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Mrs Marilyn Pepper
Acorn Under Five's (Birstall)
31 Cliffe Road
Birstall
Leicester
Leicestershire
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Dear Mrs Pepper

Ofsted survey inspection programme – narrowing the gap in literacy and numeracy

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 4 December 2008 to look at work in literacy and numeracy.

As outlined in the initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on how well you meet the needs of all children in relation to their literacy and numeracy, with particular consideration to those at risk of not reaching their full potential. The visit also evaluated the level of expertise to support children learning English as an additional language (EAL).

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing settings but these will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with you, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's work and observation of children's play.

The overall effectiveness of provision for literacy and numeracy was judged to be outstanding.

Learning and development

The quality of learning and development is outstanding.

- Your staff know all the children extremely well and have robust systems in place to develop their language and literacy skills, according to each child's starting point and capabilities.

- You evaluate your practice effectively to enable the delivery of a curriculum that encourages both boys and girls to have fun exploring and learning, especially with literacy and numeracy.
- You develop excellent links with parents to involve them in their children's learning for literacy and numeracy.
- The children are well nourished and ready to learn.

Leadership and management of literacy and numeracy

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- You lead a very strong staff team. Staff are motivated to constantly improve the service provided for the children and their families, in order that children achieve as much as possible, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- The group is committed to the further development of all staff through accessing a wide range of training courses, enabling high standards of practice to be evident in literacy and numeracy.
- Your commitment to offering skilled assistance to children learning English as an additional language, and to children with learning difficulties and disabilities, enables them to fully integrate into the group.
- You have the ability to self-evaluate your practice in language, literacy and numeracy effectively and make appropriate changes to improve the provision for the children.

English as an additional language

- You are committed to offering skilled assistance to children learning English as an additional language and to children with learning difficulties and disabilities, through employing additional staff, thereby enabling such children to integrate fully into the group.

How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?

Inclusion in literacy and numeracy is outstanding.

- You integrate all children into the group effectively, enabling each to work with an individual development plan and make good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Your staff know all the children very well and adapt the learning environment to meet their varied needs.

Areas for development, which we discussed, included:

- seeking suitable training and support for permanent staff when teaching children with English as an additional language.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy and numeracy in your setting.

As was explained in the previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the inspector for your next inspection.

Yours sincerely

Ann Guy

Inspector, Children's Directorate