



Acorn Grove Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280214
Inspection date	08 February 2006
Inspector	Nighat Ghani
Setting Address	Manchester City Council, Woodville Resource Centre, Shirley Road, Manchester, Lancashire, M8 0NE
Telephone number	0161 740 5687
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Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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?

Acorn Grove Nursery has been registered since October 2005 and is managed by Pre-School Learning Alliance. It operates from a Resource Centre in north Manchester. There are two large rooms which are used for the care of the children. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 08.00 until 18.00, for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these, 41 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five staff. All the staff hold a relevant childcare qualification. The setting receives support from the development workers at the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have their dietary needs met as the staff collate information from the parents about children's allergies and any special dietary requirements. Staff do not promote simple hygiene practice through the daily routine, as the children and staff do not wash their hands before snack time, which compromises their health.

Children learn the importance of healthy eating, as they are provided with a good range of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit, bread sticks, toast and a drink of orange juice. However, outside of snack times, children do not access fresh drinking water freely, because systems to ensure their energy is replenished are not fully implemented.

Children benefit from the clear procedures followed by staff for the administration of medication and reporting of accidents. Children are assured of receiving appropriate treatment in the event of an emergency, as there are sufficient members of staff with current training in first aid.

Children do not have regular opportunities to engage in physical activity to help them understand there is a firm connection between the importance of regular exercise and being healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained environment. The rooms are bright and well organised to ensure that the children can move about freely and safely. At present there are no children under three attending the nursery, however there is a good range of equipment, toys and furniture available for this age group. Staff set out different activities, that are appropriate for the wide age range of children who attend. These are of good quality and staff ensure they are maintained in a good condition. This enables the children to use them safely and effectively. Excellent child-size furniture is available in each room, which allows staff to organise the rooms in a flexible way, for children to play and eat together. However, there is a lack of domestic-style furniture in the baby room to assist children in developing mobility and to continue normal life experiences.

Good safety and security precautions reduce the risk to the children of accidental

injury or harm. For example, the main door is kept locked to prevent unwanted entry and staff carry out regular risk assessments, which are recorded and action taken when needed. Children learn about keeping themselves safe, as staff remind them about the simple rules, such as no running indoors and to move things that they may trip up on.

Children are well protected because the staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of their roles and understand the procedures they must follow, if they suspect abuse or neglect. Most of the staff have attended child protection training and a nominated member of staff takes responsibility for liaison with child protection agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff set out a range of activities, toys and equipment for the children, which they access freely making choices and extending their own play. Children particularly enjoy and become engrossed in role-play. Key worker systems are in place, which make it easier for staff to keep track of children's individual progress.

Staff observe what children do, but it is not clear how this information is used to plan the next steps for the children's play and learning. Staff are particularly aware of and skilled in meeting children's emotional needs, such as settling new children into the setting and developing their confidence and self-esteem. Staff offer praise, follow children's interests and ask questions, which extends their communication skills. The daily routine is varied and flexible, with times for children to have snacks and take part in different activities set out for them.

Teaching

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff provide a warm and caring environment, where children feel happy and secure. Children's confidence and self-esteem are well fostered and behaviour is consistently managed by staff who know the children well. All staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Planning includes all six areas of learning and identifying what children are intended to learn from each area. However, the plans lack detail of how children are grouped and staff deployed to support children's learning. For example, staff move around and interact with children, but do not plan adult led group activities. Resources are plentiful and children can access them freely. However, children do not fully benefit from these, as they are not always sure about what the resources are for or how to use them.

The assessment methods used, clearly identify progress children are making along the stepping stones within the early learning areas. However, it is not clear how the gaps in children's learning are used to inform planning. Staff are skilful at asking children open- ended questions, which extends their thinking.

Children are happy and confident in their environment. They relate well with each

other and have made close attachments with their peer group. Children are becoming independent, as they are encouraged to put on their aprons before taking part in a messy activity and hang their coats on their pegs on arrival.

Children are developing good communication skills, as they engage in conversation with staff, who actively listen to them. Very few children access books freely, to acknowledge that these can be used for enjoyment. Older children can recognise their names and are beginning to sound the letters of the alphabet, however, there is lack of print in the environment. Counting and number recognition is well promoted and children learn about simple problem solving through the use of imaginative play. Children's knowledge of early addition and subtraction is well promoted through activities, such as play dough and whilst singing number rhymes.

Children learn about the natural world and their community during meaningful activities. They construct using a variety of objects and materials and use simple tools to achieve a desired affect. They access the computer confidently and generally use it well to support their learning. Children are curious, but their exploratory impulse is not sufficiently challenged, so they miss opportunities to be scientific in order to understand why things happen and how things work.

Children do not get the opportunity to develop their large motor skills, as they are not provided with physical activities on regular basis. Imagination is well fostered through role-play. Children enjoy participating in messy and creative activities and will independently choose these activities, when asked what they wish to play at. They are not often given the opportunity to use paint freely, for example, to see what happens when two colours are mixed together. Modelling material, such as play dough, is regularly available for children to experiment with and create freely.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcome. They are treated with equal concern, helping them to settle and join in with the activities. Staff respect parents wishes with regards to any individual needs, helping to promote the children's self-esteem. Children with special needs are respected and fully integrated within the setting and their needs met through staff working in partnership with other agencies. Children play with a variety of toys and materials that reflect the wider world to increase their awareness of diversity and their understanding of others.

The children are generally well behaved and are beginning to learn and understand the difference between right and wrong. For example, a member of staff helps children to negotiate over a doll's pram and understand they can share and take turns. Staff are consistent in the management of children's behaviour, which has a positive effect on children's behaviour. They respect their environment by helping to tidy away the toys before snack time and at the end of the session. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with the parents is satisfactory. Children under 3 benefit from the positive partnership with parents. Staff get the opportunity to know and collate information

from the parents during the settling in period, while children settle and get familiar with their environment. Staff share important information about children's needs and interests on a regular basis. However, parents of children who receive nursery education are not encouraged to contribute towards their children's assessments which hinders children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment. An effective induction procedure is in place for new staff to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Regular team and individual meetings ensure that staff are well supported. The management team have a strong commitment to improvement, training and the professional development of staff to further raise the quality of care and education. Sufficient staff are employed to work with children and the daily registers are completed accurately. An operational plan is in place, which details the settings policies and procedures.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The deputy manager works closely with the staff during each session. Staff are aware of their role, however, they are not deployed effectively to support children's learning. The manager is aware of the weaknesses and is supported by the early years teacher to develop this area of work. However, currently the areas for improvement within the curriculum have not been effectively developed and implemented. The staff work closely as a team, which results in the smooth running of the nursery. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure good hygiene practice is implemented before snack time and ensure fresh drinking water is freely available for children at all times
- provide children with physical activities on regular basis
- provide domestic style furniture in the baby room

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):

- ensure that children's assessments are used as a guide to teaching and future planning and areas within the curriculum are effectively developed and implemented
- encourage parents to contribute towards their children's assessments
- ensure staff are deployed effectively.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk