

Charlton Acorns Pre-School

Charlton Village Road, Charlton, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 7HG

Inspection date	15/05/2014
Previous inspection date	16/09/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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 develop very positive behaviour and high levels of independence in this calm, friendly and welcoming environment.
- Staff focus well on developing children's social skills, promoting their language development and enabling them to take suitable risks to challenge their physical skills.
- Children enjoy positive relationships with staff and most children engage well in activities.
- Staff make good use of the outdoor space to provide children with a range of learning opportunities.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always make the best use of open questions to support children to develop their own ideas and make links in their learning
- Opportunities to challenge older and more able children are not fully developed, particularly in mathematics and literacy.

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 activities both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of an outdoor activity.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the chairperson of the committee.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff, and the pre-school's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Gill Little

Full report

Information about the setting

Charlton Acorns Pre-school is run by a parent management committee and first opened in 1968. It operates from its own building with access to a secure enclosed outdoor area in the grounds of Charlton Primary School, on the outskirts of Wantage, Oxfordshire. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and is caring for 48 children in the early years age range. It is registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Staff support children learning English as an additional language and children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is open on weekdays during school term times from 9am until 3pm. Sessions run from 9am until 12 noon and from 12 noon until 3pm. An optional lunch club is available from 12 noon until 1pm. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. It employs nine staff, of whom seven hold relevant qualifications, including staff who have attained Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school has links in place with the on-site school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- encourage staff to make more use of open questions in order to support children to develop their own ideas and make links in their learning
- enhance opportunities to challenge older and more able children routinely, particularly in mathematics and literacy.

Inspection judgements

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

Children become engrossed in their activities as soon as they arrive for their pre-school session. They are keen to explore and to engage in new experiences. They show good levels of concentration and are able to persist when challenges occur. Staff support them well with this approach, as they explain how to prevent water from spilling from a watering can when children carry it across the garden. Staff teach children how to plant tomato plants carefully in the soil and help them to understand what plants need to survive. Staff model mathematical language effectively during these activities, using words such as 'bigger, deeper, empty', to support children's understanding of these concepts. Staff make good use of the outdoor area to provide a range of learning opportunities. This enables children to experiment with the space available by creating a large-scale painting. Staff encourage children to explain their thinking by describing how they make different colours by mixing paint. Children become fascinated as they look for ants and worms

using magnifying glasses, with good support from staff. Staff make good use of ongoing discussions with children to promote their language development. They explain new words while reading stories, such as 'cranky', to extend children's vocabulary and understanding. However, they do not always make the best use of open questions to further challenge children to develop their own ideas and make links in their learning. Children are able to use the outdoor space freely throughout the sessions; an improvement that has been made since the last inspection. Children play very calmly and most are completely engaged in their play activities. They read books on beanbags under the shade of a canopy or play with tractors in the sand pit.

Children develop early literacy and mathematical skills through both planned and spontaneous activities. Staff encourage children to find out about numbers and letters, and they support their early writing skills. They plan focused activities at times, such as learning about size in a practical way based on the Goldilocks story. However, staff are not fully successful in providing everyday opportunities to challenge the older and more able children in mathematics and literacy. Overall, staff are preparing children well for the next steps in their learning and for school.

Management and staff have clear strategies in place to support children learning English as an additional language. They help parents understand the importance of developing home languages to enhance children's communication skills. Staff work closely in partnership with parents where appropriate to help children catch up when problems are identified. They provide parents with information about outside agencies who can offer additional support and suggest strategies so that parents can support their children's skills at home. The pre-school encourages all parents to promote learning at home through informal discussions and weekly newsletters. Staff provide advice on toilet training, developing mathematics and explaining the purpose of Forest School activities. Management has recently implemented a new online tool so that parents can access their children's development records at any time and contribute their own observations from home. Parents comment that this service is working well. They also report that communication has improved between themselves and the pre-school over the last year.

The pre-school manager has regular meetings with staff to discuss the progress of their key children and she closely monitors children's progress using the online tool. This approach enables her to identify any gaps in children's learning and ensure that key persons support children effectively to help them make good progress from their starting points. Progress checks for two-year-old children are in place and the manager has recently updated this system to provide information that is more accurate. The impact of funding for free early education is good.

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

Children develop very positive behaviour in this calm, friendly and suitably resourced environment. They are able to play cooperatively in small groups, organising games and jigsaws without the need for adult help. They include each other, encourage turn taking and they share resources well. Staff focus successfully on developing children's personal

and social skills, such as becoming familiar with the pre-school's routines and encouraging independence. Children help themselves to the food from the snack bar, remembering to wash their hands first, showing a good understanding of hygiene practices. They return dirty plates and cups to the washing-up bowl and remember to put uneaten food in the recycling bin, without prompting. Staff ring a bell as a last call for snack time to ensure that all children who want a snack can have one. Children know where to find tissues and help themselves, keeping their noses clean. Staff strongly promote independence. They encourage children to put their shoes and socks back on after playing in the sand pit and praise them warmly for their efforts when they do so. As a result, children are confident and well-motivated learners who are well prepared emotionally for school.

As well as making good use of the adjacent outdoor area, staff take children in small groups on weekly visits to their Forest School area close by. This activity provides additional opportunities to explore the natural environment. In the garden, children enjoy taking considered risks to challenge their physical skills, such as climbing trees safely and with confidence. Staff supervise children well at all times while allowing them the freedom to explore. They explain safety rules to children carefully, such as not tipping their chairs forward while eating lunch to prevent accidents.

Children develop positive relationships with each other, their key persons and the staff team. Children spontaneously hug staff, showing that they feel secure and comfortable. Staff are proactive in helping children to respect each other, explaining why some children do not like the musical instruments being played too loudly. Staff have a very calm and gentle approach, reassuring children when necessary or caring for them effectively in the event of an accident.

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

The management team demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities to meet the legal requirements. Staff undertake relevant safeguarding training regularly to ensure that they understand procedures. They are familiar with possible symptoms of children at risk and know what to do if they have concerns. The premises are safe and secure, and staff are vigilant to help reduce the risk of accidents. Management and staff hold all required information relevant to individual children and ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Staff are required to read and to confirm their understanding of all policies and procedures, including those relating to complaints, in order to promote good standards of practice.

Well-established recruitment and induction procedures assess the suitability of new staff and help them to become familiar with their roles and responsibilities. Management hold termly supervision meetings and annual appraisals with all staff to support their ongoing professional development effectively. As well as providing opportunities to talk about the progress of their key children, these meetings identify any training requirements. Staff comment that they feel well supported to improve their qualifications and that they have ongoing opportunities for training. Staff are currently developing their knowledge and

understanding of using high quality interactions with children, to further promote their learning. The manager has a good understanding of how well this is impacting on practice and where further support is required. Specialist training is in place where necessary to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The impact of qualifications and training on children is positive.

The manager has a clear system in place for monitoring the educational provision and children's progress. Regular supervision meetings and the use of the online assessment tool support this process well. The self-evaluation process is effective in identifying strengths and areas further development. Parents are welcome to offer their views through ongoing discussion and questionnaires. Staff now talk to children about any planned changes in the pre-school environment so that children can also share their views. Management and staff have taken positive steps to meet the recommendation set at the last inspection.

The pre-school maintains positive partnerships with parents and other settings that children attend or to which they will transfer. The weekly newsletter to parents provides a range of information about the pre-school and related matters. Policies and procedures are easily accessible on site so that parents can look at these at any time. Staff are currently supporting weekly visits for children to the on-site school to help them prepare for transfer. Staff share good information with other settings that children attend, sharing strategies regarding children's individual needs to ensure consistency.

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	133720
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	973526
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	48
Name of provider	Charlton Acorns Committee
Date of previous inspection	16/09/2009
Telephone number	01235 224 088

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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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