

Acorn Grove Nursery

Pre School Learning alliance Shirley Road, Woodville Resource Centre, MANCHESTER, M8 ONE

Inspection date	13/11/2012
Previous inspection date	24/05/2010

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

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children benefit from the free-flow, accessible learning environment which successfully promotes their independence and encourages active learning.
- A strong key person system and transition arrangements facilitate close relationships with parents ensuring that every child's needs are known and met.
- Partnerships with other professionals make a strong contribution to keeping children safe and to ensuring that every child gets the support they need.

It is not yet good because

- Monitoring of the educational programmes, resources and children's progress is not yet sufficiently rigorous. As a result it does not ensure that all aspects of the prime and specific areas are provided for and that any identified gaps in learning and weaknesses in quality are addressed.
- The organisation and accuracy of assessment and the quality of planning for individual children's progress is variable and is not yet used to support parents to extend children's learning at home.

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
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as 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 for inspection 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
- 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 activities in the two main play rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the deputy manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form, quality audits and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Angela Rowley

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorn Grove Nursery was registered in 2005. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and is managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It operates from self-contained premises attached to

Woodville Sure Start Children's Centre in Manchester. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from two ground floor playrooms and the centre creche room. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff, of whom 11 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and one at level 2. The manager holds an early years degree. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, 8am until 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 125 children on roll. 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the educational programme involves activities in all aspects of the prime and specific areas. In particular, develop the programme for understanding the world by: providing role play areas with resources reflecting diversity and by developing the use of the outdoors so that children can investigate features of nature and living things
- ensure that the two-year-old progress check is organised to contribute to the Healthy Child Programme health and development review and discuss with parents how the summary of development can be used to promote learning at home.

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

- review the environment and resources, both inside and outside, so that they are well-maintained, stimulating and appealing in order to support and extend children's learning and development
- monitor planning and practitioner assessment to make sure they are consistently accurate and precise and use the information to identify and address specific areas for improvement in the provision for learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their play in the enabling environment where they make choices and decisions regarding what they want to do and play with. The continuous play provision enables all children to access a broad range of activities and helps them make progress in their learning, in particular their personal and social skills. In the baby room children freely spend time looking at an attractive range of books in a comfortable and inviting book area. They also explore some basic natural materials in treasure baskets and freely access additional play materials in low level storage units. In the 'big room' children build tall towers and balance bricks in the construction area. They freely access, and put on, aprons to dig in the sand or blow bubbles in the water tray. Some good provision to promote the use of technology and electronic learning means that more able children independently access and confidently use programmes on the computer. The emphasis on independent learning means that children make suitable progress and are prepared for moving onto school or for their next steps in learning. However, whilst the free flow play environment supports some independent thinking and learning, practitioners are not yet effectively monitoring their provision or the enhancement of it to ensure that children receive opportunities across all aspects of the areas of learning. Additionally, practitioners are not yet making the most of the outside space to enhance play and to extend opportunities for learning. As a result, children presently have few opportunities to extend their understanding of the world by exploring nature, people and places.

Systems to establish children's starting points on entry are adequate and developing. Verbal exchanges between the key person and parents ensure that the most important information about children's abilities is shared. The setting has recently introduced a new questionnaire as part of the admission process which extends this information; however, the information requested is not meaningful for practitioners working with children under two years. Children's learning journeys contain examples of their activities, photographs, practitioner observation notes and summative assessment reports. This information is used to support practitioners in identifying how to build on children's interests or areas needing additional focus in future activity planning. However, as yet, their understanding of using the setting's recently revised planning and assessment tools is variable. Consequently, whilst planning for many children and particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is detailed, for some children planning lacks relevance and challenge.

Most practitioners have a suitable understanding of how children learn through play. Their deployment across all areas of the provision means that all children are included and generally well supported in play. Some practitioners use their knowledge to extend opportunities, for example, by introducing counting when making sand pies saying, 'one, two, three, go,' or by counting the number of bricks in the tower they have built. However, other practitioners just supervise play and this means that they do not always challenge children's thinking. Practitioners work closely with external agencies to ensure that children who need it most get the support they need to help them progress. Lead practitioners working closely with these children are knowledgeable. They use their skills and the advice they receive from others to its best effect to promote individual progress. For example, practitioners now use 'sign' and photographic 'objects of reference' to support non-verbal communication. Provision for children who have English as an additional language is sound. The setting employs a number of bilingual practitioners who

use their skills effectively to support translation with parents and to enable children's needs to be met.

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

Children feel secure and are settled as they are supported by the consistent routines and the effective relationships with their key person. Whilst there have been staffing changes, resulting in some disruption to the key person system, several staff members are long serving and offer consistency. The use of a buddy system means there is consistent support and as a result children's care routines are managed well. Secure arrangements for transition to and within the setting are strong. The settling-in process, which is tailored to meet individual children's needs, means that all children are well supported. Clear information sharing in establishing children's 'All about me' details from parents means practitioners understand individual needs, routines and interests. Daily communication, both in verbal exchanges and in daily diaries, ensures parents are well informed about the routines and activities of their babies during their day at nursery. Practitioners working with the youngest children offer nurturing care. They know them well and, as a result, they quickly pick up on their non-verbal cues of tiredness and meet their individual needs well.

Clear risk assessments and daily checks are implemented which help keep children safe. Secure entrance and exit arrangements are in place with a manned reception, electronic release doors, internal key-coded doors and a password system. The premises and equipment are suitably clean and generally well-maintained. Identified hazards are promptly reported to the children's centre in which the setting is based. However, some routine maintenance lacks attention. For example, the garden is overgrown and some equipment is worn and needs reviewing and replacing. This means that some areas of the premises and provision present as being undervalued and unappealing. Additionally, there are few resources which reflect the home backgrounds and languages of all children attending. This impacts on how well children use the resources and how much they offer challenge, appeal and promote a positive sense of identity. Children's health is appropriately promoted and a suitable number of staff hold current paediatric first aid certificates. Practitioners also adopt secure practices to prevent the spread of infection, for example, when they are nappy changing and with regard to the use of individual bedding and equipment.

Children benefit from the free flow environment as they seek out their friends and the resources they want to play with. Positive behaviour is promoted as children are helped to understand the settings 'golden rules'. Practitioners give sensitive reminders, such as not to climb on furniture and offer appropriate explanations which help children understand the safety implications of their behaviour. Children's social skills are promoted. They sit together in small groups during rolling snack time and meal times, during which they eat healthy meals and snacks. They are reminded and encouraged to use their manners. More able children are encouraged to adopt self-help skills, for example, in pouring their own drinks and cleaning their teeth. Independent access to tissue boxes, for example, means children learn how to respond independently to their own personal hygiene needs.

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

The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are understood and met. Arrangements for safeguarding children are effective. Security arrangements within the setting have been improved since the last inspection. Almost all practitioners have attended introductory safeguarding training and have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. Senior practitioners have a working knowledge of and are able to implement appropriate procedures to protect children from possible harm. A strong partnership with other professionals working with individual families and attendance at 'team around the child' meetings ensures information is shared. Recruitment and vetting procedures are secure and staff benefit from a well-structured induction process. Regular staff supervision sessions also take place to offer support and guidance.

Professional development is encouraged and some staff have, or are presently extending, their core qualifications. Training is offered routinely through regular staff meetings. The setting is keen to develop the provision on offer and is engaged in a number of quality assurance projects, such as 'Reflecting on Quality' and the 'Manchester Quality Assessment Framework', in addition to their own in-house spot checks. However, whilst routine performance management and reflective practice does help the setting self-evaluate and draw out many of the most needed areas for improvement, it does not always identify minor weaknesses or drive change forward at a quick enough pace. For example, internal audits have already highlighted a need to monitor activity planning and to track children's progress. The lack of such systems still means that management have not identified gaps in the educational programme and are not able to evaluate the progress children make over time and in different areas of learning. Internal audits have also highlighted the need to review and refresh the indoor and outdoor environments. However, whilst some redecoration has begun, the need to ensure that space and resources are inviting and well-maintained remains.

Parents comment on the welcome that both themselves and their children receive and on the strong relationships with their identified key person. They comment that this means that they can go about their day without worrying about their child. Some steps are being taken to further engage parents, for example, by re-establishing the parent's forum. The recent implementation of summary reports keeps parents well informed about what their children can do. The newly required two-year-old assessment has been, in the main, successfully implemented. However, it is not yet organised to contribute to the Healthy Child Programme and does not yet include information for parents regarding how future learning can be supported at home.

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
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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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. 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 inspected again within 12 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	EY280214
Local authority	Manchester

Inspection number	886856
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	65
Number of children on roll	125
Name of provider	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Date of previous inspection	24/05/2010
Telephone number	0161 740 5687

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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 that are usually their 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.

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