

Acorn Childcare Nursery Limited

Off Greenbank Lane,, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 1JJ

Inspection date	08/01/2014
Previous inspection date	17/11/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Play experiences offer interesting and challenging activities for all children, who are supported extremely well in their learning. As a result, children are keen, active and happy learners, well-prepared for their next stage of learning, including school.
- Procedures for settling younger children into the nursery are well-established and highly regarded by parents, resulting in excellent links with home and happy, secure attachments for all children.
- Partnerships with parents and other outside agencies are particularly strong, with other professionals making positive contributions to meet the individual needs of children.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff skilfully use questioning and carefully listen and respond to children's ideas, resulting in confident creative learners.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Inclusion can be further enhanced by celebrating children's uniqueness and cultures, introducing resources from their home languages, supported by their families to create a greater sense of belonging for individual children.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed play activities and staff interaction with children both indoors and in the outdoor environment.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, owners, staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector examined a sample of children's records, procedures and staff recruitment documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to throughout the day.

Inspector

Patricia Pickens

Full report

Information about the setting

Acorn Childcare Nursery Limited was registered in 2004. It is owned by a limited company and operates from a purpose built facility situated in the Hartford area of Cheshire. Children are cared for within five playrooms and share access to secure outdoor play areas. The nursery is open five days a week, from 8am to 6pm, all year round, except public holidays and a period between Christmas and New Year. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 76 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 29 members of staff, including the manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. This includes 27 staff at level 3 and two staff qualified at level 2. In addition, the nursery employs a cook, kitchen assistant and a cleaner. The nursery receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further opportunities to celebrate children's uniqueness and culture by introducing resources from their home languages, supported by their families, to create an even greater sense of belonging for individual children.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Educational programmes have depth and breadth across all seven areas of learning. Activities are interesting and challenging and children are keen, active learners, motivated by a stimulating environment where they can develop curiosity and exploration. Staff have high expectations of children based on prior skills, sought through regular and precise assessment of children's learning. They display a good understanding of how to promote the learning and development of children through praise and rewarding achievement. Children's displays are personalised and clearly involve children's own ideas. Artwork is individual and expressive; brightly coloured themes enhance learning, such as shape of the month and colour of the month. Children enjoy showing parents their creative and academic achievements. This was remarked on by parents, who often are led around the playrooms by their enthusiastic children discussing how they have designed or created models, pictures and collated stars for being helpful, for caring for others and in caring for the environment.

Staff record accurate assessments of children and track individual progress effectively. All

children are progressing well and achieving typical and sometimes higher levels of development in the prime areas of learning, given their starting points. The quality of teaching is evident in the use of skilful questioning during activities to extend learning and re-shape tasks. Children are interested, keen learners absorbed in their play, exploring the wider environment and developing their own solutions and ideas. For example, a group of children in the outdoor environment busily make bird feeders, by filling small sacks of netting with a variety of seeds and fasten these with string. They are excited and talk about how birds in winter need extra food. When they are asked why, they say it is because there are no berries and not enough insects to feed them. Upon further questioning children talk extensively about what birds like to eat, such as worms and bugs and of course their seed feeders. The member of staff encourages creative and critical thinking by asking where they should hang the little sacks, not always settling on the first idea. They ask children where the birds might be able to access them, allowing children to suggest 'high up in the trees'. Further questions about how might she reach to put them up, brings suggestions from children about using a ladder. This shows that children are able to provide solutions and resolve any challenges to their task. Consequently, the feeders are hung on high branches of the trees. Children are listened to and their ideas are valued.

Children are supported in the acquisition of communication and language skills and their personal, social and emotional development, within circle times in all rooms, giving even the youngest children a voice and an opportunity to be heard. Children are generally working within the typical range of development for their age, taking into account any special educational needs and/or disabilities. Progress is consistent and gaps are closing due to the close professional relationships with specialist teachers from outside agencies. The key person system is well-embedded. The 'progress check at age two' is completed by staff and used to inform planning for children's learning experiences. Parents are consulted and early interventions ensure support is targeted to meet children's needs. Parents contribute to assessments and are kept well-informed. They are encouraged to consolidate learning at home, through daily diaries and profiles. As a result, strong relationships are forged between parents and adults in the setting. Parents report on receiving 'honest, open information' and feel they are fully involved in their children's education. They report being very satisfied with their children's progress in their play and learning. Positive comments are made regarding the nursery being a 'home from home' and 'very welcoming and friendly', having been recommended by families and friends. Parents and grandparents feel confident their children are happy and cared for by a dedicated team of staff.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Care practices are consistent and a well-embedded key person system ensures strong relationships with children are established, resulting in happy, secure attachments for all children. Staff present as good role models for children, they are deployed well and apply agreed strategies in their practice. Behaviour management is consistent, providing clear guidance. As a result, children are caring and show respect, tolerating and celebrating differences in each other. For example, young children are observed using sign language

to converse with one another effectively.

Transitional moves between rooms and onto school are planned and managed effectively, with accompanied visits to local schools, so that children are confident and well supported for the next stage in their learning. Parents report on how happy their children are at the nursery and how well their older children have settled into new schools since leaving the setting. Partnerships with schools, outside agencies for special educational needs and/or disabilities and inclusive practice is robust, with positive contributions to benefit children, ensuring children are consistently and effectively supported in their learning. However, there is scope to further enhance and celebrate children's uniqueness relating to different backgrounds and cultures by introducing foods, snacks, pictures and stories from their home languages, supported by parents, to create an even greater sense of belonging and diversity.

Staff show awareness of how to keep children safe from harm. They are able to demonstrate what to do if they have concerns about a child. Security is robust. The setting entrance and outside gates are securely locked and visitors to the setting are identified, signed in and out and closely monitored. Parents report feeling that their children are very safe and secure in the setting due to rigorous security arrangements. Children's behaviour shows they feel safe in the setting and confidently converse with visitors in imitation of how adults welcome people into the nursery. Healthy diets are promoted at lunch and snack times. The need for caring for the environment and one another is embedded in daily routines. Staff encourage independence at mealtimes, allowing children to manage their own personal needs appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, children participate in tidying up, washing hands, laying the table, serving each other lunch and are rewarded for their cooperation and contributions by a 'star wall', where they place photographs of themselves on large stars for being helpers, enjoying a sense of achievement and providing good role models for their peers.

Stimulating well-resourced indoor playrooms and a large extensively resourced outdoor play environment supports children's all round development. The grassed area is extensive and has small hills, trees, shrubs and wooden play equipment to support children's physical development and skills in running, climbing and taking risks appropriate to their age. The outdoor environment provides opportunities for play and exploration. For example, children dig in vegetable patches and soon discover a worm, which results in shouts of excitement and laughter. A member of staff holds the worm in their palm for children to observe more closely. Children ask 'Where does the worm live?' 'Has he eaten our vegetables?' Children are listened to and their contributions are valued and answered by adults who care for them. Children dig up celery to take indoors. Fruit that is grown by the nursery staff is picked and cooked to make fruit pies for lunch. Other children play at making pancakes in the mud kitchen; some are absorbed in water play, where they are learning about an octopus and counting his eight legs. Children have a wide variety of equipment from slides, tyres and large apparatus to climb upon, mobile small scooters and tricycles to practise their physical skills. There is a large tepee, willow house and wooden play house providing different types of dwellings for imaginative play. Aluminium disc and sound chimes hang from trees providing a sensory experience. The garden is a hive of activity with children squealing with laughter as they play with independence and freedom

of choice.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Accurate monitoring of the educational programmes ensures a broad range of experiences that help children make progress towards the early learning goals. Precise tracking of children's progress ensures consistency in planning and assessment and an accurate understanding of all children's skills and abilities. This results in individual children's identified needs being targeted early, so that appropriate interventions are sought and gaps are closing.

The new manager is fully aware of her responsibility to safeguard children in her care. Safeguarding and security are a priority for the senior management team, with rigorous care taken in training staff in how to deal with concerns about a child. For example, in addition to attending training courses on child protection, there is evidence of clear induction training for new staff. All staff have safeguarding cards in their tabards, outlining the procedure to follow in the event of concerns, disclosure by a child or signs to look out for during daily practice, so that children are protected and kept safe. Students, volunteers and newly appointed staff display sufficient knowledge to discuss with a good level of understanding what actions to take if they are concerned about the safety and well-being of children. For example, a refresher induction on safeguarding has just been completed with one member of staff returning after a period of study away from the setting.

Recruitment of new staff is robust and thoroughly monitored from the start with a 'working interview', which requires interviewees to work in practice for part of a day alongside experienced members of staff, so that they may be assessed on their interaction with children and suitability for the position. New staff are restricted from participating in nappy changing routines and working unsupervised with children until after their clearance has been received and suitability is established.

The manager and deputy manager jointly carry out inductions for new staff, students and volunteers. Regular supervision meetings and staff appraisals are conducted twice yearly. Staff training is effectively monitored and needs identified, with individuals continuously seeking professional development at higher levels. The management team evaluate each other's practice and are jointly involved in self-evaluation within the setting. The views of parents, children and staff are taken into consideration when evaluating current practice and identifying further improvements. The management team appear eager and enthused to drive forward improvements for the benefit of children in their care. Owners and managers work closely together, on a daily basis, to support the effective running of the setting. Senior staff are not included in staff to child ratios and therefore, are available to monitor practice and support staff in their work.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY280796
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	877700
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	58
Number of children on roll	76
Name of provider	Acorn Childcare Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	17/11/2008
Telephone number	01606 77877

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

