



Asquith Nursery/Creche - Solihull

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY287777
Inspection date	20 September 2006
Inspector	Janet Ann Keeling
Setting Address	C/o David Lloyd Leisure Club, Highlands Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 4NU
Telephone number	0121 745 6067
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Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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?

Asquith Court Nursery and Crèche opened in 1998. It operates from facilities within the David Lloyd Fitness Club, which is located in the Shirley area of Solihull. Facilities are on two levels, the lower level accommodates children under the age of three, whilst the pre-school children are located on the first floor. The nursery has its own entrance, located off the main entrance hall. There is access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery and crèche serve the local community.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 64 children at any one time. There are currently 79 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 14 funded three-year-old children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group have strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week for 51 weeks of the year, closing for statutory bank holidays and one week over the Christmas period. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00. The crèche opens seven days a week for 51 weeks of the year, closing for one week during the Christmas period. Sessions are from 09:00 until 17:00.

There are 22 staff available to work with the children. Two thirds of the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level two and three. Casual staff are available for emergency cover. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well maintained environment. Most children are actively and consistently learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through well established daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and when returning from outdoor play. However, not all children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals.

Children have access to an appropriate range of activities which effectively contribute to their good health and well-being. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, as children skilfully negotiate the climbing frame, learn to peddle bikes and throw and catch balls. Children enjoy the fresh air as they have daily access to the outdoor play environment and take regular walks with staff around the local community.

Children enjoy a nutritional diet which is prepared on the premises using fresh ingredients. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered on a daily basis. Children have a good awareness of healthy eating as they regularly engage in topic work and have meaningful discussions with the staff. Most children are able to access drinks independently, however, this good practice is not encouraged throughout all rooms within the nursery. Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children calmly and comfortably fall asleep as they feel safe and secure in their surroundings.

Children's health and dietary needs are very well met at all times because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. For example, children's individual requirements are discussed fully with parents on admission, recorded and shared with all staff. Children's dietary requirements are also shared with the chef who ensures that all children's dietary needs are met at all times. Children's accident, medication and emergency consent forms are all in place and fully maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised, safe and secure environment. For example, visitors to the group are required to formally identify themselves, sign the visitors book and are accompanied at all times whilst in the setting. Children are able to move around safely and freely as identified hazards have been minimised through the completion of risk assessments, however, the current risk assessments do not include the outdoor play areas.

Children are kept safe because staff take positive steps to promote safety within the setting and whilst on outings. Children benefit from the very experienced and caring staff, who are very well informed of the groups health and safety procedures, for example, children engage in regular fire drills, learn about 'stranger danger' and follow the highway code whilst out on walks.

Children have access to good quality equipment and resources which are appropriate to their developmental needs and which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for the children to use. Children are encouraged to access the well organised resources which are clearly labelled and stored in child-height furniture. Children learn about safe practices whilst using equipment, for example, staff talk to the children before using the climbing frame and gently remind children to sit down whilst using scissors.

Children are safeguarded through the setting having robust child protection procedures in place and because, staff are competent and aware of their roles and responsibilities whilst protecting children in their care. The setting have a designated child protection co-ordinator who would follow through any issues of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and actively enjoy their time in this welcoming setting. They have excellent access to toys, equipment and resources which are independently accessed by all age ranges of children throughout the nursery. Children are able to build on knowledge and skills already acquired as staff continually assess their achievements and interest and respond positively to their individual learning needs. Babies and young children benefit from the staff's knowledge and understanding of the "Birth to three matters" framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Babies needs are skilfully met by staff who are fully aware of their individual needs. They receive positive support from experienced staff who spend time holding, talking and playing with them. Babies early communication skills are developed as they engage with staff who respond to their non-verbal gestures and verbal sounds during play. They have very good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore a variety of natural and man-made objects. Babies early physical development is supported as they begin to roll, crawl, stand and take their first steps.

Children's personal and social development is excellent throughout the setting, all children enjoy positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children become engrossed in a wide

range of self-selected activities which they enjoy enormously. Their behaviour is very good, they are actively and consistently praised by staff for their effort and achievements, consequently, their self-esteem is carefully fostered.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They speak confidently and share their personal experiences within the group. Children listen carefully to each other, they take turns and show care and concern for others. They express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively, for example, older children confidently put on their coats before going outdoors, whilst younger children wash their hands with soap and water after using the toilet.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching effectively promotes children's learning towards the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The staff are caring, patient and supportive of the children; they have high regard for the children and know them well. The staff demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work and provide good role models for the children. The staff manage children's behaviour sensitively and consistently; they encourage children's good behaviour through regular praise and encouragement, consequently, the children's behaviour is excellent. The setting have recently introduced a 'continuous learning provision' where planning is based on regular observations and assessments of children's interests and achievements. However, planning does not clearly demonstrate how the six areas of learning will be covered, and at present the children's 'incredible learning journey' assessments are not regularly evaluated throughout the year. Interaction between the staff and children is excellent; adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration.

All children have equal opportunities for learning; staff ensure that both full and part-time children are able to access the full range of activities and special project work. Children make good progress as a result of the wide range of stimulating activities and resources that are made available to them, and, through the staff's constructive questions which encourage children to express their feelings and develop their ideas and interests. Children have good opportunities to use their own initiative and develop their independence whilst engaged in both indoor and outdoor activities. Children who have learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported in the group.

The well organised accommodation provides a stimulating learning environment in which children are able to access the resources independently. Children's work is valued and attractively displayed on boards within the pre-school room, however, as the display boards are all out of reach from the children they are unable to independently display their own work. Examples of children's work included; painting, collage work, encouraging children's mark making and early writing skills and a wonderful display of 'post boxes' that the children had made from a variety of media.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and settle quickly into the group, their relationships with adults and their peers are excellent. Children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate festivals throughout the year, they express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively. Children engage easily in conversation, whilst engaged in activities children

participate enthusiastically, they listen carefully to adults and to each other. Children learn how print carries meaning as they are able to identify their labelled work on displays. More able children are able to write recognisable letters on their own work as they freely access the well resourced writing table. They competently use stencils, write letters and label envelopes. Children have regular access to a wide range of books; many of them show a keen interest in books and use them independently, carefully turning the pages and discussing the illustrations with each other and staff.

Children are encouraged to use number as part of every day routine; for example, children counted how many chairs were needed at snack time and how many children were in the line to go outdoors. The children use mathematical language effectively whilst engaged in activities and are familiar with words to describe size, position, shape and quantity. They confidently name shapes such as square, triangle, circle and rectangle and had opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts; for example, they compared the size of their post boxes and talked about the size of their envelopes, one child asked 'Do you think they will fit into the post box?'

Children have good access to a range of toys, resources and planned activities which promote their awareness of diversity, for example, as they enjoy celebrating different cultural festivals throughout the year. Children freely access a good selection of programmable toys and technical equipment which they use competently and with increasing skill. Children learn about their natural environment and develop an understanding of living things, as they talk about the weather changes, look for mini-beasts in the garden and observe seeds as they grow.

Children show good control and co-ordination as they move confidently and safely around both the indoor and outdoor areas. They take part in regular music and movement sessions in the dance studio where they are able to develop their awareness of space and others around them. Older children are able to take swimming lessons within the David Lloyd complex. Children have access to a secure outdoor space where they are able to develop their climbing, pedalling and balancing skills; for example, as they negotiate the climbing frame, peddle bicycles and kick balls. The children competently use a wide range of small equipment including scissors, paintbrushes, chalk sticks and cutters.

Children develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work and regular discussion with adults and their peers; for example, whilst engaged in snack time children talked about their likes and dislikes of various foods, and staff explained why certain foods were healthier than others. Children have daily opportunities to paint, draw and make collages using a suitable range of media including chalk, felt pens, pencils, fabric and malleable materials. They use their imagination in activities such as painting, music and movement and various role-play situations. The role-play area changes regularly to support the children's interest, for example, into a post office, veterinary surgery and supermarket. Children explore sound effectively through playing a range of musical instruments, listening to a variety of musical sounds and initiating singing sessions

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are fully included in all activities and their differences are acknowledged and valued. Children are able to access a wealth of exciting activities, toys and resources which actively raise their awareness of diversity and promote their understanding of others. For example, through access to role play equipment, books, posters and by welcoming visitors from the local community. Children's understanding is further promoted as they complete topic work on Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, and through positive discussions with the staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively fostered during these activities, with the staff acting as positive role models for the children.

Children's behaviour is excellent. Children are fully aware of the groups boundaries and expectations for good behaviour. Children learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's understanding of right and wrong is further developed as they respond to gentle reminders from staff, to care for their environment, resources and each other.

The partnership between parents and carers is good. An effective partnership with parents and carers contributes to the children's well-being within the group. Children's individual care and educational needs are fully discussed with the parents before the child starts at the setting, enabling staff to be fully aware of the children's needs. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of each day; they share information about the children's progress on a regular basis, and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Parents evenings and newsletters help to keep parents informed about the pre-school activities, however, at present there are limited opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's early education and on-going assessments. Parents and carers have access to good quality information regarding the group, including a prospectus and policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and the very focused leadership and management of the group. Staff are knowledgeable, they fully understand the settings policies and procedures and ensure children are protected, kept safe and that children's individual needs are supported effectively.

The premises are welcoming with good quality displays, the environment is very well organised and effectively maximises children's learning and development. Children benefit from qualified and skilled staff, who follow an effective induction programme and, who are committed to on-going training and development. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through regular staff meetings and yearly appraisals. All legally required documentation is in place, however, the policies and procedures have not been updated and written in line with the revised National Standards Guidance of October 2005.

Leadership and management is very good. The staff work well as a team, they are deployed effectively and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings are held

to discuss daily issues. The manager and staff have worked effectively with the local authority early years team who provide support and guidance throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and in-house development workshops. Managers are fully committed to developing the early years provision.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were asked to; ensure all staff were fully aware of the settings policies and procedures, ensure children's individual needs are supported during meal times and ensure confidentiality is maintained when completing medication records.

The setting has successfully met the recommendations from the previous inspection. Through induction procedures, staff appraisals and through regular staff meetings all staff have been made fully aware of the settings policies and procedures. Children's individual needs are now fully supported at meal times and confidentiality is respected when completing medication records. Consequently, children's health, safety and well-being are further supported.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted.

In October 2005 Ofsted received information relating to National Standards 7 (Health); and 13 (Child Protection) concerning a child who presented with unexplained injuries. Ofsted investigated in conjunction with other agencies and found that the child's care was shared between the parents, Asquith Nursery and another nursery unrelated to Asquith Court Nurseries. The other agencies involved determined that no action was required by them. Ofsted found that the Key worker system and settling in procedures were not adequately managed, that room registers did not demonstrate that minimum staff to child ratios were met at all times and that accident records were not always completed in full. Ofsted agreed three actions in response to these findings. The provision submitted details of steps taken to meet the requirements of these actions, which Ofsted deem to be an appropriate and proportionate response. The provider remains qualified for 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):

- make sure that all children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through daily routines, for example, by ensuring that all children learn about the importance of washing their hands before meals
- ensure that all children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- develop the settings risk assessment procedures to ensure they clearly demonstrate what action has been taken to minimise hazards to children whilst accessing the outdoor play areas
- review and update all policies and procedures in line with the revised National Standards Guidance of October 2005.

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):

- continue to evaluate and develop the newly implemented planning and assessment procedures to ensure they clearly demonstrate children's progress towards the early learning goals
- provide more opportunities that would enable parents to be more involved in their child's early education and on-going assessments
- further develop the learning environment, for example, by ensuring that children can independently display their own work within the pre-school room.

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