

Acorns Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Acorns Nursery School opened in 1968 and it is a committee run group. It operates from Shackleford Village Hall, near Godalming in Surrey. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age group may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 until 14.45 term time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area, an indoor messy play room and adjoining toilet area. There are currently 36 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Children come from the village and surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs seven members of staff, of these five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are making good progress in their learning and development and enjoy their time at this welcoming and nurturing pre-school. In the majority of cases there are effective procedures in place to support children's health and to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded. The whole staff team are involved in evaluating the provision and individuals take ownership of particular improvements which benefit the children who attend. Achievable yet challenging targets are in place to ensure that future improvement is highly likely.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop methods of seeking and sharing children's identified next steps and starting points in learning with all members of staff to ensure future opportunities to progress in all areas
- enhance systems in place to ensure the secure organisation of all documentation which includes relevant detail where necessary.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well supported and cared for by a strong and dedicated staff team who work closely together to ensure all children's individual care and learning needs are promoted. The manager at the setting is ambitious and her enthusiasm is mirrored by all other members of staff. Staff recruitment procedures are effective and robust in most instances and staff are all included in developing practical risk assessments which are regularly reviewed. There is a designated

member of staff who is the child protection liaison officer and she demonstrates a thorough understanding of her role in helping to ensure that each child is protected from harm. Staff also benefit from regular training in issues surrounding safeguarding children and demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to follow if they had any concerns.

The setting has recently started to use a different room within the village hall and subsequently resources are displayed attractively to encourage children in their learning and play. Children are able to independently help themselves to the toys and equipment available and are usually able to use a range of resources to enhance their play, such as when using mud as an ingredient in their imaginary cooking in the outdoor play-house. Each child at the setting is valued and children with additional needs are particularly well supported through external partnerships with other schools, early years providers and health professionals. The setting has very good relationships with parents and shares key information with them to ensure staff understand each child's personality.

The staff team work very well together to promote equal opportunities and work hard to provide children with the chance to learn about the wider world, whilst recognising the different play preferences of the children. Self-evaluation allows staff to reflect on their practice and parents views are generally sought through discussion to support this. Previous developments have helped to improve children's experiences, such as the newly built sandpit in the garden and the ability for children to be more independent since moving into their current base room. Records and relevant documentation are stored effectively and are appropriately detailed in most instances, however some records are not fully up to date.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are happy and settled in this bright and welcoming environment and are developing the skills required for future learning. Adults demonstrate a good understanding of the early learning goals and this helps them to ensure that activities are provided which are based upon each child's interests. An awareness of the natural environment is promoted to the children imaginatively as they go on spider hunts in the garden and examine the webs they find. The current theme is based on incy wincy spider and other nursery rhymes and is further extended as children develop their fine motor skills squeezing and shaping clay before counting the number of pipe cleaners they need to add enough legs for their spider creations. Staff encourage children's interests in early problem solving through a good use of questioning and challenge. As a result children remain focused on their activities and interested as they play co-operatively together.

A range of observations are made of children in play which are linked to the different areas of learning. From these each child's key-worker gains a detailed understanding of what children do well and where they would benefit from further support, although current systems to share this information with each member of staff are less effective and information about children's starting points in all areas

of learning are not always sought immediately.

Children are very settled as they attend the setting and are forming very good friendships with their peers. Staff bend down to talk to the children and show genuine interest in what they have to say. This promotes children's self-esteem and confidence. Most children enjoy speaking confidently in groups as they share their news from home. Children talk about the adventures they have had over the weekend and the other children listen intently. Children's interest in early writing and mark-making is also well supported as children label their own work, developing their understanding of writing for a purpose.

Children's health is promoted and children enjoy the opportunity to be independent as they access the new child-sized toilet area. Children are supported in developing their understanding of making healthy choices, such as being involved in growing some produce and helping staff to prepare a range of fruits for a snack. Children are reminded about taking care as they use child-sized knives to help cut the fruit and when cutting paper straws with scissors. Children are also developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe in an emergency as a child explains to me that if there is a fire they have to 'get out quick' with their friend adding that they 'all have to line up at the door'.

Children's behaviour is managed well by staff who encourage children to learn right from wrong and gently remind children about the importance of sharing. Activities are well planned and resourced which ensures that children remain motivated and interested. Staff are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning and children are effectively supported in reaching their potential.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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