



Aylesbury College Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264202
Inspection date	28 September 2006
Inspector	Ann Hilary Guy
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Registered person	Aylesbury College Corporation
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 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?

Aylesbury College Day Nursery is run by the Aylesbury College Corporation. It registered in 1989 and operates from two rooms with adjoining resource areas within a purpose built building on the grounds of Aylesbury College, Buckinghamshire.

A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.30 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 86 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these 33 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area as most of their parents travel in to attend the college or work in the town. The nursery currently supports a

number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 staff, of whom 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Through the daily routine and topic work, children learn the importance of good health and hygiene; this includes washing their hands before meals and also cleaning their teeth regularly. Sound procedures protect children from cross infection when having their nappies changed, using potties, or in the event a child is poorly during the session. These are supported by clear written policies that underpin the practice and are implemented by all staff. Good procedures are in place to enable young children and babies to sleep according to their needs and parental wishes, monitored regularly by staff.

No meals are provided by the nursery. They provide healthy snacks for the children that include fresh fruit and vegetable pieces together with breadsticks and cheese. Parents provide lunch and sometimes tea for their child. Staff work with parents to encourage these to be healthy nutritious meals and they have the facility to warm food sent from home, following the instructions of the parent. Children have regular opportunities to drink throughout the day with water or milk provided at snack times. They can request an additional drink of water at any time. Babies are fed according to their individual routines with staff nursing babies when bottle-feeding. The atmosphere is relaxed and calming, promoting the children's health and well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery environment is extremely secure and very child friendly, ensuring the children stay safe and well looked after at all times. The premises are well organised and used effectively, enabling a variety of areas for children to play in safely, both inside and outside the building. Age appropriate toys and equipment enable the children to enjoy a rich, stimulating environment where they can have some elements of self-selection. Much of the equipment is stored on low shelves making it easily accessible for use.

Children's safety is paramount and staff ensure regular risk assessments are carried out, identifying any potential hazards. The front door system ensures no unwanted visitors can access the nursery. Fire practices are carried out with the college each term, ensuring most children have a sound understanding of how to proceed when the fire bell rings. Staff protect children well and demonstrate a very clear understanding of the procedure to follow in case of child protection, supported by good documentation. All staff undergo regular updated training in this field to ensure their practice is as current as possible.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages are stimulated and interested in the wide variety of activities available to them, enabling them to develop their skills in all areas. Independence is encouraged from a very early age, with children choosing activities for themselves. Babies receive good quality attention from the staff team with lots of physical contact as well as appropriate conversation. They are gradually introduced to the messier activities available for those walking. These children enjoy a wide variety of stimulating activities including sand and water play, many different art and craft activities, simple puzzles and colourful books, together with easy to put together early construction toys. They have a variety of opportunities to develop their manipulative skills and are constantly being encouraged to use their language skills, through conversation, singing songs and rhymes.

Children over the age of two years enjoy the stimulation of the older room, where the planning carefully merges the Birth to three matters framework and Foundation Stage curriculum, providing a rich learning environment. They have group work with their key worker, which is geared to their individual needs, providing an opportunity for age appropriate experiential learning in a small group.

All children access the outdoor area at the same time, making this a special social occasion when siblings, normally in different rooms, can be together. When the weather is suitable, non walking babies are also taken outside and have a large rug on the grass with a wide variety of suitable toys for them to use.

Very clear observational records are maintained, recorded against the different aspects within the Birth to three matters framework, enabling parents to have a clear picture of their child's progress from the time they start at the nursery. These are completed by the child's key worker.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make progress at their own pace through the Foundation Stage, with assessment records clearly plotting their development against the stepping-stones. This information is used when planning the next steps of learning. Good observational records enable staff to complete the assessment records, however, these are not clearly linked to the various aspects of the Foundation Stage, in order to clearly show how the children have achieved the stepping-stones. Planning is clearly linked to the six areas of learning, although outdoor play is not included, unless it is a specific small group activity. The medium term plan identifies how the staff intend to incorporate all aspects of learning and stepping-stones throughout the year, within the free play and group times. This enables the key worker to ensure focus, or group activities meet the needs of the children and develop their knowledge and skills in all areas. These activities are clearly evaluated and the evaluations used when planning the next steps of learning for the children.

Children enjoy periods of free play, together with times of more structured activities in their small groups. This enables them to freely explore the activities available in all curriculum areas. Staff support the children's learning effectively and help them to develop their skills and abilities

through good open ended questioning and playing alongside the child. Children enjoyed playing the shopping game, some played this properly, taking turns and enjoying both success and failure when they did not match an item. Others used it purely as a matching game and were beginning to learn how to take turns. Staff guide the children appropriately to play the game in a way suitable for their age and ability. Older, more able children were also looking at the element of competition and the staff member introduced early calculation questions, asking 'If there are eight all together and you have five, how many more items have you got to find?'

Children are happy, developing confidence and settled. They have good relationships with the staff and friendship groups are emerging. Some children communicate extremely well and those with English as a second language receive very good support to encourage their linguistic development. They have many opportunities to count, look at shapes and use early calculation skills, ably supported by the staff. The topic-based programme offers a wide variety of themes, some based around major festival of different religions. Outdoor play is not always fully planned, however, staff ensure children can access a wide variety of activities including balls, bikes and trikes, climbing activities, water painting and sand. The outdoor area is still under development with garden areas for the children to tend being developed. Children are encouraged to use their imagination throughout the session, both in group times and in free play. The role-play area is regularly changed to fit in with the theme and is supported by a variety of dressing up clothes. Children enjoy listening to stories, singing songs, painting and drawing, and playing musical instruments and games.

Children have free access to drawing and painting materials and sometimes do a specific activity within their group when they look at sounds and letters. During the inspection one group enjoyed describing a wide variety of fruits and looking to see if they were the same colour inside as out. They then tasted the fruits. This activity was rich in language with some children able to use complex sentences to describe the fruits, their flavour and texture.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

This is a multicultural nursery where all children are welcomed and valued. Resources positively represent the range of cultures cared for and good use is made of books and photographs to extend children's leaning and understanding. Children happily share the resources and play well together, especially in the home corner, water and sand. Parents provide good information about their child in order to enable staff to initially provide familiar activities and toys.

Children with any form of learning difficulty are fully integrated into the nursery and given additional support when required. They are encouraged to take part in all activities. Children's behaviour is generally very good. Clear rules of the nursery and the positive behaviour management policy, which includes much praise and encouragement, enable the children to feel valued and respected. Staff strive to maintain a happy atmosphere throughout the nursery, quietly discussing any adverse behaviour in an age appropriate way with the child concerned. Children are encouraged to respect others' feelings and they develop a sense of self worth. Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children greatly benefit from the open, positive relationship staff have with the parents. All parents receive a comprehensive information pack ensuring they know what to expect from their child's time at the nursery. Every child has a home/nursery book in which both staff and parents are able to note any comment they wish. This has proved to be a valuable resource by both staff and most of the parents, and ensures continuity of care, especially for the youngest children. Staff seek parents' views by asking them to complete a parent satisfaction questionnaire on a regular basis. They then address issues raised and, when possible, implement changes to their practice to accommodate parental ideas and improve the facilities for the children. Open days enable parents to speak to their child's key worker, see their assessment records and discuss their progress. The nursery aims to be as flexible as possible, accommodating changes that occur in college timetables so that parents know their child is safe and well looked after.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of time, space and resources together with the highly qualified staff group, ensuring their individual needs and welfare have high priority and help them make good progress. Staffing ratios are maintained at all times, with all children receiving some individual attention from a staff member at various times throughout the day. The comprehensive policies and procedures, fully understood by all staff, work effectively in practice and promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, the registration system does not always accurately reflect the number of children present in the nursery. Daily discussions with parents ensure they are kept fully informed and involved in the care of their child.

Leadership and management is good. The manager oversees the entire nursery and is ably supported by her two deputies. Staff receive regular appraisals and opportunities to develop their skills through attending local courses, which ensures children receive the best care and education possible. Staff work extremely effectively as a team throughout the nursery, providing a wide range of stimulating activities that meet the individual needs of the children. This is supported through sound planning, record keeping and evaluations.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to further develop some of their policies. These have all been amended and updated and are available to parents at all times, ensuring they are fully aware of the procedures and policies of the nursery.

At the last nursery education inspection they were asked to look at ways of extending older children's learning and supporting younger children's learning; ways of supporting new staff; more opportunities for children to label their work and see print throughout the room in the form of labels and provide additional opportunities to develop children's imagination in creative activities. All these areas have been successfully addressed. Through the implementation of the key worker groups, together with the understanding of all the staff in the room of how to

develop children's learning appropriately, children now receive good support to help them develop as an individual. All new staff initially work alongside experienced staff until they are confident and understand the practices and policies of the nursery and can implement them. Clear labels are all round the room and the self-registration system means children have free access to their name cards and can use these if required to copy their name when writing it on their work. They have many opportunities for free creative work using a variety of different media. This free creative work together with good use made of the role-play area enables children to develop their imaginative freedom. Children are stimulated and settled and enjoy the balance of guided and free activities available to them.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 the registration system accurately reflects the number of children present.

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 the outdoor area as an extension to the indoor play space
- develop a system of linking observations of children's activities to the various aspects of the Foundation Stage, in order to clearly show how children have achieved the stepping-stones.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk