

# Acorn Nursery

Ministry of Defence, Mail Centre, Main Building, Horse Guards Avenue, Whitehall, LONDON, SW1A 2HB

<b>Inspection date</b>	15/08/2013
Previous inspection date	09/09/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Children are happy and settled because of the caring and secure relationships they build with staff, who respond to their needs well.
- Staff place high priority on the safety of children. There are excellent systems to prevent intruders accessing the premises unsupervised.
- Staff keep parents well-informed of their children's progress and parents have good opportunities to contribute to their children's learning.
- Children make good progress in their learning because staff extend children's thinking and language skills well.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not maximise opportunities to enable older children to practise their early writing skills in play situations.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of an adult-led group activity.
- The inspector observed interaction between staff and children.
- The inspector tracked the progress of several children.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation.
- The inspector held a discussion with management.

## Inspector

Jennifer Beckles

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Acorn Nursery is a workplace nursery located in a Ministry of Defence building and is part of the Bright Horizons Family Solutions company. It opened in 2004 and operates from two main base rooms. It is situated in central London and is for the use of parents employed within the building. It is open each weekday throughout the year and sessions are from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There is no outdoor play facility at the building itself. Outdoor experiences are offered through the use of local parks, walks and visits to places of interest. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 50 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. The nursery supports children who learn English as an additional language. The nursery employs 16 members of staff. One member of staff holds the Early Years Professional Status, one holds a childcare qualification to level 6, 12 hold childcare qualifications to level 3 and one to level 2.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop further opportunities for older children to practise early writing skills in play situations.

### Inspection judgements

#### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff plan a broad range of interesting activities based on children's interests and skills, and areas of learning. This results in high engagement of children in activities. Staff adapt plans to meet the individual needs of children and this enables children to make good progress. Children access resources independently to create their own play and staff provide some structured activities, which offers a balanced approach to children's learning.

Children learn about food technology while baking cakes. Staff develop children's vocabulary by teaching them the names of different ingredients. They teach children words to describe the changing texture of the mixture. Staff encourage children to practise their counting skills by asking them to count the number of cakes they have made. Children concentrate well and learn to follow instructions. Staff encourage children to be independent by preparing their own paint to use for pictures. Children count out spoonfuls of paint and name colours as they mix paint with water. This helps them develop their counting skills and develops their awareness of different colours. Staff help

children to think critically by asking them to judge what else needs to be added to the mixture to make it usable. Staff provide children with a range of drawing and writing tools and materials, which are generally used well by all children. However, opportunities for older children to practise their early writing skills are not extensive because there are few opportunities for children to do so in play situations. Children learn about the world around them by playing with toy vehicles on a town play mat. Staff help children to learn about different features of their local environment by talking with them about hospitals, libraries and other facilities. Children enjoy browsing through books and select their favourite stories, which staff read in engaging ways. Children practise their language skills as they join in with repetitive phrases. Children recognise their names on name cards and use these to guide them when they practise writing their names. Overall, these experiences help children to develop skills for later use in school.

Babies enjoy exploring the texture of paint and create prints from their hands and other objects. Staff provide good opportunities for babies to develop their physical skills. Staff arrange a variety of soft play apparatus, which babies climb, crawl through and move in different ways. Babies discover the properties of different materials and everyday objects as they play with treasure baskets. They learn about different sounds and instruments while they use a range of musical instruments.

Although the nursery does not have its own outdoor area, it makes full and daily use of nearby outdoor play spaces that contain a wide variety of apparatus to promote children's physical development.

Staff carry out good quality observations of children and evaluate these well to inform their planning. Staff keep a representative sample of children's work to show their skills and interests. These samples form part of the assessment information that staff use to plan children's next steps for learning. Staff complete progress checks for children aged between two and three years and provide written summaries for parents. Staff support children who learn English as an additional language by learning key words and phrases in a child's home language.

Parents have good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. They share observations of their children with staff and staff offer parents home activity ideas to support their children's learning further at home. Staff keep parents well-informed of their children's progress through daily interaction and regular parents' evenings. During these evenings staff review with parents their children's assessment records and discuss children's development.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Children have warm, secure bonds with staff and settle well in this homely nursery. Staff find out about children's interests and skills when they first arrive at the nursery and this helps staff to get to know and plan for children well. Staff help babies to settle by adapting routines to suit babies individual needs.

Staff teach children how to behave safely. For instance, they use a soft toy to act as a prompt to support children's understanding of road safety. The toy reinforces rules for outings, such as walking while outdoors, listening to adults and looking out for vehicles. Staff are good role models and show children how to tidy up and take care of resources. Older children use the bathroom independently and understand the reasons why they need to wash their hands afterwards. Staff support younger children to develop self-care skills. Staff change babies' nappies in private, clean and comfortable areas. Children play in a colourful and organised environment where resources are all easily in reach to the children to support their independence.

Children eat nutritious, appetising meals prepared by caterers. They provide for children's individual special dietary needs. Children help to lay tables at lunchtime and pour their own drinks, which shows good independence skills. Staff provide children with a selection of fresh fruit snacks, and children make their own choices on what they choose from these. Staff help children to develop healthy habits because they take children to local parks each day for fresh air and physical exercise on a range of equipment.

Children behave well because they are clear about expectations of behaviour. Staff agree ground rules for behaviour with the children and display these to act as reminders to children. Staff use a soft toy, 'Candyfloss', to reinforce positive ways to behave and this serves to motivate good behaviour. Staff are gentle with the children, praise them often and encourage children to find agreeable solutions to any difficulties they may face. Staff use suitable ways to manage the behaviour of young children, such as distraction. Children spend time in new group rooms in the nursery before moving up and this helps them to get to know the staff there and new routines. Staff talk to children about starting school and read books on this area to help children prepare for the move to school.

Staff teach children about difference by celebrating and discussing special events. For instance, a parent visits the nursery to give children small envelopes as part of the tradition of celebrating Chinese New Year.

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

Staff keep children safe in this extremely secure nursery. For example, there are excellent intruder prevention systems in place and vetting of staff is thorough to help ensure children's safety. Staff carry out regular risk assessments covering all aspects of the nursery, including outings and this helps to keep children protected from harm. The nursery has a safeguarding policy and procedure in place. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the signs to look out for and procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Management supervise staff regularly and this helps to identify any issues of underperformance. Staff are offered support and training where needed to improve practice. Yearly appraisals identify staff training needs and staff have attended a variety of courses. For instance, staff attended a behaviour management course, which led to a

greater range of effective behaviour management strategies and more consistency in approaches used by staff.

Management spend time observing staff practice and carry out spot checks on planning and assessment records. This helps to assure quality and consistency in practice. Staff are able to identify any children who are not developing at expected levels because a tracking system is in place to provide information on children's progress. Staff then devise appropriate ways to close gaps in children's learning.

The nursery has effective links with a range of professionals involved in children's care and learning. For example, the nursery has links with local museums that provide small group viewings specifically for children in the early years range. The nursery has good partnership with the local library, which provides story-telling sessions at the nursery and selections of books to support children's early reading skills. Parents have a strong voice at the nursery and influence different aspects of the provision. For instance, parents suggested a display of key persons in the entrance hall and the nursery implemented this. Parents spoken to at the time of inspection expressed high levels of satisfaction with the nursery and spoke in particular about caring, nurturing staff. Parents are kept up-to-date on their children's progress and have good opportunities to contribute to their children's learning.

The nursery staff have addressed the previously raised recommendations. They have a good awareness of their strengths and limitations and have identified clear priorities for development. For example, they plan to further develop systems to evaluate the nursery in order to enhance improvement planning. The nursery operates effectively and shows good capacity to maintain this in the future.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY286501
<b>Local authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	917901
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	38
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	50
<b>Name of provider</b>	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	09/09/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7218 4129

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools



and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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