

# Acorn Childcare

Community Centre, Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel, CHELMSFORD, CM3 2HP

<b>Inspection date</b>	15/01/2015
Previous inspection date	18/03/2014

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	3
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 make good progress in relation to their starting points because the quality of teaching is good and staff plan a broad range of activities that meet their individual needs and interests.
- Warm, caring and nurturing relationships are formed between the children and the staff. This means that children are happy, behave well and become confident learners.
- Partnerships with parents, local schools and other professionals are successfully established. Information is shared regularly, so that children are provided with good continuity in their care and learning.
- Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities for protecting children and they teach children to assess risks for themselves. As a result, children are kept safe and are learning how to keep themselves safe.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always give children sufficient time to think critically and use expressive language when responding to questions.
- The staff are not always making the best use of space and resources to ensure that the youngest children consistently have a reassuring and comforting play environment.

## 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 in the indoor learning environment, accompanied staff and children on an outing to the nearby park and went with staff to collect children from the local school.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider, manager, staff and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's development records.
- The inspector saw evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from their responses to surveys organised by the setting.

## Inspector

Patricia Champion

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Acorn Childcare was registered in 2012 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school and out-of-school club is situated in a village community hall in Hatfield Peverel, Essex, and is one of three settings privately run by the same owner. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from two playrooms and children use the nearby park for outdoor play. The setting employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are four staff with qualifications at level 3 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 2. The provider holds Early Years Teacher Status. There are two apprentices working towards a qualification at level 2. The pre-school and out-of-school club operate from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Opening times are from 7am to 6pm. A holiday club operates according to demand from 9am to 5pm. Children attend for a variety of pre-school sessions or out-of-school care at the breakfast and after-school club. There are currently 53 children on roll, 30 of whom are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

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

- extend the time given to children when they are responding to staff's probing questions, to fully promote children's critical thinking and expressive language skills
- enhance children's emotional well-being by reviewing the layout and resources in the room used by the youngest children, so that they can see the posters and displays at their level and that the nappy changing arrangements are reviewed to offer more privacy for children.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide children with a wide range of stimulating activities, closely linked to their interests. As a result, children enthusiastically engage in meaningful play as they take part in a good blend of adult-led activities and experiences they choose for themselves. The quality of teaching is good. Staff constantly encourage children to explore and experiment. This means that children learn to work things out for themselves. Staff give good attention to promoting children's development in communication and language. Staff use both daily

routines and planned experiences to ask questions and offer tasks to gauge children's understanding. This also promotes early language skills and sustained thinking, so children become interested in exploring new concepts and developing their vocabulary. However, at times, staff ask a lot of questions and do not leave enough time for children to process the information, consider an answer and formulate a response. Consequently, children are not consistently encouraged to build on their developing critical and creative thinking skills.

Children make good progress because staff are well informed about their individual needs. Staff gather information about children's starting points from parents when they first join, and discuss their progress on an ongoing basis. Parents are supported with their children's learning at home as information on children's progress and next steps is discussed regularly, with staff offering advice and support materials. In addition, parents become involved in their children's learning when they take home story books or provide photographs of their children's achievements while on holiday. Furthermore, parents are also involved in the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. This means that they are well informed about their child's development in the three prime areas of learning. Staff carefully evaluate each activity and children's next steps to help identify and narrow gaps in children's learning. This helps to support children's progress or identify if there are any concerns, so that further support can be put in place. Consequently, all children attending the nursery, including the two-year-olds, make good progress in their learning and development. The manager is proactive in developing partnerships with other professionals to promote a shared approach to children's learning. This ensures children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high levels of support and are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

Children are effectively developing the skills they need in readiness for starting school. They show good levels of concentration as they listen to stories. Children practise their early writing skills, holding pencils correctly when drawing or writing their names on their artwork. Children's mathematical development is promoted well, as staff encourage children to calculate, as they sing number rhymes or they explore capacity and volume using a variety of containers in the sand. Children have interesting opportunities to develop their understanding of the world. For example, they grow spring bulbs, such as, daffodils and anemones, at the planting station. They also discover the features of other countries as they explore flags, famous landmarks and food from around the world.

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

The effective key-person system ensures that children receive high levels of support and consistency of care. Children develop close bonds with staff and feel safe and secure in their care. Staff observe children well and are quick to respond to their needs. Staff comfort children if they become unsettled and recognise when children are becoming tired and need to rest, particularly after eating lunch. Children are supported well to make the move into the setting. Settling-in visits are offered, which enable children to gradually become familiar with their new environment. Parents are asked to provide information about their children's care needs, enthusiasms and interests. This means staff have a good picture of each child as an individual before they move into their care. Staff also prepare

children well for the move on to school and their future learning. They develop positive links with nearby schools and have good working partnerships with the teachers. Staff invite teachers into the pre-school to meet with children and the key person before children move into full-time education. As a result, information about children's stages of learning and individual care needs is effectively shared.

Overall, there is a well-resourced and stimulating play environment. There are two playrooms, which means that the needs of children of different ages are catered for safely. Children, particularly siblings, still have some ongoing contact with one another when they meet at mealtimes. Toys, resources and activities are set out at children's height so they can reach these comfortably and make choices about what they want to play with. Wall displays enhance the playroom for the older children and give children a sense of belonging and self-awareness. However, younger children are not always easily able to view the posters and pictures they are interested in, because they are displayed at a higher level in the second playroom. Staff are good role models. They speak respectfully to each other and to children. They model and remind children to be polite and use good manners. This means that children know what is expected of them and as a result, they behave well.

Children learn to adopt healthy lifestyles. They have daily access to the nearby park, where they have plenty of fresh air and exercise. Ample space is provided on the basketball court for energetic movement, such as playing racing and chasing games or rolling, catching and kicking footballs. Staff use these activities well to enable children to consider the risks involved in their play. For example, children help staff to check that the basketball court is safe prior to use. Children also learn about their personal safety when they practise fire drills so they can swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency. Staff talk to the children about which foods are good to eat. This helps to develop their understanding of healthy eating and how to make healthy choices. Children demonstrate their good independence skills, as they pass each other a plate, share around the fruit and pour their own drinks, with little support from the staff. Thorough hygiene practices are in place for all children to minimise the risk of cross-infection. These include hand washing before mealtimes and after messy play. There are also hygienic arrangements for nappy changing. However, the youngest children's dignity is not consistently preserved because the nappy changing unit is not always sited in a position that offers the maximum privacy.

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

The management and staff have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Secure recruitment and vetting procedures are implemented to ensure all staff are suitable for their role and that they have Disclosure and Barring Service checks in place. Induction processes include information about safeguarding and this ensures that staff are aware of their responsibilities. Ongoing suitability is checked through effective mentoring and supervision. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and there are clear procedures in place for reporting concerns about children, adults or the operation of the setting. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed to ensure children are kept safe, both inside and outside the

setting. Safe and reliable arrangements are made to take and collect children, attending the out-of-school club, to and from the nearby infant and junior schools. The majority of staff are qualified in first aid so they can deal with minor injuries and emergency situations appropriately. Documents clearly record any accidents involving children, existing injuries, and medication administered to children. An effective safeguarding policy is implemented that includes guidance on the safe use of cameras and mobile phones in the setting. This is shared with parents so that they understand the procedures in place to keep their children safe.

The management and staff team are committed to providing high-quality care and actively reflect on the quality of the care and education they provide. The manager regularly monitors the educational programmes to ensure that children are offered a wide range of experiences across all areas of learning. Children's individual development records are routinely reviewed, and achievements are carefully tracked to ensure that any gaps in development are appropriately followed up. Action taken to address the weaknesses from the last inspection have resulted in a safer and more welcoming environment for children. For example, security and cleaning routines are much improved, new flooring has been laid, cupboard locks have been fitted and there is no longer any exposed electrical wiring accessible to children. A well-established training programme ensures staff attend a wide range of training events or complete online courses. This helps to support staff as they strive to enhance their good practice. Staff comment that they are very well supported and willingly attend one-to-one supervision meetings, annual appraisals and regular staff meetings. As a result, staff work well as a team and this has a positive impact on the quality of care and education provided for children.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good and the setting has ensured that there are regular opportunities to involve them in their children's experiences. The key persons build friendly and helpful relationships and chat to parents on a daily basis about their children's achievements and well-being. A wealth of information on display boards provide details about health and safety, forthcoming events and what children are doing each day. Parental input is constantly sought, for example, through surveys and discussions. Parents are very complimentary about the pre-school and out-of-school club and the impact it has on their child's good progress. Partnerships with local schools and other professionals are successfully established. The manager is proactive in seeking advice from the local authority advisers and other professionals when needed. She has established very good links with the schools that children attend. Information is shared regularly, so that children are provided with good continuity in their care and learning.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>

## 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>	EY454277
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	974630
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	53
<b>Name of provider</b>	Amy Louise Savill
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18/03/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	07580 834417

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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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