



Apple Tree Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY311880
Inspection date	20 June 2006
Inspector	Charlotte Jenkin
Setting Address	Priestley CP School, Prince Charles Drive, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 8TG
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Registered person	Rachel Louisa McMahon
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?

Apple Tree Nursery has been registered since July 2005. It operates from two mobile classrooms in the grounds of Prestly School in Calne. The nursery is registered to care for 40 children from two to eight years and currently runs an after school club. There are currently 95 children on roll, including 51 funded three and four year olds.

Seven staff work with the children, and of these five are qualified. The setting receives support from the Lead Teacher and Development Officer.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in warm, clean premises. They are encouraged to practise good hand washing routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and staff practise good hygiene practices, including cleaning and nappy changing. Children are not, therefore, at risk from cross infection. The sickness policy is formally shared with parents and children are not, therefore, exposed to unnecessary illness. Children benefit from staff's awareness of the correct procedures to follow if children have accidents or require medication. This protects the children's health fully. Children's health is protected from the sun as the staff work closely with parents to ensure protective clothing and cream is brought into the nursery.

Children develop an awareness of healthy eating as they contentedly choose from a wide variety of nutritious snacks, including various fruits. They also participate in activities that enable them to develop an awareness of the kinds of foods that are good for them, and those to be eaten in moderation. However, they are not yet fully pro-active in ensuring parents bring in healthy lunch boxes. Also children bring in their own lunches to the nursery and these are not all stored safely to protect the children's health from perishable foods. Staff discuss children's dietary needs with parents, prior to a child commencing in the setting. These discussions are recorded and any dietary needs or allergies are catered for. These are shared with staff to ensure children are not exposed to contaminated foods. Children have water available to them at all times and help themselves, ensuring they have enough fluids throughout the day.

Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They regularly go for walks to the local park, where they play on the large climbing equipment to develop their upper body strength. They have daily access to the garden, where they have access to a good range of toys and equipment that support their physical development well. Children move around the premises with confidence and show a good awareness of space. They are able to stop and control their movements, and negotiate pathways with ease. Children climb over, under and through objects with control and have opportunities to move their bodies in response to music.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and rest in premises that are clean and warm. There are many attractive displays of the children's work around that makes the environment bright and welcoming to children and their parents. Children have their own labelled pegs and know where to put their belongings which helps them develop a sense of belonging in the group. Children have access to a wide range of stimulating toys and equipment that cover all areas of development. These are stored at the children's level to enable them to make choices and initiate their own play and learning. Such

free choice opportunities encourage the children's independence and confidence.

Children benefit from the good range of safety measures that staff implement to promote safety and prevent accidents within the setting and on outings. For example, staff check the premises daily for hazards, the premises are secure and risk assessments are undertaken before children are taken on outings. All fire precautions are in place, and the evacuation plan is regularly practised to promote the children's safety. Children, therefore, play in safe premises, free from risks where they are able to move around with confidence.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded as staff have a thorough and working knowledge of child protection issues and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. The nursery's child protection duties are formally shared with parents, and children's existing injuries are formally recorded. Hence, children's well-being is actively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery happily and settle quickly to engage in their play. Staff and the other children greet them as they enter, demonstrating a good sense of belonging in the group. They eagerly make choices in their play, for example, choosing sticking and cutting materials, play on the computers and water play and, therefore, initiate their own play and learning. Children develop high levels of independence in personal care, being able to visit the toilet independently and helping themselves to water. They form good relationships with staff as they readily approach them for assistance. They play co-operatively with peers, demonstrating positive social skills. Children become confident in exploring and expressing their feelings, as they talk with staff about how they feel daily. They sit quietly when appropriate, for example, at story time and during circle time, developing appropriate concentration skills.

Younger children benefit from staff's developing knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework as they have access to an exciting range of activities that cover all aspects of this. Children appear very settled and at ease in the nursery as they form secure relationships with the staff, sitting together playing and reading stories, and enjoying the close company they share. They readily approach staff for comfort or for assistance, and they respond quickly to the children's requests. This enables them to develop good levels of self-esteem as their needs are being met. Staff regularly praise the children for their achievements which helps them to feel good about themselves. They interact well with the children and support their language development, as well as their confidence, as they are being respected and listened to by the staff. Children have regular opportunities to be creative, as they dress up, explore colour and texture and sing songs. Children are able to develop positive self-images as they look in mirrors and also put photographs of themselves on the wall daily. Children eagerly and happily explore the toys and equipment on offer and are confident in making choices in their play. They develop good levels of concentration with staff supporting them well during activities, sustaining their interests and enabling them to develop a positive attitude towards new learning

experiences.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff working with the children are well qualified and have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are clear about the learning intentions of activities and understand how children learn through everyday practical experiences. However, some creative activities are adult lead and children do not have free and practical experiences of developing their skills fully in this area. Activity plans are clear and linked directly to the early learning goals and stepping stones. Staff and resources are well organised, although children do not have free access to a wide range of art and craft materials to develop their own free expression through art.

Staff have a sound knowledge of children's progress towards the early learning goals. They currently monitor their progress through highlighting their achievements in the Tracker assessment system. These are supported with photographs of children at play and by some observations. However, the observations are not clear in showing what children know, understand and can do, and are not fully used to inform future planning and move children on to the next stage in their learning.

Children speak confidently and fluently in a familiar group and are well able to make themselves understood. They develop suitable writing skills as they freely make marks, with older children writing their names. Children show a great interest in books, as they independently access these, look at them and turn the pages. They show interest in counting and numbers, recognising numerals and counting reliably. They explore volume and use language to describe size, shape and position. Children use number to solve problems, for example, when playing number games on the computer, and count for real purposes during the day.

Children observe change over time, for example, when growing seeds and examine living things using magnifying glasses. They explore various textures and use their senses as appropriate to describe what they see and feel. Children have opportunities to freely select from various materials and use different methods to join them together and create models. They develop good skills in operating computer programmes independently and in exploring how simple equipment works.

Children use their imagination well and engage in role play based on first hand experiences, for example, cooking dinner for friends. They explore the sounds musical instruments make and are able to express themselves through music, as they enjoy singing familiar songs. Children are not fully encouraged to freely express their own ideas using materials of their own choice for art work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is well respected by staff who know the children in their care well. They gain information from parents regarding children's play preferences and experiences, in order that they can cater for children's differing needs and interests. This helps promote the children's self-esteem. Children for whom English is an additional language have their language development supported, however this area

has not been fully developed. Children develop respect for the lives of others, through learning simple words in the other languages of the children attending. Children with special educational needs have their development fully supported in the group.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have regular opportunities to explore their local environment, with walks to the local park and library, where they are able to become familiar with the locality. They have access to activities that enable them to develop respect for the lives of others, for example, food tasting and dancing for Chinese New Year, where they gain an insight into the lives of others.

Staff are very good role models to the children and treat one another and the children with respect. They use age appropriate methods for managing unwanted behaviour and work closely with parents to ensure the children receive consistent messages in the setting and at home. Children develop good sharing and turn taking skills that are appropriate to their age and stage of development, as staff encourage this in a way that enables the children to learn right from wrong. Staff regularly praise the children for their achievements, and this helps them to feel good about themselves and develop high levels of self-esteem. Children's behaviour is, therefore, very good.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the solid partnership with parents as their care needs and routines are fully respected and catered for. Children are, therefore, cared for in line with parents' wishes. Staff and parents regularly exchange information regarding their children's needs and this enables the staff to offer the children continuity of care. However, the system for sharing information with parents of the younger children is not fully developed, as not all routines are recorded as requested by some parents. The complaints procedure and record is effective and readily available to parents. Parents receive detailed information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning. They have easy access to activity plans and are kept up to date with the current theme for learning through newsletters. Parents have both informal and formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and to view their assessments, which includes photos of their child engaged in activities, examples of their work and some observations of them at play. However, they are not actively encouraged to contribute to the assessment process. Parents are welcome to help out in the nursery and also receive some information regarding activities they can do at home with their child to support their learning in the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff and recruitment procedures ensure all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Staff regularly attend training to keep updated with relevant changes in the early years, including workshops on the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. This enhances the children's learning experiences. Staff are well supported by the management and this enables them to work in a happy and respectful environment.

Children benefit from the high adult to child ratios, as staff spend quality time interacting and playing with the children. This supports their development well. Children appear relaxed and at ease in the comfortable and well organised environment where they eagerly explore the toys and activities and display a positive attitude towards new learning opportunities.

All policies and procedures are in place and most are implemented consistently in order to promote children welfare, care and learning. However, staff do not fully promote healthy eating with parents and ensure children's lunches are stored in a way that protects their health, and information sharing between staff and parents of younger children is not fully developed. All necessary consents are gained from parents for routines and activities and this protects the children's well-being and ensures they are cared for in line with parents' wishes. All documentation is stored securely and available for inspection.

Leadership and management is good. Staff in the pre-school room work well together as a team and share all responsibilities including planning. They are well supported by the owner and manager with respect to their professional development, and training needs are identified by appraisals and regular observations of their practice. Staff demonstrate a commitment to improving the educational provision as they attend regular training and development opportunities. This in turn enhances the children's care and learning opportunities and leads to improvements in the delivery of the curriculum, for example, Maths.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints 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. There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- develop a system to ensure children's packed lunches do not pose a risk to their health and that parents are given advice and encouragement to provide nutritious meals for them
- ensure parents of younger children are fully informed about their child's day, including information regarding foods they have eaten, nappy changes and activities they have participated in

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 assessment system to include detailed observations of children at play that show what they know, understand and can do, and use this to inform future planning and move children onto the next stage in their learning
- ensure children have regular opportunities to express their ideas through free creativity, including selecting freely from a wide range of materials and displaying their own free work

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