



Ambleside Early Excellence Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284428
Inspection date	06 December 2005
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	The Ambleside Centre, Ambleside Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4JJ
Telephone number	01189 3776444
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Registered person	Ambleside Early Excellence Centre
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Ambleside Centre registered in 2004. The centre is an Early Excellence centre offering a service of education, childcare and support for children and their families. The centre is situated in Woodley near Reading, with easy access to the surrounding local area. Hours of opening are Monday to Friday 8am to 18.00pm, 48 weeks of the year.

Children have access to 5 purpose built nursery areas, a parents room, and a quiet

room. There is also a large covered play area and playground for outside play. There are currently 80 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. The nursery currently supports a number of children with additional needs, and supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

All staff working with the children hold qualifications in childcare and education, many also hold current first aid certificates. The nursery receives support from the local Early Years Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children and babies enjoy the varied and well presented, nutritious healthy meals. Even the youngest children learn to set the table and eat together, sharing fruit as healthy snacks and enjoying nutritious cooked meals. Older children cut and prepare their own fruit, serve themselves from the snack table when they wish, pour their own drinks and clean up after themselves. Staff prepare a cooked lunch, respecting parents' wishes and taking account of children's special dietary needs in providing a varied menu. Babies and young children enjoy the one to one adult contact at meal times and are given time to enjoy and finish their food in a relaxed and calm environment.

Children are adept in their physical skills. Children enjoy daily outside play, which is well equipped for an excellent range of exciting activities and promotes a healthy lifestyle. They use planks and logs to create their own balancing equipment and explore the different areas, developing physical control and co-ordination and using imagination. They have good co-ordination and an awareness of others, particularly when riding bikes and wheeled toys outside. Children take part in a range of activities in all areas of learning, which help to develop both their fine and gross motor skills. Children use an extensive range of equipment and interesting activities to develop their manipulative skills. They thread beads, sew with needle and thread, use tools such as scissors, staplers and hole punches, mould clay and play dough and are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills.

Staff use the Birth to three matters guidance well to provide an excellent and varied range of physical play experiences for babies and children under three. Children are able to rest and be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children use a good range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. These are well organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. Playrooms are spacious and very welcoming for the children. There are many opportunities for children to sit or lie comfortably and enjoy individual

stories and cuddles with staff.

Children feel confident and secure in their environment through the good deployment of staff who work directly with them. Staff's awareness of children's developing abilities helps to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations and minimise risks. Robust policies and procedures are individual to the setting. They promote the children's safety and well being, supporting all to develop their full potential.

Regular communication with parents contributes to children's safety. Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give high priority to the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children of all ages come confidently into the school and settle quickly into familiar routines. They form strong trusting relationships with staff and play happily alongside other children. They are very confident in making choices and concentrate for long periods at their chosen activities, showing great interest and a desire to learn. Children play an active part in the setting. They show immense enthusiasm as they make independent choices and select their own activities from good well-presented play equipment and self-selection areas.

Staff work directly with the children. They show an excellent understanding of the individual development needs of the children, helping them to focus on activities such as counting and building and develop good concentration skills. Staff support their explorations and encourage conversation which develops language and communication skills. They keep accurate records of children's achievements and plan activities to ensure progress. As a result children throughout the setting are motivated and become engrossed in a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, indoor and outdoor, which provide good levels of challenge.

Children show an excellent understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy through routines such as hand washing and caring for their environment. Their behaviour is exemplary. They know right from wrong and show confidence in their negotiating skills. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other.

All children are happy, settled, and thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. They are very confident, interested and able to work on their own in activities such as drawing, sticking, imaginary play and looking at books. They have extensive opportunities to explore their senses through music and touch. They enjoy their activities and make rapid strides in their learning. This is due to the staff demonstrating a good knowledge of the individual needs and abilities of the children.

Children receive praise in their work and play helping build their self-esteem and confidence. They show a well-developed self-respect for others in the setting. They

explore different beliefs, traditions and cultures and talk about special events in their lives. Children experience varied opportunities to develop their physical skills through well-planned and spontaneous activities both indoors and out. As a result, they develop an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Nursery Education:

Children are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. By the time they go to school they are ready, well prepared and confident to accept the transition to their new environment. Children respond to new activities and challenge with enthusiasm. They increase their thinking skills with practical first hand experiences to explore and investigate. Children are skilful communicators. They interact with confidence, speak clearly and listen well to each others and staff's conversations. They confidently extend their play as they decide to add. Children can sit quietly to listen when appropriate and concentrate and persevere for long periods at their chosen activities. They become confident in speaking as staff encourage communication and introduce new vocabulary. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books and join in songs and rhymes with enthusiasm. Children benefit from an extensive variety of activities that develop hand and eye co-ordination and prepare them for writing. They learn to form letters and numerals tracing shapes in sand trays as well as using pencils, chalk and crayons. They learn the links between sounds and letters and learn to recognise their names. They express their ideas, drawing and painting freely, exploring clay and play dough, and building and constructing with recyclable materials. Children learn about sound and rhythm using a good collection of percussion instruments and enjoy listening to recorded music. Overall, they are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is inspiring and challenging for all age groups of children. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They provide a purposeful learning environment for the children to learn and develop as individuals. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to providing a rich learning environment for the children. They plan, evaluate and assess children's progress and the effectiveness of activities, in moving children on in their learning. Relationships are excellent with a happy buzz of children engaged in varied activities within the setting and including staff in their play. Staff use good consolidation techniques through repetition, questions and revisiting topics and activities to support the children's learning. Assessments of the children are rigorous. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of tracking the children's progress and use the information effectively to guide planning.

The partnership with parents is excellent. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's learning and progress, as well as being involved in learning alongside their children. A sense of mutual trust develops through the home visiting services and as staff make themselves available as and when parents wish to discuss their child's progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children feel valued in the setting. Relationships are excellent. The play and education provision is organised and monitored well to ensure children have access to the full range of activities. Children arrive at the setting happy and confident. Younger children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Babies settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow their individual routine. The older children are welcomed as they self register and eagerly look forward to the day activities. Children's individual pegs and labelled drawers provide them with a sense of belonging as they store their pictures and personal possessions. Children show exceptionally high standards of confidence and independence. Their individuality is respected and they show a strong sense of belonging to the group, being familiar with routines and knowing what is expected of them. Their learning is self-motivated and they receive strong support from the staff. They support each other, working well together, sharing and helping.

Parents and carers are well informed by staff. They share relevant background information, play activities and discuss children's specific needs. A clear and informative notice board with relevant up to date information is accessible to all parents. Children benefit from the open door policy and two way sharing of information, with opportunities for parents to speak to staff to enhance their development and learning. Parents receive very good opportunities to contribute to the assessments made on their child and to be involved in their learning. As a result, parents and carers have a very good understanding of their child's progress.

Staff are proactive in ensuring the needs of all children are being met. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. Children with additional needs and those learning English as an additional language are safe and are fully included in the setting. This is because of the sensitive adult support and well-planned adaptations to resources and activities. Staff work together with parents, carers and other professional bodies to organise the environment and plan appropriate activities to ensure the children take part at a level appropriate to their needs. Children develop a positive attitude to others through varied positive images displayed around the setting. They visit the local community and develop a secure knowledge of the wider world. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children benefit exceptionally well from staff who adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. As a result children's behaviour is exemplary. They become aware of the routines and procedures and know what to expect in response to the routine changes in the session. Children know right from wrong, they are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the setting's effective and efficient organisation.

Staff working with the children are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and consistently promote the children's well being in line with the comprehensive and robust policies and procedures. They demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of the Standards for Full Day Care and the Foundation Stage to help children achieve well.

Staff observe children's development and learning and keep detailed systematic records that help them to meet their needs. Children's records are openly shared with parents and their contributions valued to help them develop their full potential.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with relevant induction procedures and good opportunities to receive further training. This is used to help develop their skills in organising a provision that meets the children's needs, keeping them healthy and safeguarding their welfare.

The manager is dynamic, enthusiastic, and well informed about Early Years. Her senior management team monitor and evaluate the provision through regular meetings, training and promoting the personal development of herself and all the staff. This results in a happy and focussed team who work effectively meeting the personal development and achievements of all the children. Overall, the needs of the range of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards

of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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