



Acorns Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY231141
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Hazel Stuart-Buddery
Setting Address	Shackleford Village Hall, Shackleford, Surrey, GU8 6AE
Telephone number	01483 426437
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Registered person	Acorns Nursery School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acorns Nursery School is managed by a parent committee. It opened in 1969 and operates from the village hall in Shackleford, Surrey. Children are cared for in one main hall and they have access to toilet facilities. Staff have access to a kitchen and a store room. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 14:30 on Mondays and Wednesdays and 09:00 to 13:00 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, term time only. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 34 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs six members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualification. The nursery receives advice from the EYCS and it is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from daily opportunities to play outside in a well equipped outdoor area. They excitedly get on their coats and queue up ready to go outside. They enjoy running around and riding the bikes. Children use the outdoor equipment with increasing skill and negotiate the space well. Younger children like to play shops while they are outside. They push a toy shopping trolley around and pretend to fill it with food.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene routines and independently visit the toilet. Good procedures for nappy changing help to prevent the spread of infection. However, children are not fully protected from the spread of infection as all the children use the same water to wash their hands and two towels are shared. All medical and dietary needs are recorded and in most cases parents give prior written consent for medication to be administered. Children receive appropriate care if there is an accident as all staff hold a current first aid certificate. Children benefit from healthy snacks and enjoy apples, bananas and Satsuma's prepared for the children by the staff. Children bring their own drinks to have during the session but do not have independent access to them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff work hard to ensure that the hall is welcoming to children. Pictures and posters are displayed around the room. A cosy book corner with carpets and cushions provide children with an area where they can relax. Children play in a reasonably safe environment. They are generally kept safe within the group by staff who are vetted and who demonstrate an awareness of safety. However, not all hazards that have been identified are minimized. The security of the site is good. Doors into the nursery are locked and children are unable to leave unattended.

Children have easy and safe access to a range of resources that are selected by the staff on a daily basis. They sit safely and independently to eat snacks and lunches.

Children's welfare is adequately promoted with regard to child protection. A designated member of staff is responsible for child protection and has completed training in this area. Although information has not been cascaded to all members of staff. Not all staff are aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, growing in confidence and engaged in play throughout the session. Younger children benefit from being with the older children and begin to copy routines. Younger children copy the older children and sit quietly during snack time. This is a social occasion where the children enjoy chatting between themselves. Younger children are given the opportunity to show the group something special they have brought with them. One child, with growing confidence, stands up and talks about the special treasure box she had for Christmas. A member of staff sits with her to encourage her to talk out loud so everyone can hear. She smiles proudly as the group listen to her and look at the box. Children enjoy singing nursery rhymes. They all sit excitedly as they choose their favourite song. Children sing with excitement and enthusiastically do the actions as they sing.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sufficient progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan a range of activities and experiences. However, the individual needs of children are not always catered for and resources are not always available to extend activities. For example, some children enjoy playing in the pretend shop, they use the electronic tills with confidence, but do not have any pretend money to extend the play opportunity. Most staff have a basic awareness of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals, although not completed training in this area. They interact with the children and offer appropriate levels of help and support. However, not all activities are extended to cater for the more able child. As a result of this not all children get maximum enjoyment out of the activities.

Children are happy and confident. They are polite and show care and concern for each other. For example, children offer to help each other put on the dressing up clothes. Children begin to develop their independence as they learn to take care of their own needs. Most children try hard to put on their coats before going outside. However, children are not encouraged to pour their own drinks at snack time. Most children listen well and sit quietly while other members of the group talk about their show and tell item.

Children are given lots of opportunities to develop their communication skills. They happily volunteer to stand up and tell the group about the special item they have brought in today. One child proudly shows off his sun glasses, he puts on the glasses and then tells the group that they have all gone dark. He explains confidently that they are made of glass. Children have some resources to encourage mark making, although staff sometimes miss opportunities to encourage children to write their own name. Children enjoy counting as a group. They enthusiastically count the boys and girls and use mathematical language when they compare how many boys and girls there are. Planned activities encourage children to count up to 10 and develop their number recognition.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating a range of musical instrument from around the world. One child is fascinated by the sound the rain machine makes. Staff encourage children to develop their fine motor skills. Children listen carefully as the member of staff explains how to safely use the scissors. They hold the scissors as they have been shown and with some help cut

around the curly line. The children smile proudly as they complete the cutting and a curly snake begins to appear. The children had previously decorated the circles and hold up the finished snakes with pride. There are opportunities within the daily routines for children to develop their physical skills. They learn to control their bodies as they negotiate the obstacle course. Children smile happily and cheer as they throw the bean bag into the hoop and receive praise from the member of staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel good about themselves and show respect and consideration for others as they share resources, help each other and take turns while using the equipment. For example, three children enjoy rocking together on the see-saw, they negotiate between them whose turn it is to sit in the middle. They confidently explain that sitting on the end is hard work as you have to do the pushing with your feet. Children are well behaved and benefit from the staff's positive approach to behaviour management. Staff foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children have some opportunities to learn about diversity through planned topics. However, resources around the room are sometimes limited.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive a handbook with detailed information on the setting. A notice board keeps parents informed of any relevant information and regular newsletters are sent out. The policies and procedures for the group are being reviewed and currently are not readily accessible to the parents. Not all policies reflect the current regulations and parents have not been advised of the changes. Parents are encouraged to be part of their child's learning. They receive information on the Foundation Stage curriculum through newsletters and open evenings. Children take home a reading book on a weekly basis and parents are advised of the current theme. Parents are happy with the care and education offered by the group. They are confident in approaching staff should they have concerns or wish to discuss their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are happy within the group. Staff work well as a team supporting most children according to their needs. Staff organise the space well and this allows the children to move around freely and safely. Staff select the resources and activities, although the individual needs of all children are not always catered for.

There are effective and robust recruitment procedures in place, which the committee have responsibility for. Not all staff receive an effective induction to enable them to be familiar with the policies and procedures. Most documentation is maintained appropriately. Staff are unsure of the regulation changes in October 2005 relating to the complaints procedure.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The person in charge has identified development needs within the group, but has not been able to implement training. Long term planning is completed and covers the six areas of learning, however, medium and short term planning is

not in place and specific learning needs of individual children are not always allowed for. The progress of children's learning is not documented effectively and therefore staff are not always aware when children are ready to move onto their next stage of development. However, children mostly make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to provide children with an expanded range of toys and resources to reflect positive images of children. The children have some resources that reflect diversity that include books and dolls and musical instruments from around the world.

Nursery Education

There were no key issues identified at the last inspection and the group were asked to consider updating children's records more frequently to ensure a clear picture is available of each child's progress at all times. The group have not updated children's records on a more frequent basis and no longer keep profiles on the children. They have adopted a system that local schools use, although observations are not dated or completed regularly and a clear picture of children's progress cannot be seen.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted,

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- obtain parents prior written consent to administer medication

- ensure the existing complaints procedure reflects the October 2005 addendum to the National Standards and notify parents of the change
- ensure risks that have been identified on the risk assessment are minimized.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals so that planning and assessment are effective and promote all areas of children's learning
- improve the educational programme to provide more challenge for the older and more able children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk