and equipment during their play. The activities and opportunities offered; staff interaction and commitment clearly supports the good development of children's 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?	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	2
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
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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

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