



Abacus Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY244931
Inspection date	24 November 2005
Inspector	Julie Kim Davies

Setting Address	Ketley Bank Community Centre, Telford, TF2 0DH
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Telephone number	01952 617295
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E-mail

Registered person	Abacus (Dawley) Ltd
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abacus Day Nursery opened in 2002. It is located in Ketley Bank, which is a suburb of Telford. The nursery operates from its own rooms within a single storey building which has access to a safe outdoor play area. It operates all year round and opens from 07:30 to 17:45 Monday to Friday.

The nursery cares for a maximum of 92 children aged from 3 months to 11 years at any one time. Of the 48 children on roll, 12 receive funded nursery education. Most

children live in the local area. The nursery serves the local community and is part of the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative. The nursery is able to support children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

There are 11 full time staff who work with the children, of whom 8 have recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teaching mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's individual health requirements are well met. The staff team's good knowledge and understanding of the setting's health policies and procedures ensure that children's wellbeing is appropriately supported. Practitioners are knowledgeable about individual children's needs through an effective key worker system. Comprehensive and well maintained routines are in place to ensure that children benefit from a clean and ordered environment. This is supported by the extensive information given to parents regarding children's health issues, such as exclusion times relating to childhood ailments, thus reducing the possible risk of cross infection for children.

Children develop good levels of personal independence, with even very young children being encouraged to develop responsibility. For example, toddlers who need help to use the toilet are encouraged to wash and dry their hands and dispose of paper towels with minimal help. Older children manage their personal care needs very well and are developing an understanding of things that may affect their health, such as germs and eating healthy foods.

Snacks and meals provided are healthy and children enjoy a good balance of foods. Children use snack and meal times as an extension to their formal learning activities by discussing what they are eating and helping practitioners to set up and clear away equipment. Children are offered drinks at snack times during the day, however, drinking water is not readily accessible so that children can choose for themselves when to have a drink. This is to be raised as a recommendation from this inspection process.

Children of all ages take part in a good range of activities that promote physical development and co-ordination. Daily access to outdoor play and quality resources ensure that children are developing movement skills and good spatial awareness. For example, they play with hoops and bricks, ride bicycles and access other assorted equipment as they negotiate their environment with co-ordination and control. They enjoy organising group games with both staff and peers such as 'Bear Hunt' where they can run, jump and use their imagination as they make good use of their physical environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves safe in a welcoming nursery where they are able to freely move around the learning environment. Practitioners are vigilant about children's safety and ensure this by the highly effective implementation of daily risk assessments and detailed health and safety policies and procedures across the provision. Children talk about safe practice, for example, they recognise that they must not throw sand as it can hurt their own or other children's eyes.

Children are well protected because practitioners have suitable knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement nursery and local child protection procedures. The recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the nursery, detailed policies for the collection and non-collection of children and arrangements for recording pre-existing injuries, contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm.

Children benefit from the well-organised learning environment and good range of equipment and resources available which are suitable for the ages of children attending. Effective procedures are in place to ensure equipment is safe and well maintained. Children and babies access their own resources independently across the provision, which helps to develop and support their growing independence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery. Staff are aware of the individual children's needs; they offer appropriate support and assistance to ensure they enjoy their time within the nursery. They achieve well due to the staff's good understanding and use of early years guidance such as the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff use these effectively to plan an interesting range of activities to provide good quality care and education.

All children are able to select the toys and resources they wish to use within the rooms, for example, toys are displayed on shelving at appropriate heights within the play rooms. Children are comfortable within their environment and receive effective support from the practitioners. Older children make friends with their peers and all children develop good relationships with the stable staff team. All children play happily and older children initiate conversations and involve other children and adults in their play. Practitioners provide children with appropriate levels of interaction both in planned and free play activities. Children are progressing well in the relaxed and well-organised environment provided by the staff.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident in their surroundings. They readily select the toys and resources they wish to use from the good variety available. Children develop their independence skills through a good range of planned activities, toys and equipment. They are willing to assist in daily tasks, for example, tidying up and selecting books to be read to the whole group.

Children sit and listen well at group times; practitioners encourage them to put forward their thoughts and feelings, which they do with confidence, such as ideas about what will happen next in stories that are not known to them. Practitioners encourage children's curiosity and reinforce their learning through questioning, repetition and well planned topics. Children are well behaved, understand expectations and boundaries in place, for example, using equipment appropriately and sharing the toys and resources.

Children enjoy books and stories and have many opportunities to look at them on their own or in small and large groups with and without staff members. Children confidently join in with stories and anticipate what may happen next. Practitioners provide children with opportunities to mark-make and practise their emergent writing through specific activities, however there are limited opportunities to do this spontaneously and as part of a wider range of play experiences. Children count up to 10, and many count beyond this. They are confident in their use of simple calculations and have opportunities to use these skills each day, for example, comparing the number of cups to the number of children. Children use mathematical language in their play, such as 'longer', 'shorter', 'above' and 'beside'. Children are keen to discover the world around them and have appropriate planned themes to develop children's awareness of different cultures and traditions. Children enjoy and participate in a very good range of physical activities to assist them in their development.

Practitioners find out about each child right from the beginning, through discussions with parents and carers. They have a good awareness of the needs, interests and skills of the individual children in their care and use these to plan a suitable range of activities. Planning is flexible and is adapted to meet the needs and interests of the children. Practitioners have developed effective systems for recording individual children's achievements and use these to inform planning for children's next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have positive attitudes towards one another and are confident and self-assured. Children play well together, learning to share and take turns, and they negotiate this with confidence. They show genuine concern for one another and benefit from the good example set to them by the staff team.

Children develop a secure sense of belonging and confidently take on responsibilities within the nursery, such as helping to clear up after themselves. Behaviour is good and children develop increasing levels of independence, confidence and self-esteem as practitioners continually praise and value their achievements. All children and their families, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, receive appropriate support from practitioners, enabling them to thrive and make good individual progress. Children gain respect for themselves and others as they learn about their local community and the wider world, and value and celebrate their differences and similarities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is fostered.

Babies and young children enjoy cuddles from practitioners and are self assured, developing good levels of independence and a sense of security and belonging. They benefit from an effective partnership with parents and carers, ensuring their individual needs are understood and met, and they make steady progress in their development. Parents are involved in their children's learning because effective communication takes place between practitioners and themselves, for example through daily discussions.

The partnerships with parents and carers is good. Practitioners give priority to establishing and securing the links between home and nursery, ensuring parents are involved in their child's learning. Parents receive detailed information and discuss the curriculum and the policies of the nursery, which helps them to understand how their child learns and develops through play.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children attending. The suitably qualified staff team use their knowledge well to ensure that children make good progress in all areas. Practitioners demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures, and implement these effectively to ensure that children are kept safe and well.

Training opportunities and on-going development for practitioners ensure that children benefit from a staff team which is confident and up to date in its knowledge. For example, staff have completed training in using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to monitor the progress of younger children. Children benefit from good staff ratios which ensure that they are consistently well supported.

The leadership and management of nursery care and education is effective. Practitioners show a strong commitment to children's achievement and development, which is demonstrated by the children's enthusiasm for, and involvement in, their learning. Processes for monitoring and evaluating children's progress are effective and ensure that they receive good quality care and that nursery education meets each child's individual needs. For example, staff regularly assess planned activities and review their suitability in terms of enabling individual children to progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three issues were raised regarding the nursery education aspect of the service. This included developing staff's knowledge and understanding of ways to challenge children more to enable them to be more focused in their play. Develop behaviour management strategies, ensuring children understand the behavioural expectations within the setting. Improve opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills.

Staff have developed their skills of supporting all children's learning through planning suitable activities. Curriculum planning has advanced in such a way that children's developmental needs are better understood and reflected in the activities provided and so children are now appropriately challenged and focused in their activities and learning. Staff have undertaken training and developed the behaviour management policy and strategies ensuring staff and children are all clear of what is expected. Positive systems have been introduced to encourage desired behaviour such as reward stickers.

Opportunities to improve early writing skills have developed. There is a designated writing area with suitable resources. However this remains an area for further development to enable children to take this a step further and have opportunities to spontaneously mark-make in a range of activities.

For the day care aspect of the service the setting was asked to review the privacy arrangements for children using the toilets and ensure staff consistently obtain parental signatures for all accident and medication records. Both aspects have been addressed, toilets have suitable doors in use and all documents are appropriately completed and up to date.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 children have access to drinking water at all times

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):

- provide children with opportunities to mark make spontaneously within a wider range of play experiences.

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