

# Acorn Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144542
<b>Inspection date</b>	21/06/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Davenport
<b>Setting address</b>	2 Narford Road, Hackney, London, E5 8RD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 806 3610
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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).

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

Acorn Playgroup was registered in 1997. It is a voluntary group funded by the Hackney Learning Trust and operates from a community hall situated in the Clapton area of the London borough of Hackney. Access is via a buzzer at the front door and a short flight of steps leading down to the playgroup. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 16 children from the age of two to the end of the early years age group may attend the setting at any one time; of these, not more than eight may be under three years. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.30pm during school term time. It is registered on the Early Years Register and there are currently 14 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three or four-years-old. The playgroup currently employs three members of staff, including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Staff at the setting receive support from the Hackney Learning Trust and other childcare professionals.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Practitioners at this inclusive setting possess a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are well motivated and challenged, in a stimulating environment, as experienced and dedicated staff plan fun activities tailored to their individual needs. Consequently, they are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Although there is a breach of requirements relating to attendance records, record keeping is generally robust and children are safeguarded well. Children benefit from the good working partnerships that have been established with their parents and with other professionals. Management makes good use of self-evaluation and this, together with a shared dedication to driving improvement, ensures continuous development and good outcomes for children.

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

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

- keep a consistent daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises, their hours of

15/07/2011

attendance and the names of the children's key workers (Documentation)

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

- develop the current system of planning and assessments to ensure that observations clearly identify the learning intentions and next steps for individual children's learning .

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

Staff safeguard children well. A comprehensive and clear safeguarding policy ensures that all adults are aware of their individual and collective roles and responsibilities. Staff are vigilant with regards to identifying and minimising potential risks to children and risk assessment records contain required details. Robust vetting procedures ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Security of the premises is appropriate and visitors to the setting are asked to identify themselves and sign the visitor's book, further securing children's safety. Accidents and the administration of medication are dealt with and recorded appropriately, and written consent for emergency medical treatment is in place. Documentation is generally maintained well and written policies reflect staff practice and the setting's everyday procedures. The current system for recording children's hours of attendance is usually effective. However, there have been some occasions recently when they are not signed out with their time of departure. This results in a breach of the specific legal requirement to maintain a record of children's hours of attendance.

Promoting inclusive practice and encouraging children to make a positive contribution is integral to the ethos of the setting. A good range of effectively deployed resources, including positive images of diversity and natural materials, provides opportunities for children to select what they wish to play with. Children play together and alongside one another, naturally accepting and respecting differences. Staff know the children and meet their needs very well, and every child is recognised and valued for their individuality. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure that they are aware of each child's background, needs and home language. For example, staff ask parents for familiar words in children's home languages and use these to help the children settle and feel secure. Staff demonstrate a clear commitment to working in partnership with other providers and professionals. Appropriate information is exchanged with other settings and agencies and this ensures that children's individual needs are known and any necessary advice or support is obtained and promptly acted upon. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly well supported at this setting and staff do their best to provide any additional care and equipment recommended by specialist agencies in order to assure consistency.

Staff demonstrate a good capacity for improvement, and recommendations raised at the setting's last Ofsted inspection have been addressed. The manager uses the

Ofsted self-evaluation form as a tool to assist with reflective practice and also welcomes input from the local authority, other staff, parents and children. Relevant training and development courses for staff are regularly undertaken, which helps them keep up to date with current childcare trends and good practice issues.

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

Children are happy and settled in this very friendly and inclusive pre-school. Staff use their good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide a well balanced programme of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which incorporates free play and work on topical themes. Consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff generally plan well for children's individual needs. Settling in observations and effective liaison with parents help establish children's starting points. A combination of unplanned and focussed observations are carried out on all children and their learning journey profiles also include examples of their work and photographs of them at play in order to demonstrate their progress to parents. However, observations are not consistently organised in a reader-friendly way because learning intentions and next steps are not always clear.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered in a number of ways. For example, children who are settling in and those with special educational needs are soothed as they play at the water tray, enjoying the feel of the water and watching as they pour it from one container to another. At circle time the children all sit together with the staff. They sing the 'Hello' song and introduce themselves to the other children, which helps them to gain a sense of belonging to the group. They recognise their own pegs, get their jackets and put them on for themselves when it is time to play outside; this encourages their independence and self-help skills. Children behave well as they share, take turns and are generally friendly and kind to one another. This is largely due to the very good example set by staff. They are patient and respectful, encourage the children to use good manners and give lots of praise and affirmation for good behaviour.

Children's language is very well supported. The playgroup has recently completed a Department of Education 'Every Child a Talker' (ECAT) project, which is designed to help create a developmentally appropriate, supportive and stimulating environment in which children can enjoy experimenting with and learning language. Children enjoy listening to stories being read to them and staff introduce books by the title and author, which effectively introduces the concept that books are written by different people. Children's creativity and imagination is encouraged as they participate in role play. For example, a small group of children play with the building set, which includes many props and tools. A member of staff sits near by and extends the children's enjoyment, encouraging both boys and girls to participate by saying 'That's right, you can be the welder' when a girl puts on the pair of goggles. The children wear the builders' helmets and experiment with the hammers, screwdrivers and pliers. A child is told 'Well done for thinking of that', when they bring a mobile phone to their 'building site' and they phone to find out

who hasn't turned up for work. Children gain a great deal from this activity, including learning problem solving and mathematical concepts as they use the tape measures to measure the length and width of the bricks counting from one to nine centimetres.

Many activities are routinely taken outdoors and children enjoy opportunities to play in the fresh air every day. They gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them as they observe mini beasts and tend the tomatoes and potatoes they have planted. Their physical dexterity develops well as they climb, kick balls, ride cars and carry large five litre bottles of water to demonstrate how strong they are becoming. Children find out about other cultures, religions and beliefs during activities which celebrate cultural and religious festivals. They use roti boards or 'patlaa' when rolling out biscuits and chapatis at the modelling dough activity. Parents are involved in themes such as 'Around the world' where children are asked to think about where in the world they go to visit friends and relatives.

Children's health and well-being is supported well. Good hygiene routines are followed and children know that they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before they eat. Staff gain details from parents and record and cater for any special dietary requirements. Snacks are healthy and nutritious and fresh drinking water is readily accessible throughout the session. The playgroup has participated in the 'Happy in Hackney' programme, which concentrates on promoting good health, and has also completed a project with the children about looking after their teeth. Staff talk to the children about keeping themselves safe and healthy. For example, children are reminded to sit properly on their chairs at snack time and told 'well done' for covering their mouths when they cough. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure on an ongoing basis and receive visits from people in the community such as the lollipop man, who spoke to them about road safety.

## 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	2

### 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	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
--	---

### 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	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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



