



Albion House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY318956
Inspection date 03 May 2006
Inspector Ros Church

Setting Address 9 Albion Street, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 8BG

Telephone number

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Registered person Melanie Jane Shaw

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?

Albion House Day Nursery is a privately run provision. The present owner took over the nursery in 2005. It operates from a converted terraced house situated in the town centre of Grantham, Lincolnshire. The two storey premises consists of three playrooms, an entrance area and kitchen, storage areas and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area which includes multi-surfaces for various types of play. The pre-school age children use a room on the ground floor, with the children

aged under three being cared for in two separate rooms on the first floor.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 52 children on roll, this includes 14 children who receive funding for nursery education. The core opening hours of the nursery are 08:00 to 18:00, with extended hours available from 07:15, each week day except Bank Holidays and Christmas. The nursery is able to support children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff both full-time and part-time. Of these, 6 of the staff including the proprietor/manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are 5 members of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The nursery receives support from the Lincolnshire Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean and well-maintained premises. Their good health is promoted because staff follow generally good health and hygiene routines. For example, clear procedures are followed when changing nappies, staff use disposable gloves and aprons. There is a clear policy regarding caring for sick children which is shared with parents. However, written consent has not been obtained from parents to ensure they are able to meet all the individual needs of children in an emergency. Children begin to learn about good hygiene because staff understand the importance of keeping children healthy, for example, younger children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, and after toileting whilst the older children are being helped to understand about germs and taking responsibility for their own health.

Children's individual dietary needs and routines are met because the staff work well with the parents. The nursery provides breakfast and a range of healthy snacks which include fresh fruit, this helps children to develop an awareness of healthy eating. Parents provide children's main meals which are heated up and served on the premises. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when children sit within their own group rooms and enjoy each other's company. All children are able to access drinks of water as they require, younger children are provided with their own covered beakers, whilst older children pour their own drinks from a covered water jug, this promotes their independence.

Children enjoy daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise within the well-equipped enclosed outdoor play area. Well-planned opportunities are provided for all children, a wide range of large and small equipment is used to help children gain control over their bodies. The covered and partly enclosed patio area enables children to have fresh air in all weathers, as a good range of activities are provided. Other opportunities are provided for physical play indoors, for example, older children enjoy music and movement and younger children enjoy the small slide and ball pool.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, welcoming, safe and secure environment where they are able to feel settled and comfortable. Children are grouped in rooms according to their age and ability, where space is used well to allow them to play, eat and rest safely depending on their needs. Children's art work is displayed around the nursery, which makes the environment attractive and helps children to feel valued. Toys and equipment are well organised within all rooms and the outdoor areas, this enables children to access them freely, it increases their independence skills and allows them to make clear choices with regard to their play and learning.

Children remain safe within all areas of the nursery because there are effective systems in place to identify and minimise any risks, and policies and procedures that guide practice. These are understood by all staff so that children are kept safe in line with health and safety requirements. Access to the nursery is closely monitored, ensuring only known adults are allowed entry, and that children are safe at arrival and collection times. Children learn about safety in their environment through practical life experiences and staff's clear explanations such as how to carry a chair safely. Older children learn about road safety when on outings to the local library and park. Children are kept safe in the event of a fire because staff are familiar with procedures. Appropriate fire safety equipment is in place and practices are carried out on a regular basis to ensure children are familiar with the evacuation plan. Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and know what to do in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery. They make positive relationships with the staff and one another. Babies and young children have a clear bond with the staff who work with them, which increases their well-being and sense of trust. Younger children happily play together, and are beginning to take turns, share and to talk to others, such as when playing together with the role play equipment, and sharing books with one another. Young children and babies enjoy a range of planned activities and experiences including sensory materials such as sand, water and paint. They explore their senses as they listen to the sounds made by the sound shakers. Staff are becoming familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan children's play. However, assessment and planning systems are in their early stages and do not yet link together. This means that while young children experience a variety and balance of activities these are not always planned according to their interests and what they need to do next.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals as a broad range of activities are planned and provided, which link to the stepping stones across the six areas of learning. Staff

have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and understand the different ways children learn. Staff generally support children's learning well and use a variety of teaching methods, such as encouraging children to think and ask questions. However, assessments and evaluations of children's learning are not used effectively to plan next steps in learning and record sufficient differentiation on plans. Therefore, children do not always receive enough challenge to extend their learning appropriately. Children are learning to be independent and choose from a range of resources set out around the room.

Children show interest in the activities and are motivated to learn. They enjoy learning about the world around them as they explore natural objects and learn about living things such as the lifecycle of a frog. They observe tadpoles and talk about how fast they are swimming and learn about how these will grow into frogs. Children plant seeds and learn that these need water and light to grow. Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well. They confidently make valuable contributions to group discussion and happily listen to each other as they talk about their experiences. Children have access to a good range of books which they often choose to look at and use to support topic work. They enjoy listening to stories in a group and enjoy sharing books with others. They use books appropriately, holding them correctly and turning one page at a time, demonstrating their knowledge of how books work. Some children can link sounds to letters to spell their name correctly, while other children do this with the support of an adult. Children have satisfactory opportunities to write their own names and use writing for different purposes, in role play such as the garden centre they learn to write down the prices of items for sale.

Children are developing confidence with numbers, many 4-year-olds can recognise numbers to nine. They use some mathematical language in play to describe the size and position of an object, and they know many common shapes. Children use some equipment such as crayons, scissors and glue when designing and being creative, however, there are limited materials available for this purpose for children to independently select their own resources. Children develop their physical skills whilst confidently using the climbing apparatus in the outdoor area, they show a good awareness of space when chasing one another. Children's imaginations are developing well as they join in with role play and act out real or imagined experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children behave generally well within the nursery and are learning to work harmoniously together. They have clear and consistent boundaries and know what is expected of them. They begin to learn to treat each other and their belongings with care and concern, for example staff encourage children to take turns with equipment, and at the end of activities children help to tidy away. Staff are familiar with agreed policies for behaviour management, they are calm and affectionate when explaining positive behaviour. Staff act as good role models to reinforce good behaviour, they use praise and encouragement which promotes children's self-esteem and confidence. Children participate in activities helping them to learn about their own

and other cultures. For example, pre-school children engage in craft activities and dressing-up to help them learn about particular festivals such as Chinese New Year. They access a satisfactory range of resources such as books and puzzles which include positive images of cultures, abilities and lifestyles, so helping them to recognise and respect diversity. However, younger children have limited opportunities to independently access these materials to raise their knowledge of the wider society. Staff have attended relevant training and developed suitable policies to help support children with identified special needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children are cared for by staff who work well with the parents to ensure individual needs are met. Parents of babies and younger children are provided with daily written information about their child's day, and staff work closely with parents to ensure home routines are followed. A notice board within the entrance area displays information such as policies and procedures, and pre-school planning. However, there is limited information on the Foundation Stage, this means that parents are not fully aware of the curriculum their child follows. The nursery has introduced parents' evenings for parents of pre-school children, giving them opportunity to discuss their child's progress and achievements with the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are contented in the relaxed environment and develop settled relationships and interest in the activities. They are grouped in rooms according to their age and ability, where space is used well to meet children's individual needs. Children are kept safe as appropriate vetting procedures are carried out on persons working with the children. However, although recruitment and selection procedures are in place for staff and volunteers, they are not robust enough to ensure all background checks are carried out, to ensure their suitability and children's safety. Suitable systems are in place, and used appropriately, to ensure relevant information is held on the children and that the required records are maintained. This means staff are aware of children's needs and are able to care for them according to parents wishes. Although all the required policies and procedures are in place, an operational plan is not available for staff and parents.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff within the pre-school room work well together as a team and plan an interesting range of activities. Some monitoring systems are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education, however, children's progress is not comprehensively evaluated and well used to inform planning. As a result children are not consistently challenged to achieve their full potential. The manager and staff are committed to continue improving the care and education for children, they undertake various relevant courses and training. 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 registration.

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 written parental permission is requested, at the time of placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- develop the use of 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and provide activities and assess the progress of the younger children
- ensure there is a robust system in place for recruitment and selection of staff, with reference to checking employment history and references
- develop and review an operational plan, ensuring that it is available for staff and parents.

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):

- develop the use of observations and evaluations of children's progress to more effectively inform planning and to identify how to support children's next steps in learning
- extend resources for children to self select with reference to designing and making materials

- develop information for parents with reference to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage.

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