

Acorns Pre-School

The Old Police House, Little Market Place, Masham, North Yorkshire, HG4 4DY

Inspection date	05/09/2013
Previous inspection date	17/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	1
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

- The thoughtfully planned playroom creates an enabling environment for all children to promote independence and to engage them in purposeful play. Children benefit from a good range of play materials to support their learning and development.
- Children are happy and well motivated to play and explore and freely access a wealth of resources in a welcoming child-friendly environment.
- Effective systems for planning and assessment display an accurate understanding of all children's skills, abilities and progress. Every practitioner has a good awareness of how young children learn and make the most of opportunities to promote children's learning through play, discussions and group activities.
- Children's communication and language skills are given high priority; lots of opportunities are available to develop their skills. For example, children of all ages enjoy listening to stories and joining in with action songs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Information sharing with parents about their children's learning at home is not always fully effective, to enable the staff to use this information to sharply focus planning for children's future development.
- There are words written on the boxes where the toys are stored but there are no pictures accompanying the words to help children recognise that print carries meaning in order to promote their very good early reading skills.

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 observed children playing in the main playroom and in the outside area.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents and also read their written comments.
- The inspector looked at children's learning records.
- The inspector spoke with the manager throughout the inspection and looked at relevant documentation.

Inspector

Jane O'Callaghan

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorns Pre-school was registered in 2003 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted old police building now part of the community office in Masham in North Yorkshire. The setting serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and the manager has a degree in childcare studies.

The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 3.15pm term time only and a holiday club runs for two days a week in some school holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the existing information available to parents to help them continue their child's learning at home and the systems to give them the opportunity to share information with staff to help them plan children's learning

- enhance children's understanding that words have meaning, by supporting the words on storage boxes with pictures, to show what they contain, or using signs to name things.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff support children well and meet their needs effectively. The children access a wide range of activities, suitable for all their ages and stages of development. A strong system is in place to ensure children's development progresses well, through informative observations, all linking clearly to areas of learning and children's individual age banding. This ensures they are well prepared for school. An efficient key person system is in place; key persons take on board children's starting points with information gathered from parents and also record the next steps in learning. Parents are given opportunities to see their children's learning records and to assess their children's starting points when they

first start at the setting. However, there are fewer opportunities to share information about their children's learning and development in the home. Therefore, staff sometimes do not have a complete picture of children's achievements to build on to progress their very good learning.

The manager and staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the requirement of the 'progress check at age two'. Information and resources are in place to ensure that these include all of the required information for parents and others. All of these elements enable them to accurately assess two-year-old children's development and provide relevant information to aid their progress within the pre-school.

Children have good opportunities to develop their communication and language skills. They have ready access to a wide selection of good quality books, both indoors and in the outside area. They regularly visit the on-site library to choose books and attend story time. The staff sit with the children and listen to their favourite story about a boss in the offices and children concentrate well on the story. They also have good fun outside reading in their make-believe house to their friends. This promotes their self-esteem and concentration skills. Children love the nearby outdoor area, where they are keen to explore their new 'mud kitchen', they pretend to stir the mud and water together, adding flowers and pretending to put it in the toy oven. This promotes their imagination and helps them feel different textures.

The staff demonstrate a good awareness of engaging and challenging children's interests. For example, when making flap jacks, staff ask children what else melts as they watch the butter melt and children are quick to say ice cream and explain 'it goes runny'. Staff involve the children in measuring the ingredients and placing it in the tray; they then go to the oven to place it in. This promotes children's mathematical development and understanding of the world. The activity also shows the staff have a good knowledge and understanding of teaching children in a fun and enjoyable way. Staff encourage children to use their imagination as they sit with them in the role-play area, which is a hairdresser's salon. Children sit the staff down and pretend to comb their hair and talk about their mummy, who is a hairdresser. Children then use the toy telephone to tell staff 'it's for you'. Children then write down the staff's next appointment using the small cards and pencils available, which develops their writing skills. Children have good opportunities to develop their manipulative skills, along with their expressive arts and design skills. They stand at the easel and paint the circles that they have cut out with the scissors and eagerly show their friends and staff the blue circle. Throughout the pre-school all resources are well set out, easily accessible and there are written words on the toy boxes. However, these are not accompanied by pictures, which means there is further scope to ensure that children learn that print carries meaning.

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

Staff support children's well-being effectively as the key person system works well throughout the setting. All new children are invited to a settling-in day, where they meet their new key person and then are gradually introduced to all of the staff and children over a short period of time. This helps children to bond with their key person and to settle

well into the environment. Every child and their family receives a warm welcome in the pre-school. This helps children's separation from their parents, puts children and parents at ease, builds attachments and promotes their self-esteem.

Children in the pre-school behave well. Staff's gentle, yet firm approach with children, sets them good examples on which to model their behaviour. Staff also give children lots of positive praise, such as when children help to tidy away the toys. Children are responsive to the staff and they are learning right from wrong. For example, they are given gentle reminders to say 'please' and 'thank you' and encouraged to share with their friends. They are given clear explanations by staff about why it is nice to share and be kind to their friends.

Staff promote children's good health very well. They encourage lots of fresh air for children, with access throughout the day to the well-resourced outdoor area, where they can climb on large tyres, run around and explore in the growing area. Staff develop children's healthy lifestyle through weekly access to a 'Forest school', while there they learn about the outdoor environment, as they have outdoor snack time and build dens. The nearby outdoor area also offers children options for a healthy lifestyle as they grow their own fruit and vegetables, which are incorporated into snack times. For example, children make the fruit into pulp to drink at snack time. Children are involved in lots of music and movement and they get lots of regular opportunities to go to the local town hall. This ensures that children benefit from a good level of physical exercise. Children receive nutritious snacks, such as fruit, rice cakes, their own baking and dried fruit, as well as drink bottles, which are available at all times. Children of all ages have a good understanding of the importance of self-care, as they independently wash their hands and use disposable towels after going to the toilet. Their independence is further promoted as they select their own snack throughout the session.

Children's safety is promoted very well. For example, the pre-school undertakes detailed written risk assessments, enabling children to take supervised risks in safe surroundings. The manager ensures that regular fire drills are practised to ensure that children are aware of evacuation procedures. Children are protected within the pre-school, as there is a good security system in place and staff ensure all visitors' identification is seen and that they sign in and out of the premises. Children are very aware of the safety procedure when walking to the nearby outdoor area. For example, they know to line up and hold the ring on the 'walking rope' and as they walk to the outdoor area children say, 'listen and look for cars'. This promotes children's awareness of staying safe and also being cared for in a secure environment.

The pre-school has a good transition policy and procedure in place. When children are moving on to school they invite the teachers from the schools into the setting to meet the children, they share the profiles with them and also take the children to the school they will be going to. This ensures good continuity of care and education.

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

Leadership and management of the pre-school is strong. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms to look for, should they have any safeguarding concerns. There is a well-written policy and procedure to follow, which staff are made aware of and this includes the role of the manager who takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding. Full risk assessments are in place for all areas children access. These are regularly reviewed, along with daily checks prior to children arriving. The recruitment procedure is clear and fully established within the pre-school. This means that every person who works in the pre-school is properly vetted and cleared, through a system which includes a thorough induction.

Staff work effectively as a team and they are supported well to understand their roles and responsibilities. For example, regular reviews of policies at staff meetings, help them to recognise the importance of policies, such as safeguarding and risk assessments. Induction, supervision and appraisals are effective tools that the leadership team use to support staff and ensure that they have opportunities for continual professional development and further training. Staff ensure that activity planning is completed regularly. Each week staff plan for their own key children, ensuring it includes their interest and next steps. Good communication between staff ensures planning provides challenging activities for children and covers all areas. This ensures children's skills and abilities are monitored and that they continue to make good progress in their learning.

The manager and staffing team demonstrate a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement. They are currently updating the self-evaluation to ensure they are working in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage and the recommendation from the previous inspection has been addressed. Staff ensure that they take on board parents' comments through regular questionnaires and a notice board that parents can write ideas on. Children's thoughts are also taken into consideration, through listening and observing them within the pre-school. The staffing team have a common sense of purpose and work effectively together to continually improve opportunities for children to achieve and maximise their individual potential. Practice is regularly evaluated and their key strengths and weaknesses are identified and addressed. This ensures the best outcomes for children.

The pre-school staff have a well-established partnership with parents; the manager ensures that settling-in periods meet with parental needs. Staff make parents feel welcome in the pre-school and provide daily feedback, in addition to regular open evenings and newsletters, so that parents are, mostly, continually involved in their children's welfare and learning. Parents also complete regular questionnaires, for example, after children have settled in, throughout their stay and as they leave. This ensures that parents are fully involved throughout their child's time. All comments from parents are very positive, they remark how they, 'love the outside area' and 'how well my child has progressed and is also good at socialising thanks to your hard work'. The pre-school has good procedures in place for working alongside outside agencies in a confidential manner and with parental permission. This ensures good continuity of care and learning for all children.

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

Unique reference number	EY266330
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	908627
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Acorns Childcare Committee
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2009
Telephone number	01765 680203

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

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 4234, 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.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

