

Inspection date	10/12/2013
Previous inspection date	13/02/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children make very close attachments with the excellent staff and form superb relationships with their friends. This ensures that children are exceptionally confident and self-assured.
- Children are treated with a great deal of respect and this results in a harmonious, highly inclusive environment for everyone, where every child is valued and their individual needs are met.
- Staff constantly observe children in their play, clearly identify the next steps in their learning and, consequently, plan and facilitate highly effective experiences. As a result, all children are making excellent progress in their learning and development.
- A range of positive behaviour management methods help children to appreciate rules and boundaries; staff use clear explanations, praise and encouragement. As a result, children know what is expected of them, behave extremely well and develop awareness of how their behaviour affects others.
- Partnerships with parents are exemplary. The manager in particular, along with staff, work tirelessly to involve them in their children's learning and development. As a result, parents contribute to the assessment of their children's progress, which ensures that there is a collaborative approach to supporting children's skills for the future.
- The management and staff are highly motivated and dedicated to providing the best quality childcare for all children. The nursery is constantly monitored and evaluated to ensure children benefit from a continually evolving provision.

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 spoke to the management, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning systems and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector observed child-led and adult-guided play experiences indoors and outside.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the providers self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspector

Sharon Alleary

Full report

Information about the setting

Acorn Childcare, Spalding was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a large Edwardian town house, close to the centre of Spalding, Lincolnshire. The setting operates as childcare on domestic premises. The provision serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The principal holds a level 4 qualification in early years development. The setting opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for two weeks at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.45am until 5.45pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 72 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider enhancing the excellent opportunities for children to see their home language by extending the meaningful words displayed around the setting.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making very rapid progress in their learning and development. This is because of the rich, varied and imaginative educational programme that is expertly implemented by outstanding staff. As a result, children are exceptionally well-prepared for school. The staff in each nursery room know the children very well. The nursery has recently had a complete change-around of staff as a result of the manager using her excellent knowledge of staff and children to change the dynamics in each nursery room. This has resulted in new initiatives and inspiring staff, who are now more focussed on actively contributing to the learning and development of the children in their care. The precise and sharply focussed assessment of the children's learning allows highly individualised planning, creating optimal challenge for all children. Additionally, the staff are highly skilled in the use of open questioning to further promote children's learning through play. For example, during a creative opportunity, the staff asks open questions about choice of materials and which are most suitable for making an angel. Children are motivated and eager as they begin to create recognisable angels with a wide range of

creative resources. Staff work well to involve parents in their children's learning. For example, parents provide information about their child's developmental starting points and actively contribute to the assessment of their child. Staff complete the required progress check at age two when the time comes, which provides a detailed account of what each child knows and can do.

Staff use resources in innovative ways to support the next steps in children's learning and development. For example, children are exploring a Christmas treasure basket in the baby room. In order to maximise their development and learning the staff model playing with the items. This gives children a chance to copy and discover textures. Staff are highly skilled at naturally introducing children to learning opportunities that prepare them for school, such as, spontaneously using letters and sounds in activities. For example, when reading a book staff say, 'That's a r, for rectangle'. This supports early literacy skills. Children become engrossed in their play. They delight in taking turns with their friends when creating a 'zoo'. Consequently, their personal, social and emotional development is developing rapidly. Conversations are animated between the children. Staff are highly skilled at recognising when to join children's play and when to simply observe. Consequently, staff use this child-led play to make quality observations of children. Staff encourage mathematical language during children's everyday play. For example, when children bring some books for staff to read, they ask 'How many books have you got there'? Children count the correct number of books out loud, saying, '1, 2, 3, 4'. No learning opportunity is missed. For instance, during tidy up time, staff ask, 'Can you find me a triangle to put away now please'? Consequently, children are making excellent progress in their mathematical development.

The enchanting outdoor space encourages children to develop their physical skills as they master the tricky 'creeper scooters'. Children confidently ask the inspector, 'How fast was I going, did you see'? Children listen intently to the Nativity story that is told to them with intonation and expression. They eagerly recall the story's setting and principal characters. Further excitement follows as children dress up as the characters and sing Christmas songs. This supports children's listening and attention skills along with developing their imagination. Every room in the nursery has children who enthusiastically make choices within their play. Engrossment and involvement is evident with children of all ages. The first class resources and superb displays actively contribute to children's involvement. For instance, the inspector was in awe of the Cinderella themed display that the children had developed, complete with a delicate slipper. Older early years children have excellent opportunities to explore information and technology as they use computers to interact and play on a number game. They use the mouse and keyboard with skill. Staff are close by to offer their support and to set challenges when necessary.

Children with English as an additional language are exceptionally well supported. Staff take time to find out key words and phrases in children's home language and how to pronounce these. There is a wealth of dual language prompts within the rooms. This helps children to feel totally included and ensures that they settle well.

The management team are further developing this excellent practice by producing more labelling in other languages, although, this has yet to be fully implemented. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning and development. They are invited to share

information about their child's achievements and interests at home. For example, the daily diaries provide quality two-way communication between home and nursery. Staff further encourage this participation by providing opportunities, such as asking parents to provide items from home for display on the phonics table.

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

Children clearly demonstrate that they feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging in the nursery. They settle to sleep readily. They enjoy going to sleep in large, low-level rockers. Sleeping children are safe because the staff are always close by. Older children are confident to ask for items they want and they are keen to know what is going on during the daily routine. The clear bonds and attachments the children develop are evident through their growing confidence and self-esteem. For example, the children are curious about the presence of the inspector, asking, 'What's your name?' Although allocated to a key person, who remains their prime carer, children build relationships with all staff members throughout the nursery. This ensures continuity of care in the instance of absences. Children settle extremely well as they start at nursery because staff obtain valuable information from their parents, which is used to develop clearly recorded routines so that children are cared for in line with parental wishes. A range of positive methods help children understand appropriate behaviour with clear explanations, praise and encouragement. As a result, they know what is expected of them, they behave well and develop an awareness of how their behaviour affects others. Consistent acknowledgement of good behaviour is given, for instance, staff use the words 'Good choice', or 'Nice sharing'. Staff offer lots of positive praise and recognition for children's efforts and achievements. Staff teach children to help tidy away the resources safely at the end of the session.

Children show high levels of independence as they are encouraged to address their personal care needs, including hand washing, and learn why this is necessary to stop germs spreading. Children help themselves to cutlery and they enjoy healthy and nutritious meals. They develop dexterity as they serve themselves, developing awareness of portion control. Food is plentiful with sufficient for further helpings if required and children eat very well. Communication is animated and lively at meal and snack times. There is a varied menu of nutritious food cooked at the nursery. For example, children enjoy baked potato with a selection of toppings and a side salad. Dietary and cultural needs are catered for when required. Meals are freshly made on the premises. The nursery cook is committed to completing advanced food nutrition training. This ensures that practice in relation to food is carefully planned and assures children's good health and safety. Close attention is given to any specific dietary requirements to ensure any allergies are diligently managed and children's health and well-being are prioritised. Children are very adept at recognising their needs. They help themselves or ask for named drink bottles to quench their thirst.

Children are learning how to manage their own personal care. Older children are able to be independent in the bathroom and toddlers are encouraged to wash their hands in their own room after messy activities. Children have fresh air and exercise each day at nursery,

in the enchanting garden space. Children use the outdoor environment in all weathers and understand the need to put on waterproof clothing, hats and boots before going out in the damp conditions or the rain. Staff encourage all children to be independent, and all children are competent in putting on and taking off their coats and shoes. Consequently, children are well prepared for school. Children move to older age groups according to their readiness so that physical and emotional development is secure. Key persons may visit with children until they are settled in their new room, sharing quality handover summaries so that new key persons are fully informed and learning levels are maintained. Children develop excellent relationships at every level with adults and their peers; this is because the nursery is highly inclusive and welcoming throughout. Staff invite teachers from the local schools to visit the children at nursery and they share information about their progress and individual needs so that these continue to be met.

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

Excellent systems are in place to help safeguard children and promote their welfare. Staff maintain accurate records regarding the children in their care and ensure the highly effective use of all required documentation. For example, records of any accidents that occur during play are recorded fully by staff. These records are then agreed with parents and reviewed regularly by the manager to assess any similarities or if any action is needed to further promote children's safety. Exceptional leadership and management, along with the highly dedicated team, result in a positive, inspiring environment, clearly aimed at supporting children to achieve to their full potential. The nursery owner and those who take on a senior role, have a very calm but confident approach to the work that they do. They are exceptionally successful in inspiring the whole staff team, and in particular apprentices, to strive for excellence. The morale of the staff is very good and they have high expectations of children and respect for the management and their colleagues; this results in a successful working environment.

Management and staff successfully implement an extensive range of policies and procedures aimed at promoting children's health, safety and well-being. Systematic reviews of policies ensure staff are up to date with current practice. As a result, staff have a very comprehensive knowledge of what to do if they have any concerns regarding children's welfare and take appropriate action to liaise with safeguarding professionals. The manager is passionate about her role and her leadership is inspiring. The manager and staff have an exceptional understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements within the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are highly focused on the importance of assessing the delivery of the educational programmes provided for each child. In addition to this, they constantly and effectively monitor and revise their techniques in relation to children's progress and interventions where needed. As a result, they are highly inclusive and ensure that gaps are narrowing for groups of children and those identified as being in need of support.

A thorough recruitment and induction process ensures all staff, including students and apprentices, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, the necessary knowledge of children and their families and the general running of the setting. Suitably qualified staff are deployed very well across the nursery at all times, with a high staff to children ratio maintained. This ensures that children get lots of adult attention and are very well-supervised. Processes for managing the performance of staff and their professional development are used exceptionally well. The manager carries out informal chats along with more formal appraisals. Staff embrace this as a basis for personal development, which has in turn led to a passion for improvement and high standards of teaching across the nursery. Staff undertake regular training, either in-house or through recognised courses. This increases their knowledge base and extends their practice skills to enhance the outcomes for children even further.

Staff conduct very thorough risk assessments relating to the premises, activities and outings. The premises are secure with a key pad entry system to prevent unwanted access to the premises. The setting's self-evaluation is an accurate reflection of the strengths and areas to develop, which ensures that the staff are constantly making positive developments. For instance, the nursery is currently developing the already delightful outdoor space to incorporate an outdoor classroom. Excellent partnerships have been established with other agencies, particularly the local authority's Birth to Five service. This ensures a consolidated approach to the care of children who may have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. The manager strives to ensure that all professionals and shared carers who work with the children share relevant information on an ongoing basis so that children's care and progress are monitored highly effectively. Parents are provided with quality and timely information about the nursery. They are informed of events through regular newsletters, together with daily diaries. Discussion with parents highlights how extremely happy they are with the care their children receive. They have noticed very positive changes in their children's confidence and learning. One parent comment that they will soon be sending their third child to the nursery.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY379855
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	946090
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childcare - Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	73
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	13/02/2013
Telephone number	

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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.

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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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