

Acorns Pre-School

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



Inspection date	10 March 2016
Previous inspection date	24 April 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Since the previous inspection, management and staff have developed systems to enable them to reflect well on the quality of the provision. They value the views of staff, parents and children in identifying areas for improvement.
- Management supports the qualified staff through regular meetings and training to update their professional knowledge. This has a positive impact on children's learning; for example, staff have developed beneficial approaches to how they plan for children's next steps in learning to ensure that they make good progress.
- Staff complete regular observation and assessments of children's achievements to enable them to monitor their progress effectively. Any weaknesses in learning are easily identified so children can receive the additional help that they need.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff encourage information sharing between home and the setting about children's changing interests and needs.
- Staff support children well to become independent. For example, children confidently dress themselves for outdoor play and are confident to ask for help when they need it.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, staff miss opportunities to fully extend children's thinking and communication skills during their play activities.
- At times, staff interrupt children's play and learning with little warning of changes in the routine or activities, to allow them opportunities to end their play.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve changeover times so that children know what is going to happen and can end their play for themselves
- extend the opportunities for children to communicate their ideas to further promote their learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the activities and the quality of teaching throughout the setting.
- The inspector held discussions with the management team and spoke with children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including staff suitability checks, self-evaluation, observation, assessment and planning records, and documentation linked to the monitoring of children's progress.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

June Robinson

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff have training to develop their awareness and confidence of child protection issues. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The management team ensures that staff are suitably checked to work with children. Recruitment procedures are robust, with effective processes to help staff to become familiar with their roles and understand their responsibilities. The management team has good systems in place to evaluate the quality of the provision. It has successfully addressed the areas for development identified at the previous inspection. For example, it now has effective methods to plan for children's learning, to monitor their progress and have improved hand-washing procedures to minimise the spread of infection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff provide a stimulating environment where children choose resources independently to support their learning. Staff skilfully follow children's play and spontaneous interests to extend their experiences. For example, children's interest in vehicle play was further developed by encouraging them to draw a huge street-plan to include things they may see from a car window. Staff introduced new words into children's vocabulary. For example, when children discussed some of the animals they might see from the car, staff explained words such as 'safari park' and 'flamingo'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children behave well. Staff support children very well to learn to share resources with each other. For example, staff used a timer to support children to take turns with the more popular resources. Children have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills and benefit from being in the open air. They understand the effect exercise has on their bodies. For example, children talked about their legs being tired after using the bikes. Staff teach children about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, through discussion and by teaching them good hygiene practices.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are curious and enthusiastic learners. They remain engaged for good periods of time on activities that interest them. Children are self-assured in their pre-writing skills. For example, they made road signs and shop symbols on their large street-plan. Children use mathematical language spontaneously. For example they compared the distance toy cars travelled using language such as 'shortest' and 'furthest'. Children are confident in recognising numbers and solving mathematical problems. For example, when some children left the group, they quickly calculated how many children were left. Children are effectively supported to develop the key skills to help them in their future learning and the move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143104
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1013458
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	16
Name of provider	The Acorns Pre-School (Bower Hinton) Committee
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2015
Telephone number	07599 981932

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 Wednesday from 8.30am to 3.30pm, Thursday from 9.30am to 2.30pm and Friday 9.30am to 12pm, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years. There are three members of staff working with the children; of these, two have relevant qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2.

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