

Acorns Pre-School

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



Inspection date

24 April 2015

Previous inspection date

3 December 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff do not plan activities well to reflect children's individual learning needs. This means that children do not always make good enough progress in all areas of learning.
- Arrangements for hand drying are not effective in helping to prevent germs from spreading or teaching children how to keep healthy.
- Most creative activities are adult led. Therefore, children do not have enough opportunities to experiment and explore with different materials and use their imaginations to complete their projects to their own satisfaction.
- Systems for self-evaluation are not fully effective. The pre-school have taken some steps to address actions and recommendations raised at their last inspection. However, they do not have secure systems in place that help them to identify weaknesses so they can make continuous improvements in the outcomes for children.

It has the following strengths

- Children develop strong relationships with staff and their friends. They are polite and learn how to behave due to the effective strategies used by staff.
- Children are confident and become increasingly independent in managing their needs. This helps to prepare them for the next stage in their learning, so they are ready for their move on to school.
- Staff regularly share information with parents regularly, helping to keep them fully involved in children's learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve planning and assessment cycles to ensure activities target children's specific learning needs to help them all make good progress
- improve hand-washing procedures to minimise the spread of infection.

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

- provide more opportunities for children to engage in creative activities when they choose
- improve arrangements for monitoring the provision, to help identify and address areas for improvement.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playroom and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector completed a joint observation and held meetings at an appropriate time with the registered person and manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documents and sampled welfare records.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection and engaged in discussions with staff and children at appropriate times.

Inspector

Samantha Powis

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Children access a suitable range of activities and enjoy their time at the pre-school. They have lots of freedom to choose what they want to play with. However, independent access to creative resources to enable children to use their imaginations is limited. Staff chat to children, sometimes introducing them to letter sounds and numbers through their discussions. For example, when getting ready for snack time children had to listen for the initial letter sound in their name to know when it was time to go and wash their hands. Staff make some observations of the children and complete the required progress checks for children aged two years. However, these are not always sufficiently detailed or used effectively to inform future planning. This means that at times, activities do not reflect children's individual learning needs to help them all make good progress. Parents can see their child's development record and can take home the diaries to share with members of the family. This keeps them involved in children's learning and encourages them to discuss children's experiences in pre-school at home. Links with early years providers help to promote consistency.

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

Children receive consistent support from the staff, which helps them to feel emotionally secure and build positive relationships. For example, staff help them to use the timer so they learn to share and take turns. Children gain confidence and feel important. Celebrations of birthdays and activities relating to festivals around the world help children learn to respect and value each other. Staff encourage children to pour their own drinks and find their own coats promoting their independence. Children benefit from daily opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air. However, all children use the same hand towel to dry their hands, which often falls on the floor of the toilet area. This increases the risk of germs spreading. Overall, practices and procedures help to keep children safe. For example, children take part in activities to learn about road safety.

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

There are suitable arrangements for recruitment, induction and staff appraisals. Staff are vetted appropriately and aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. Managers understand their responsibility to inform Ofsted of changes to committee members so checks are completed. The designated person attends training on safeguarding to ensure she is able to deal with any safeguarding issues promptly, to help keep children safe. Although the provider has addressed weaknesses identified at the last inspection, self-evaluation is not fully effective in helping to ensure continuous improvements are made.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143104
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1000869
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	19
Name of provider	The Acorns Pre-School (Bower Hinton) Committee
Date of previous inspection	3 December 2014
Telephone number	07548221736

Acorns Pre-school registered in 1997. It operates from the church hall in the village of Bower Hinton, near Yeovil, in Somerset. The pre-school opens Monday to Thursday 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. On a Friday they offer care from 9.30am to 12pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years. There are three members of staff, all hold childcare qualifications to level 3.

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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

