

The Acorns Nursery School



Westmeston Parish Hall, Lewes Road, Westmeston, Near Ditchling, East Sussex, BN6 8RL

Inspection date	9 July 2015
Previous inspection date	15 September 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff meet children's individual needs well and they positively interact together. As a result, children are happy and show secure and trusting relationships with staff.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff provide effective communication with all parents so they feel valued, fully included and informed about their children's learning and development.
- Staff prioritise the safety of the children. They have a good understanding of the procedures to follow and know how to report any concerns to protect children's welfare.
- Effective observation and assessment processes identify children's interests, how they like to learn and their achievements securely. This helps staff to accurately plan for children's next steps for learning.
- Staff use the wider community and the outdoor learning environment to effectively support all children's physical well-being and development.
- Management uses a range of effective ways to evaluate their practice to help them make continuous improvement. Staff show dedication to providing quality learning opportunities for all children.
- Children are well prepared for starting school. Staff plan a variety of activities that help children to get along with others, follow rules and do things independently.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff miss some opportunities to further develop children's choices of toys and resources indoors.
- At times, changes of routine are not always organised effectively to support children fully. As a result, this sometimes leads to some children becoming distracted.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen opportunities further for children to access and self-choose toys and resources
- review how changes of routine are organised to fully engage children during these times.

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector viewed the areas of the nursery that children use.
- The inspector observed staff interacting with the children.
- The inspector sampled written documentation, including children's progress reports, and policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children, and gathered parents' views and considered these.

Inspector

Kelly Hawkins

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff provide a variety of activities to engage children to promote their learning and development in all areas. They provide good-quality teaching as they skilfully extend children's learning. For example, children enjoy interactive stories and engage in imaginative role play. Staff support children to make links to the real world through effective discussions. They use a wide range of techniques to develop children's communication and language skills. For example, staff ask lots of questions to encourage children's speaking, listening and problem-solving skills. Children develop good letter recognition and writing skills. Staff actively engage parents regularly in their children's learning experiences. For example, they invite parents to regular events and encourage their contributions to their children's learning records. Staff establish good links with other professionals and work closely with other settings that children attend. This ensures there is a consistent approach to supporting children's learning. Staff share information about children's development with teaching staff at the schools they move on to. This helps to promote their continued learning as they make this change.

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

Staff maintain good relationships with children, who arrive happy and quickly engage in activities. Children enjoy their learning experiences. They seek out staff for support and offer spontaneous acts of affection, such as sharing memories and conversations. Children understand the importance of caring for others and living things. For example, they water their plants and observe bugs. Children enjoy keeping active outside and develop good physical skills. For example, they have opportunities to challenge themselves, such as climbing trees and balancing. Children develop a good understanding of keeping healthy as staff talk to them about the effects of the hot weather on them. This helps children to clearly recognise when they are thirsty and to independently help themselves to water.

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

Management ensures that staff maintain a safe environment through completing sound risk assessments daily to identify any hazards. Management follows effective procedures to check the suitability of all staff. They support and encourage staff's professional development and monitor and evaluate practice through regular training and meetings. Staff have completed training to widen children's learning experiences outdoors. This helps to engage all children in outdoor activities. Management accurately monitors children's progress. As a result, any gaps in children's learning are closing quickly and all children are supported. This means that all children, including those with additional needs make good progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY218724
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	842556
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	48
Name of provider	Janet Rosaline Irwin
Date of previous inspection	15 September 2010
Telephone number	01273 841428

The Acorns Nursery School at Westmeston registered in 2002. It is privately owned and is one of three settings run by the same individual. The nursery school operates from the Parish Hall in Westmeston, between Ditchling and Plumpton in East Sussex. It opens term time only, every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am to 2.30pm, with an extended day from 9am to 5pm on Fridays. Holiday fun adventure days run during school holidays from 9am to 5pm. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four. The provider employs nine members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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