

Acorn Day Nursery

25 Wessex Place, Somerton Business Park, Bancombe Road, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6SB

Inspection date

10/07/2014

Previous inspection date

25/03/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

4

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 enjoy their time at the nursery as they are actively involved in a generous range of experiences that challenge their development through effective planning and assessment arrangements.
- Partnerships at all levels are good, especially to support disabled children and those with special educational needs .
- Children's emotional well-being is catered for well and children have a good sense of belonging.
- Staff model language well and promote children's communication skills effectively.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The organisation of some group times provides a distraction, such as while the youngest children sing songs, toddlers are trying to listen to a quiet story.
- Staff do not always give children a warning that it is nearly time to tidy away so that children can finish their play.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children playing inside and outdoors.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with children and the delivery of their care needs.
- The inspector talked with children, staff and parents at convenient times.
- The manager and inspector conducted two joint observations.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including planning and assessment arrangements and recruitment procedures.

Inspector

Rachael Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Acorn Day Nursery is privately owned and registered at the current premises in 2006. It operates from a purpose-built building situated in the business park on the outskirts of Somerton, Somerset. Children are grouped according to their age and stage of development in separate areas within an open-plan room. There is an enclosed area on two levels for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open every weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. There are currently 82 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery receives funding for early years education for children aged three- and four-years-old. The nursery cares for children who are learning English as an additional language and for disabled children and those with special educational needs.

The owner/manager holds an early years qualification at level 4. She employs 12 members of staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications at level 2 or above. This includes an early years professional. The nursery also employs a cook who holds appropriate food and safety qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- reorganise the timing of group time for toddlers and babies so that children's enjoyment is not disturbed
- model respectful behaviour by consistently providing children with a few minutes warning before tidy up time so that they can finish their play.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are actively involved in a broad range of experiences that excite them and challenge their development. Staff make detailed observations of children's engagement in activities. They have good understanding of children's next steps in learning through effective assessment arrangements. For example, staff document children's time at the nursery well using communication diaries for the youngest children, learning pathways and memory books. Staff keep parents well-informed about their children's progress. Parents are actively involved in children's learning from the start, such as by providing information on children's interests, routines and starting points, so that staff can plan effectively.

There are detailed tracking documents, and the required progress check for two-year-old children enables staff to identify any gaps in children's learning to adapt their planning or to make appropriate referrals.

There are good opportunities for children to be physically active in the well-organised outdoor area, which provides children with opportunities to climb, balance and develop their sensory play. In particular, children have good opportunities to make marks and explore letter formation. Older children thoroughly enjoy using chalks on the chalkboard to write their names in preparation for their move to school. Staff celebrate children's achievements, suggesting, for example, that they get the camera to take a photograph of their writing. Children listen carefully to instructions and use the camera independently. Toddlers thoroughly enjoy using brushes and rollers in the water to make marks on the chalkboard. Staff commentate on children's movements so that they link their actions to words, helping them progress their communication skills well. Children enjoy climbing the steps to descend the slide. They show good awareness of safety, reminding each other to be careful of the seesaw at the bottom of the slide until they can move it. Children show curiosity as they explore the outdoor environment. Staff keep a watchful eye on younger children as they investigate the hose pipe. Children discover that if they pull it, water dribbles out and spills on their shoes. Children repeat these actions pleased with their discoveries, giggling happily. Staff step in and redirect children's play when they feel the length of the hosepipe has become a risk encouraging children to fill the watering can to water the beans and tomatoes they have grown.

There are good opportunities for children to play and learn together, overall. Staff use props well to encourage younger children's attention as they explore the theme of holidays. Staff talk to children about sun safety, such as why it is good to wear hats when they play outside, so that they begin to understand about keeping themselves safe. There are good opportunities for children to explore the resources using their senses as they pass them round the group learning to take turns. Staff ask questions and give children the time to respond and name the objects. Staff listen to children's responses, such as, 'I like going to the beach'. However, the organisation of these group times occasionally leads to some children becoming distracted. For example, the baby circle time runs simultaneously to the toddlers' group time and, as their play spaces are very close together, it is difficult for toddlers to hear their story while babies are singing.

Children enjoy their sensory play. Staff demonstrate to children how to smooth the sand down to make hand prints. Children copy and are encouraged to use mathematical language to compare size. Younger children enjoy transferring the sand between their hands to feel its texture and then sprinkle it on top of the digger. Noticing children's exploration, staff commentate on children's actions, saying for example, 'You've covered the digger'. Children exclaim 'Gone!' in response. Staff repeat these movements, encouraging children to work collaboratively to cover the car to hide it for a friend to find. Children benefit greatly from these positive interactions from staff to build their confidence.

Staff support children's communication skills by describing what children are doing. For example when children are building with construction kits, staff comment, 'You've built a tower'. Staff introduce key vocabulary and provide consistent praise for their achievements

so that they are confident to repeat activities. Children show good hand/eye coordination as they operate the computer well to complete a simple programme and the youngest children develop good fine motor skills as they post shapes. Staff provide very good support for children to learn the names and sounds of letters. Children confidently identify the initial sound of familiar words. They are proud of their achievements, showing adults their certificate.

Children are keen to learn, demonstrating the skills they need for their future learning. They hold different shapes up for staff to name and repeat the words to reinforce their learning. Children are confident to ask for help, such as to fix tricky pieces together. Toddlers use increased language to describe their intention such as, 'I want more. More baby boat'. Children show good coordination skills as they rotate pieces of the tray jigsaw so that they fit. Staff reinforce their learning well, encouraging them to look at the different clothes and parts of the body.

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

Children benefit greatly from a warm and welcoming environment, which meets their individual needs. There is an abundant range of easily accessible toys and resources in each area. For example, toddlers keenly access the comfortable quiet area to explore their favourite books. They turn pages carefully making up their own stories as they observe the illustrations.

Children's emotional well-being is catered for well by approachable and enthusiastic staff who know their children well. The key person system works well, especially in the baby room as the key person delivers all care needs, such as changing nappies routinely and hygienically. Staff have good knowledge of children's care needs and respect their developing independence, such as in feeding themselves. Children have a good sense of belonging. For example, all children are welcomed when they sing the 'Hello song' and observe their photograph apples to register their attendance. Staff work well in partnership with parents to establish photograph albums so that the youngest children have positive self-esteem.

Children are familiar with routines. This means that children are well behaved and understand expectations and boundaries, such as to listen to others as they sit in a circle time. Staff use daily routines well to promote learning, such as lining children up to complete a headcount before they go inside, therefore encouraging counting and early calculation skills. However, staff do not always respect children's play fully such as, offering them a five minute warning so that they have time to finish their play before they tidy away.

Older children have good opportunities to learn about safety and to explore different resources. Children explain the functions of the different colours on the traffic lights, such as 'red means stop'. Children listen to instructions well, running when the light is green, slowing down when it is orange and stopping when it is red. Staff reinforce children's understanding, modelling sign language to support children's communication skills well.

Children predict that the men at work sign means 'stop digging'. Staff praise children's ideas and correct them respectfully. Children confidently talk about their own experiences, such as a parent going through a red light, and that they saw road works near a local supermarket. Children play collaboratively with the lollipop sign and zebra crossing, stating 'We can do it together'.

Children learn good hygienic practices. For example, all children wash their hands before they eat their snack of apples, strawberries and toast. Older children develop good independence skills as they choose which topping to put on their toast and spread it on their own, using knives safely. All meals are prepared in a scrupulously clean kitchen by an appropriately qualified cook who has good knowledge of children's special dietary requirements.

Older children are aware of their own needs and visit the toilet independently. They demonstrate good understanding of hygiene as they flush the toilet, wash their hands with soap and running water and use paper towels to dry their hands, so that they do not spread germs. When children read a book together and learn that a flea causes the dog's itch they comment: 'It's very small. It's like germs on your hands. You can't see them but you need to wash them away.'

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

Staff demonstrate good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They provide a safe and secure environment, which is thoroughly risk assessed. There is an accurate record of children's attendance completed by staff. This is supported well as staff duplicate the register on a whiteboard so that staff are effectively deployed to meet children's needs. Staff have secure knowledge of the possible signs and/or symptoms of abuse and procedures to follow should they have concern about a child in their care. There is strong partnership working with key agencies to safeguard children. There are appropriate systems in place to enable suitably qualified and vetted staff to work directly with the children. There are good arrangements to maintain staff's professional development through annual appraisals and the recently introduced supervision meetings and peer-to-peer observations.

The staff team has a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a broad range of experiences, both planned and child-initiated, that help children make good progress across all areas of learning. The owner/manager monitors planning and assessment arrangements well to ensure her staff are consistently delivering the educational programme and have an accurate understanding of children's progress.

The staff team work well together to monitor the provision and drive improvement through effective self-evaluation. They have made good progress since their last inspection, addressing successfully all actions raised, through the support of the local authority advisers and an external training organisation. For example, the leadership team

has strengthened systems to record staff suitability, so that information about staff's enhanced checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service is readily available. Managers have reviewed recruitment procedures, which now include two written references for new staff. The leadership team has visited another nursery to share practice and identify improvements. For example, they have ordered a mud kitchen to extend children's role-play in the outdoor area. The team monitor the provision well to make improvements. For example, noticing that some older children like to sit quietly in the afternoon they are developing a communication friendly space, as well as a comfortable book corner, for the children to relax.

There is a good partnership working at all levels. The staff team works collaboratively with the area special educational needs coordinator and other professionals, to enable all children to be included and to make the best possible progress from their starting points. Staff have made good links with the local primary school to support a smooth transition, for example, to develop a school entry plan to enable children to be supported effectively. Staff work in conjunction with parents to support children learning English as an additional language, such as to develop a word wall to respect children's home language. Parents comment positively about the nurturing environment and the positive interactions that children receive from staff.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY345531
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	968995
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	82
Name of provider	Katryn Bennett
Date of previous inspection	25/03/2014
Telephone number	01458 273705

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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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