

Acorns Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY420333
Inspection date 08/09/2011
Inspector Anne Drinkwater

Setting address 174 Brooklands Road, SALE, Cheshire, M33 3RA

Telephone number 0161 973 9199
Email christinecambridge@btinternet.com
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 Day Nursery opened in 2006 and was registered again in 2010 as a partnership. It is located in the Brooklands area of Sale. It is one of three nurseries run by the same provider. Children have use of five rooms located over two floors, which are accessed by stairs. There is a fully enclosed play area at the rear of the building available for outdoor play.

A maximum of 56 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 74 children attending on a variety of placements who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, some of whom receive funding for early years provision. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year and employs a manager and 13 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from an early years support worker.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress as they enjoy an interesting and versatile range of play activities which stimulate their enjoyment of learning. Every child is supported effectively, which means most children progress successfully in their learning and development. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure their safety and good health. The emerging links with parents and carers help to involve them in their children's care. The provider has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, and partnerships with parents are a key priority for further development to ensure that everyone is fully involved in their children's learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve further the arrangements for observations, planning and assessments so they can be used on a regular basis to incorporate children's next steps and assist in providing challenging learning and development experiences to all children
- develop ways of obtaining information regarding children's starting points when they first attend from parents and enable them to have ongoing opportunities to view and contribute what they know about their child to their portfolios.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management of the nursery is strong and a committed team of staff also support it to ensure that each child is well cared for, happy and safe. All staff have an accurate understanding of the signs of possible abuse and neglect. There are accurate procedures in place to act quickly and professionally if there are any concerns about children. Rigorous recruitment, induction and staff checks are in place, which further safeguards children. All staff hold a recognised childcare qualification and first aid certificate to further ensure the safety of children. Staff take responsible steps to ensure the safety of children on the premises in the case of a fire with a clearly defined procedure for the emergency evacuation of the premises, and a clear risk assessment is in place to identify any potential hazards.

The nursery has a good range of resources which support children's play across all six areas of learning. The staff are well deployed and ensure that the day runs smoothly and reflects the needs and interests of the children attending; this promotes an inclusive environment where every child matters. The newly decorated rooms are adorned with children's artwork, which gives them a sense of achievement, and they enjoy a child-centred environment in which resources and activities are presented purposefully. Staff take account of children's individuality and additional needs to ensure innovative opportunities are provided and all children are included.

Equality and diversity are given due respect and consideration, and this is reflected in how well the children treat each other and the adults in the nursery. Parents are asked to provide as much information as possible about their child's specific needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religion and any disability they may have. The nursery uses this information to support their care of the child in line with the parents' wishes. Parents are provided with information on the organisation of the nursery and their child's welfare, and they are also supplied with questionnaires to enable their comments to be considered and valued. Many comment on the safe and well-organised activities and environment, however, they do ask to be more involved in their children's learning and to be kept more informed on their children's achievements so that they can feel actively involved in their child's development. As a result, staff are striving to implement new procedures to enable parents to be more involved in their children's learning and development.

The provider and manager have the ability to maintain high standards. Steps are taken by management to evaluate the provision for children's welfare, learning and development. This has helped highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the early year's provision. As a result, their priorities for improvement are well targeted to bring about sustained improvement to the early years provision.

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

Settling-in visits are tailored to the needs of each child and their family to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and secure. There is a good key person system in place because the staff know the children very well. Children are making good progress as they enjoy planned learning activities, and the observations made by staff highlight children's next steps and ensure these are planned for. However, the frequency of the observations is erratic, which means the next steps identified are not consistently planned for to challenge children in all areas on a regular basis. In addition, information regarding children's developmental starting points is not requested from parents as children start in the nursery to ensure staff can plan experiences for the individual child. However, staff treat every child with respect and support their developing independence in order for them to become active and inquisitive learners. Children are highly confident while exploring their environment. They play an active role in their own learning as they consistently make choices throughout the day.

Children are naturally inquisitive and curious. They are deriving great satisfaction as they act out a variety of roles in their imaginary play. For example, a large group of children in the home corner act out roles of people that help us in the community. They pretend one child is injured and the construction worker then becomes the doctor, and another child is delighted at finding the new packs of coins and notes for the till. This then prompts a spontaneous activity as they take the coins and till outdoors to go shopping. Outdoor play is available for at least an hour a day. The recent addition of an all-weather canopy ensures their play is not hindered. Children make the most of their physical play by climbing and by driving on a selection of wheeled toys. A variety of structures, such as the playhouse and wicker tepees, further prompt their imaginative play. The continuous provision of sand, water, dough and creative materials helps develop many skills as children learn to share, to measure and to estimate how much a container will hold. They are learning to cooperate with one another as they borrow implements from their peers. This play also offers considerable opportunities to learn skills in problem solving as they cut, glue, create, pour and measure both the sand and water. Important steps in communication, language and literacy are made as children enjoy books and sing action songs. They also relate their holiday experiences, enjoy choosing their favourite books and put them away efficiently when finished, learn to handle books appropriately and learn good listening skills. Children enjoy a range of celebrations which give a strong sense of belonging in the nursery and help them to understand each other's cultures.

Children are learning how to lead a healthy lifestyle as they enjoy a selection of fresh fruit for snack time and healthy lunches, which are quickly devoured. Drinks are readily accessible in all rooms and staff ensure even the youngest of children are encouraged to drink. Discussions on being healthy are further promoted by the use of topics, books and posters. They learn important messages about health and hygiene through everyday practices, including washing their hands before eating, covering coughs and wiping their noses. There are effective rules about how children treat one another. If squabbles develop, staff are particularly skilled at

calming the children and helping them develop a positive view of themselves and others. Their behaviour is excellent, which results in excellent self-esteem.

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	3

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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