

# Acorns Pre-School

United Reformed Church Hall, Bower Hinton, Nr Martock, Somerset, TA12 6LN

<b>Inspection date</b>	03/12/2014
Previous inspection date	16/10/2008

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
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## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is inadequate

- The designated person for safeguarding children has insufficient knowledge of the procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff.
- The provider does not provide Ofsted with the necessary information for them to complete suitability checks on the new committee. They have failed to notify Ofsted of a change in manager. The provider is unable to evidence that they complete appropriate suitability checks for all staff. These breaches compromise children's welfare.
- The monitoring of children's development is inconsistent. Staff do not have a secure enough knowledge of how to plan challenging adult-led activities that help children make better progress.
- The provider does not effectively self-evaluate the setting's practices to identify and action the most significant weaknesses to ensure good outcomes for children.
- Staff do not provide sufficient good quality regular information for parents to support their children's learning at home.

### It has the following strengths

- Children are happy and generally enjoy their time at the pre-school. They behave well and develop strong relationships.
- Staff promote children's critical thinking skills by encouraging them to think of solutions to problems.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector checked safeguarding information and the premises.
- The inspector spoke to parents, children and staff.
- The inspector sampled documentation such as policies and procedures, children's development records and planning.

## Inspector

Elaine Douglas

## **Full report**

### **Information about the setting**

Acorns Pre-school opened in 1997 and is run by a parent committee. It operates from the church hall in the village of Bower Hinton, near Yeovil, in Somerset. The main play space is a large hall; there are also toilet and kitchen facilities available. There is a grassed and tarmac area, which they use for outdoor play. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 20 children on roll. The pre-school opens each weekday from 9.30am to 2.30pm term time only. In addition, children may start at the group from 8.30am and remain until 3pm according to demand. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years. There are three members of staff. Of these, one holds an early years qualification at level 5 and two hold a qualification at level 3.

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

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- ensure the designated person to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children has the knowledge to respond and take appropriate action with particular regard for if an allegation is made against a member of staff
- provide Ofsted with information needed to check the suitability of all committee members
- ensure records about staff include identity checks and vetting procedures, including disclosure reference numbers, the date obtained and details of who obtained it
- improve the monitoring of children's learning and development including completing progress checks for two-year-old children to plan more challenging experiences and help them make better progress.

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

- develop self-evaluation processes to reflect on practice and evaluate how to target the most significant actions to improve outcomes for children
- extend staff knowledge of how to use adult-led activities to promote children's creativity and challenge the more able children
- improve the frequency of sharing information with parents on children's next stages of learning so they can provide support at home.

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

Staff plan to ensure children experience activities covering all areas of development. The information that staff seek from parents on children's starting points is variable so they do not have good information about all children. Their observations and monitoring of children's progress is inconsistent and so planning does not always identify children's changing needs. As a result, some adult-led activities lack challenge to help children to make good progress. Not all parents receive regular information on their children's next stages of development to enable them to support learning at home. This means that, although children make suitable progress in their learning and development overall, staff

do not challenge some of them to progress as rapidly as they are capable.

Staff effectively support child-initiated activities by posing questions for children to solve problems and develop their mathematical skills. For example, while children made their own designs with plastic bricks, staff asked them if their construction was taller or shorter than themselves. They encouraged children to count the bricks and, when their car would not fit through the archway, they helped children work out what they needed to do. However, during adult-led activities, they do not plan for the different learning needs of the children, and therefore do not challenge them sufficiently. For example, staff over-prepared calendars for children to make their fingerprints into snowmen. This missed opportunities for children to use tools such a hole-punch or to thread ribbon for themselves. In addition, children were not able to paint their own fingers or use the resources in their own way. This limits children's creativity.

Staff provide suitable support for children's key areas of development to prepare them sufficiently for school. They use daily routines such as circle time to promote children's learning. For example, children recited the days of the week, and therefore knew that if today is Wednesday, then tomorrow is Thursday. Staff encouraged children to sound the letters in their names and find their named placemat at lunchtime. This supports children's literacy development and helps them understand that text carries meaning. Children enjoy whole-group stories. They pay attention and show they are listening by answering questions. For example, children commented that they would need two Wellington boots but a cow would need four. Staff encouraged children to recall the story at the end so they also developed an understanding of the structure of the story. Children join in with number rhymes and some are confident to sing to the group. Staff engage children in talking about their interests and things they have done at home. As a result, children develop successful communication skills through listening and responding to questions. Children enjoy role play and act out situations that are familiar to them. Staff provide sufficient support for children to manage dressing-up clothes to promote children's independence and physical skills. Children competently use the computer to operate a program, using both a mouse and a touch screen.

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

Staff help children to understand about safety by regularly practising the emergency evacuation procedures. They talk to children about safe behaviour, such as sitting on their bottom so they do not fall off a chair. However, the provider fails to ensure they safeguard children's welfare. They lack knowledge of secure safeguarding processes with regards to suitable people and notifying Ofsted of significant changes, which compromises children's well-being.

Children have a suitable awareness of healthy living. For example, children responded well to staff questions about the weather, commenting that they need to wear hats and gloves because it is cold and frosty. They put their hands over their mouths when they cough and they wash their hands to get rid of germs. Children helped themselves to tissues and disposed of them hygienically, using hand gel afterwards to help prevent the spread of

infection. Staff work with parents to provide children with healthy snacks and lunches. The pre-school provides milk and water and children help themselves to a drink at any time. Children develop an appropriate awareness of the effect of the weather and exercise on their body. For example, staff suggested that children should blow on their hands to warm them up after being outside.

Staff provide a learning environment indoors that enables children to actively select resources and initiate their learning. They use labelling, posters and displays around the premises, which children can refer to and use to learn about the purpose of print. Children have daily opportunities to be outdoors, where they use equipment for large physical skills, such as tricycles, scooters and balance bikes. They also have a garden area for planting and finding mini creatures. Children use a wide range of resources overall, and have positive images of people's differences. This helps them learn about the world they live in.

Children welcome each other, using sign language with their words. This helps children of all abilities to communicate. Staff use golden rules to reinforce their expectations of children's behaviour, such as taking turns and being polite. As a result, children play well together and have strong relationships. For example, children offered to share their resources with others who wanted to join in with their game. Children helped to tidy up, putting toys back onto the tables when staff asked them to. They use a sand timer to share large equipment such as bicycles. This means children are happy to wait, knowing they will get a turn. The suitable key-person system helps children to settle. Staff help children gain self-esteem through acknowledging their achievements. This prepares them for moving onto another setting or school.

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

Management have too little understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, there are breaches in the safeguarding and welfare requirements that have a significant impact on children's safety and welfare. The manager is the designated person for safeguarding but has insufficient knowledge of the procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff. The provider has failed to provide Ofsted with the necessary information about the changes to the committee in order for them to complete checks to determine their suitability. The provider is unable to evidence they complete the appropriate suitability checks for all staff. In addition, they have not informed Ofsted of a change to the manager, within the required timescale. This is a breach of a legal requirement. These breaches compromise children's welfare and safety. On this occasion, Ofsted does not intend to take further action because the committee are taking prompt action to rectify this.

The overall monitoring of children's development is not fully effective. Although staff have a broad overview of children's abilities, there are inconsistencies in the quality and frequency of their observations. For example, the manager and staff were unsure whether some children had had a progress check at two years and were unable to find the

documents. As a result, they do not ensure that any gaps in children's development are closing quickly by planning to challenge children appropriately in adult-led activities. This means the provider does not successfully meet all the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Staff seek appropriate information from parents to help meet children's individual care needs and protect their well-being. Parents sign their children in and out on arrival, which provides accurate records of who is responsible for the children. Staff carry out daily risk assessments, such as checking the outdoor area is safe and secure before children go out to play. There is an appropriate mobile phone policy, which assures parents that staff use their children's photographs only for observational purposes.

The provider carries out annual appraisals to identify staff training needs, and the small staff team observe each other and discuss better ways of working. However, the provider does not use self-evaluation effectively to focus on the most significant actions to improve practice. As a result, they have not identified weaknesses in the assessment of children's learning or breaches to the safeguarding requirements. The provider is in the process of updating all the policies and procedures as they do not all provide the most up-to-date information for parents.

Parents receive documented information on the Early Years Foundation Stage and attend an annual meeting to discuss their children's progress. Staff include photographs with observational comments in the children's communication books. However, they do not complete these regularly or share them with parents frequently enough for parents to support their children's learning. Parents comment that they would like more information on what their children are doing and achieving. Staff contact other early years providers that children attend to discuss any concerns and children's development. Staff seek support from outside agencies to help promote the learning and development of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## 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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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>	143104
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	841583
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	20
<b>Name of provider</b>	The Acorns Pre-School (Bower Hinton) Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16/10/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	07854221736

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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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