



Asquith Nursery/Creche - Southampton

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY319453
Inspection date	05 September 2006
Inspector	Doreen Forsyth / Sue Stuart
Setting Address	c/o David Lloyd Leisure Ltd, Sports Centre, Frogmore Lane, Nursling, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 0XS
Telephone number	0238 073 5356
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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 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?

Asquith Nursery and Crèche is one of a chain of nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd.

The setting was registered in 2001 and opened under new ownership in 2006. The setting occupies purpose built rooms at the David Lloyd Leisure Centre in the Nursling area of Southampton, Hampshire. Children have access to a enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered to accept up to 55 children aged under five, of these no more than 27 may be under the age of two years. There are currently 120 children on roll, this includes 17 children whom are in receipt of government funding for nursery education. The crèche is registered to care for 22 children under the age of eight at any one time; currently there are 324 children on roll.

The nursery opens weekdays from 08:00 until 18:00 all year round. The crèche is open from 09:00 until 17:00 on Mondays to Fridays and from 09:30 until 12:30 at weekends. Both settings welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 20 members of staff working with the children, of these 13 have appropriate early years qualifications at level two or three or above. Other members of staff are currently working toward a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from infection and appropriately taken care of if they are ill or have an accident because the practitioners follow and understand current health and hygiene practices very well. All required documentation regarding the administration of medications and the recording of accidents and incidents are well kept. The setting has a suitable sickness policy in place, but this is not given to parents. Children's well-being is promoted as staff in the setting are all encouraged to attend relevant first aid training. Children begin to learn to observe simple hygiene routines such as washing their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet.

Children are provided with well-cooked, varied and nutritional meals and snacks, the menus are displayed for parents and vegetarian options are available. Children's individual dietary requirements are appropriately recorded. Babies' bottle feeds are provided by parents and appropriately stored at the nursery; babies individual feeding patterns are well observed. All the children in the nursery and crèche have access to drinking water, staff ensure younger children and babies are regularly provided with drinks. At snack time a large basket of fruit is provided in the nursery allowing children to help themselves to a wide variety of different fruits, these are cut up as appropriate for the younger children. Children discuss with staff about fruit being 'good for you'. In the crèche suitable snacks and drinks are provided throughout the day.

All the play rooms open up onto a safe outside play area where children can move safely and freely in the fresh air. They all have opportunities to enjoy physical play during the morning play sessions. Some rooms also have small slides and balancing equipment for toddlers to use indoors for physical play. Children using the crèche do not usually have access to outside play activities.

Children are usually able to rest and sleep according to their needs. There are suitable sleep mats and blankets provided for toddlers and older children. Babies often have to share cots to sleep in, but they always have their own bed linen.

Pre-school children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise to promote healthy life styles. Children develop co-ordination and confidence as they climb and slide and balance on low beams; however, some equipment does not provide sufficient challenge for the more able children. They learn to negotiate space while pedalling bikes and other wheeled toys. They

learn new physical skills, such playing with balls and hoops. They have good opportunities to develop small muscle control, for instance when cutting with scissors and pouring and scooping water

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, welcoming and well maintained environment. The setting has a number of good systems in place to ensure children's security, including number pad entries, and close circuit monitors, but staff do not always make parents aware of the need for vigilance in security. Most of the playrooms, including the crèche, are attractively set out and well decorated with interesting displays and children's work, however, the pre-school room is not currently as attractively presented. The setting is well risk-assessed as the manager and staff carry out daily visual assessments both indoors and outside. Staff ensure they practise regular emergency evacuation procedures, although these are not recorded.

The nursery is very well resourced and has recently obtained very attractive new purpose-built wooden furniture, toys and equipment which the children are enjoying using. In the pre-school room these take up a lot of play space and because there are a large number of children using this room it is crowded and does not allow children to move and play freely. The new resources work well in the baby and toddler rooms, but there are no comfortable adult size chairs for adults to use when feeding and comforting children, or for babies to use when practising their mobility.

Children are safe-guarded because the practitioners understand their role in child protection and are able to put the correct procedures in place if necessary. However, parents are not informed of the setting's child protection procedures before children enrol into the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are comfortable and relaxed in the setting; staff use good procedures to settle children into the nursery and crèche and help them gain self-esteem. Babies and toddlers relate very well to their carers, they are provided with interesting activities that help them to learn and develop appropriately. Staff monitor and record the children's activities and development using the 'Birth to threes matters' framework. They identify children's individual interests and learning and use this information to plan activities for each child building on their knowledge and understanding and helping them move on in their learning. Staff have attended training on the 'Birth to threes matters' programme and have made attractive displays for parents to explain how the framework is used in the nursery.

Staff interact very well with the younger children, they cuddle them and sing to them, they encourage the children to explore and investigate their surrounding. Staff talk to children appropriately, encouraging their speech and language development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children benefit from the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn. The recent introduction of individual learning programmes for children enables staff to develop children's interest and provide relevant activities. However, currently the lack of adult initiated activities does not ensure all areas of learning are fully addressed, for example, a lack of planned physical activities that offer challenge to more able children.

The room is organised into learning areas so that children can move from area to area, however, they do not have sufficient floor space to play, for example, to build construction models and assemble large jigsaw puzzles. They benefit from the freedom to choose their activities, with appropriate support from staff.

Children's progress is measured through effective 'jotting' observations and assessment system. However, staff do not use these observations to identify the next steps for children's learning to ensure their progress through the stepping stones is appropriately addressed.

Children develop a positive attitude to their learning, they are well motivated and are beginning to work independently, such as selecting collage from the shelves to decorate playdough 'cakes'. They choose from a wide range of interesting practical activities, for instance, they learn about size as they load and fit construction bricks on to wooden trucks. Their learning is developed through staff's questioning and interest in the children.

Children's behaviour is good. Children respond well to praise and encouragement as they achieve a task. They relate well to each other, and are learning to work harmoniously with others, for example, taking turns and sharing small world people as they play with the dinosaurs. Children demonstrate their interest in numbers as they cut and divide the snack fruit amongst children present. Children learn about shapes and size, while matching and sorting a variety of farm animals.

Children are given good opportunities to develop their communicate skills and their ideas, for example, while they dress in fairy outfits and immerse themselves in their role play. They have access to a range of books both for enjoyment and information. They have some opportunities to use information technology to support their learning. Children benefit from the chance to use a variety of writing materials to make marks and draw pictures. Children are beginning to recognise their names and some are beginning to write them.

Children learn about their environment, for example, growing sunflowers in the nursery play area. They explore a variety of materials to learn about their senses and texture, such as feeling and examining lentils and rice and moulding playdough. They have chances to play musical instruments to learn about sound and rhythm.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the setting and are valued and included. The setting has appointed a Special Needs Co-ordinator who ensures all children's individual learning needs are met and extra support is put in place if necessary. Children throughout the nursery and crèche learn to

behave appropriately. The setting has a good written behaviour policy, however this is not shared with parents. Children's individual needs are usually well met. Staff get to know the children well and understand their differing requirements; for example, staff explained how they knew when a baby is ready to sleep. Parents are not made aware of the settings good policies and procedures, including the equal opportunities and special needs policies and how they can have access to the complaints log.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are beginning to communicate their ideas and emotions and show concern for others, for example, a group of children help to dry the cutlery express both frustration and delight as they sort the knives and forks into the correct trays. They demonstrate good self-care skills, for instance, at lunch time laying their place and serving themselves to food independently.

Children behave well. They know what is expected of them and are aware of the rules and routines of the setting, for instance a timer is used to indicate time to tidy away the toys. They benefit from the good role models provided by the staff, who promote a positive, calm and friendly atmosphere.

Children's understanding of other cultures is developed through resources and activities designed to broaden their knowledge of the wider world. They celebrate a variety of festivals and learn about other countries and about the local community.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the open warm welcome that families receive. Parents are given information about the setting and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and achievements through regular planned meetings, parent's evenings and daily exchanges of information. Parents are not often given ideas of activities they could do to be involved in their children's learning at home.

Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with events, however the notice board does not inform parents of current day to day activities. Children benefit from this close partnership as families feel well supported and children's needs are met in accordance to their parent's wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery and crèche are suitably organised. The manager has appropriate qualifications and is adequately vetted. Asquith Court Nurseries support the manager well and ensures all documentation, policies and procedures that help to promote children's well-being, health, safety and learning are in place and regularly reviewed. Staff in both the crèche and the nursery are encouraged to train and obtain suitable qualifications. The setting ensures all staff are suitable to work with children through the robust vetting, recruitment and induction procedures that are in place. Any new or unvetted adults do not have unsupervised access to the children.

Children are well supported because appropriate adult/ child ratios are constantly maintained throughout the setting, including good booking-in systems in the crèche. Visitors and children's

attendance is recorded, but these records are not always accurately kept, and staff attendance is not well recorded.

The nursery and crèche meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting is currently undergoing changes as a result of the hand over of management to a new company. The positive relationships that are developing between senior management and staff ensures they are beginning to identify their strengths and areas for development and put in place strategies to act on their findings. Staff receive monthly visits from the company early years support worker to help ensure the smooth implementation of new practices.

Staff are keen to implement new learning programmes. However, deployment of staff and resources does not always ensure children are well supported and time well managed in the pre-school room, for example, at snack time staff do not note whether children have had a snack. An effective monitoring and annual appraisals system is in place, for instance, staff are able identify their training needs and develop their own practice, which in turn, has a constructive impact for the children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- review the organisation of the pre-school room to ensure children have enough space to move and play freely
- provide some domestic style furniture to assist children in developing mobility and to continue normal life experiences
- ensure that children's and staff attendance is accurately recorded
- ensure parents have access to all the relevant policies and procedures, including information about the setting's child protection procedures.

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):

- use the observations made on the children to identify children's next stage of learning, to develop adult initiated activities, and to ensure the educational programme is balanced across all areas of learning children
- make good use of staff, space and other resources to ensure children are well supported, time is well managed and children are appropriately challenged.

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