

# Inspection of Acorn Preschool

Holy Rood Church, Gosport Road, Stubbington, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 2AS

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Inspection date: 16 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is inadequate

Safeguarding arrangements to ensure that children are safe are not effective, which impacts on children's personal development. However, children appear happy and show enjoyment when arriving at the pre-school. They are keen and eager to do things for themselves, including hanging their coats and putting away their lunch boxes. Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve and work closely as a team to ensure that children succeed.

Children quickly settle into activities of their choice and show high levels of concentration. For example, they take time to think about mathematical questions and answer them correctly as they manipulate dough. Children behave well and enjoy each other's company. They play alongside one another and together. They show excellent imaginative skills as they turn a climbing obstacle into a spaceship and excitedly count down together until 'blast off'. Children have a good balance of adult support and time to practise and develop skills alone. This has a positive impact on the overall progress they make.

### What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager fails to ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. This has an impact on children's safety. For instance, safe recruitment procedures are not followed to ensure that those working with children are suitable to do so.
- The manager does not record or maintain relevant documentation to ensure effective management of the pre-school. This prevents a two-way flow of information being shared with other professionals when required.
- The manager does not ensure that she keeps her safeguarding training up to date, or the pre-school's policies and procedures. This hinders her ability to know how to manage safeguarding concerns, including what to do should there be an allegation made against a staff member. As a result, she is unable to fulfil all aspects of her designated safeguarding lead role effectively.
- The manager and staff team work seamlessly to create an engaging curriculum. They know all the children well and constantly reflect on the experiences children receive.
- The manager models good teaching, which supports the newest staff members. This includes how to effectively monitor children's learning through ongoing observations and assessments. However, staff do not maximise opportunities to share ongoing assessments with parents. This is echoed by feedback from parents, who state they would like more information about their children's learning.
- Children have many experiences to develop well physically. They demonstrate strength and perseverance as they move logs and gently pick up insects that are

nesting underneath. Staff support children to understand how to care for insects in the natural world.

- Staff support children's developing vocabulary extremely well. They model and extend language with ease. For example, lengthy discussions take place in the mud kitchen when making 'cakes'. Children are keen readers and have access to reading materials throughout the pre-school. They are keen to enjoy stories with adults and listen intently to familiar stories.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Staff work proactively with other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs are planned for and fully supported. All children make positive steps in their education and access high-quality learning opportunities.
- Staff place a strong focus on children's independence. For instance, children are eager to prepare for snack by washing fruit and counting enough cups for their peers. This has a positive influence on children's self-esteem, ability to work with others and resilience.
- Staff support children to follow good personal hygiene routines. Children remember to wash their hands after outdoor play. They confidently manage all steps of handwashing, most of the time doing so independently.
- The longstanding staff team provides children with consistent rules and boundaries and supports children's behaviour well. Children are beginning to manage their own emotions and show kindness. For example, they take turns and praise one another's crafts.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The manager, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, fails to understand how to safely employ staff. She does not ensure that they are suitable to work with children. She also lacks understanding of how to manage safeguarding and child protection concerns. In turn, this prevents her being able to support and coach staff effectively. The pre-school's safeguarding and child protection policy does not detail local safeguarding procedures, including actions that must be taken in the event of a concern about a child or an allegation made against a staff member. This prevents staff knowing how to escalate potential concerns about children or allegations against staff.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
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ensure that safeguarding policy and procedures are in line with local safeguarding children partnership procedures	31/03/2023
ensure that all staff understand the safeguarding policies and procedures, with particular regard to escalating child protection concerns and allegations against people in position of trust	31/03/2023
take action to ensure that the designated safeguarding lead attends child protection training and keeps her knowledge up to date	21/04/2023
implement safe recruitment procedures to ensure that those employed to work with children are suitable to do so and have gone through robust vetting	31/03/2023
ensure that records are maintained to enable effective sharing of information, when required, with particular regard to partnerships with child protection agencies.	31/03/2023

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

- enhance how and when information is shared with parents about their children's day and their learning and development, to support a continuation of learning at home.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110050
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10264840
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	45
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Holy Rood Church Centre Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP910636
<b>Telephone number</b>	01329 661154 or 07961523738
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 June 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Acorn Preschool registered in 2000. It is located in Stubbington, Hampshire. There are 10 members of staff, of whom eight hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and above. The pre-school operates during school term times, and opens from 9am to 3.30pm on each weekday, except Wednesday, when it opens from midday to 3.30pm. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Hayley Doncom

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and manager carried out a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- Three joint observations were carried out by the inspector and manager to observe the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with children, staff and parents at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation. This included staff suitability checks and policies and procedures.
- A leadership meeting was held with the inspector and manager.

We carried out this inspection 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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