

# Acorns Pre School

St Andrews School, Great Yeldham, Halstead, Essex, CO9 4PT



## Inspection date

4 June 2015

Previous inspection date

11 May 2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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 <b>does not meet legal requirements for early years settings</b>			

## Summary of key findings for parents

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

- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted, within the required time period, of the names of new directors of the limited company that runs the pre-school. As a result, the required suitability checks have not been carried out to fully safeguard children.
- Staff are not always deployed effectively in the indoor and outdoor environments, to ensure that children consistently receive good quality teaching and interaction throughout the day. As a result, children are not making good progress in their learning.
- Staff do not always encourage all parents to make a contribution to their children's learning at pre-school or at home.
- Staff do not always provide resources in the outdoor area that enable children to extend their learning and develop their imaginative skills.

### It has the following strengths

- Children have adequate opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise. They regularly visit the primary school's nature garden, play physical games on the school field and dance to music.
- Staff form successful relationships with the on-site school, especially the Reception class teachers. Children are able to regularly visit the classrooms, attend school events and meet the teachers. Consequently, they are emotionally prepared for the move to school.

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

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

- ensure that staff are deployed effectively throughout the day, so that children consistently experience good quality teaching to help them to make best progress.

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

- enhance the provision for the outdoor area, so that children are able to extend their learning even further, for example, with pens, pencils and toy telephones in their role play
- build on the already good relationships with parents, so that they are all fully aware of how they can contribute to children's learning at the pre-school and at home.

### **To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:**

- ensure that Ofsted is informed of the name, date of birth, address and telephone number of any partner, director, senior officer or other member of the governing body (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

## **Inspection activities**

- The inspector observed activities in the pre-school room, pre-school garden, school field and the Reception class outside play space.
- The inspector spoke with members of staff, company directors and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and childminders spoken to on the day of the inspection and information in parents' feedback questionnaires.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the provision and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures.

### **Inspector**

Daniella Tyler

## Inspection findings

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

The quality of teaching is variable. This is because staff are not always deployed effectively and are often engaged in other activities, such as preparing snack and tidying away resources. For example, when children bring over a millipede they have found, staff are not available to extend their learning and build on their enthusiasm about the creature. Despite this, on the occasions when staff are available, they extend children's learning appropriately. Children have become very interested in the bird box camera the setting has installed. A bird has recently laid an egg and staff have planned activities to develop children's understanding of this. Staff support children to create their own birds nest from paper and glue. They develop children's mathematical and writing skills as they encourage them to label their own work and count how many eggs they have made. Staff form positive relationships with parents and regularly update them about their children's day. However, not all parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning at pre-school or at home. As a result, opportunities to maximise children's learning have not been explored.

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

Children form appropriate bonds with their key person, staff and each other. They demonstrate that they are settled and comfortable in their surroundings. Staff provide an adequate range of resources that are easily accessible indoors. However, outdoor activities in the garden are less well planned for. There is a water tray that is covered up, a box of resources that is hard for children to access and a playhouse that has ice cream van signs on. However, there are few resources to support children to extend their play, such as pretend ice cream, pens, paper and play tills. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately. They encourage sharing and patience with the children. Staff support children's independence skills suitably so that they are appropriately prepared for school.

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

The provider has failed to notify Ofsted, within the required time period, of changes to the directors of the company who run the pre-school. As a result, the relevant suitability checks have not been carried out. However, it has minimal impact on the children's welfare as the directors do not have contact with the children. Staff carry out daily risk assessments of the premises and outings to ensure that children are adequately protected from harm. Staff meet with the manager to identify areas where training would be beneficial. The manager is well qualified and her evaluation of the pre-school gives a broad overview of some of the strengths and weaknesses. However, the manager has failed to identify and address the weaknesses raised at this inspection. She oversees children's progress so that gaps in learning can be identified and staff can plan appropriate support. However, this support is not always implemented due to the ineffective deployment of staff. Staff's relationships with other providers, such as childminders, are positive and make an adequate contribution to children's development.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	508710
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	869367
<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>	18
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	30
<b>Name of provider</b>	Acorns Pre-School
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01787 237684

Acorn Pre School was registered in 1998. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, 3 of whom are part-time staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications and there are five emergency cover staff. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 12 noon and two afternoons are from 12 noon to 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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.

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