



Little Achievers @ Ribbleton Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY317157
Inspection date	14 September 2006
Inspector	Joan, Patricia Flowers
Setting Address	Ribbleton Children's Centre, Ribbleton Hall Drive, Ribbleton, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 6EE
Telephone number	01772 655789
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Registered person	Rosy Apple Childcare Ltd
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?

Little Achievers @ Ribbleton Children's Centre is an independently operated children's nursery. It is located within new, purpose built premises in Preston, Lancashire, serving the local and wider community. The nursery is registered to provide places for up to 59 children aged from birth to eight years. The setting shares the premises with other childcare focused activities and community training provided by Sure Start. Children may attend either full time or part time. There are crèche facilities offered to accommodate children whose parents are attending training sessions on the premises. The nursery is open 51 weeks a year between 07.30 and 18.00, Monday to Friday. Freshly prepared meals and snacks are provided on the premises.

Children are cared for in specific areas within the centre. Designated play areas for 0-2 year olds, 2-3 year olds and 3-5 year olds are provided, as well as access to the area known as 'play

street'. There is an enclosed outdoor play garden on the premises with fixed equipment and soft play surfaces installed.

There are currently 23 children aged from birth to five years on roll. Of these, children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties. The registered provider employs seven staff, four of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification. The registered provider is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association, and support, training and advice is obtained from the local authority, Sure Start teacher and development teams.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good consideration is given to providing all children with a wide range of experiences so that they can develop physically during both indoor and outdoor activities. Children's bodily awareness, coordination and muscle development is encouraged as they run, climb, slide, balance and pedal both indoors and outside. They become skilful in using a range of tools as they develop their finer muscle movements, such as when they use cutlery at meal times or cutters with the play dough, and when they paint using brushes and control the mouse at the computer. In these ways children are encouraged to maintain good physical health and the ability to control their own bodies skilfully as they learn to become independent and are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Children are actively learning to be healthy as they follow robust procedures and practices during everyday activities. These are effectively implemented by practitioners so that children's health, nutritional and physical needs are effectively met. Children are fully encouraged to be independent in their personal care as part of their daily routine. Consequently, they begin to understand the importance of washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating, and to cover their mouth when they cough, so the spread of infection is minimised. Because most practitioners are trained in first aid, appropriate responses to accidents are made so that children's health is promoted, however, written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not obtained for every child.

Children enjoy varied meals and snacks that provide a well balanced and nutritious diet according to individual dietary needs. All meals and snacks are prepared freshly each day using healthy local ingredients. Children enjoy daily fresh fruit, vegetables and milk and are learning about foods that are good for them. Children have freedom to enjoy a drink of water whenever they are thirsty and can help themselves because it is made easily accessible to them, thus promoting their independence and well-being as they recognise when they are thirsty after physical activities or in hot weather. Individual children's dietary needs are met very well. There is a secure system for informing all practitioners and other adults working in the setting of specific information about individual children's dietary needs. This ensures that children's well-being and personal health is maintained and provides reassurance to parents and carers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a sense of belonging and show pride in their work as they eagerly point and talk about the picture they painted which is displayed on the wall. Children enjoy making choices and playing in a very welcoming and bright nursery environment that is well maintained and efficiently organised to meet their individual needs. Practitioners are fully competent in providing children with an engaging, safe and developmentally appropriate range of resources that all children can access easily and make choices from independently. Children enjoy looking at books and are able to sit comfortably with their friends. They delight in playing in the well resourced outside play area with the exciting range of equipment provided for them here, thereby benefiting from resources that attract, challenge and intrigue them.

Children's welfare is promoted well as there are procedures in place for assessing risks so ensuring children are cared for safely. Low branches from the willow hedge planted along the perimeter of the outdoor play area, however, present a potential risk to children's safety. Children partake in regular emergency evacuation drills so they are helped to understand about keeping themselves and others safe. Children's safety is also considered on outings; for example by using a six seated buggy, with appropriate seat belts, and increasing the staff to child ratios. This was achieved effectively when a practitioner walked with three pre-school children to the sister nursery a short distance away, to join in with the music and movement session. Children's safety and welfare is further safeguarded, were there to be any concerns of abuse. Practitioners have a satisfactory understanding of their responsibilities for recording and reporting any child protection issues to the appropriate authorities. The designated staff member responsible has specific training in this area and is supported by the registered provider so children are protected. All staff and parents are made aware of the child protection procedures because information is effectively shared with them and displayed for reference in the policy document and also on the table at the entrance door.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because practitioners use effective safety procedures that minimise the risk of accidental injury, as they remind and encourage children to play safely. Children help to tidy the toys from the floor and have regard for each other during play activities, such as when riding their bikes outside. All required safety features are available and the security of the premises is very well managed, with the door being locked and entrance only afforded via a qualified staff member after identification has been verified. Children play safely because practitioners minimise risk by regularly checking toys and equipment and by restricting access to areas such as the kitchen. Furniture to meet the needs of all the children who attend is well supplied and conforms to safety standards, thus ensuring children's continuing well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The ability for children to make choices and decisions about their play is fostered appropriately as children alternate from one activity area to another with confidence. They develop good social skills as they engage in simple conversation during their play, openly referring to their families and comparing their experiences. Practitioners listen and value what children say and talk about what they are doing, for example, during play with the sand as children pour and

transfer the sand from one container to another. The good interaction with practitioners helps to build children's self-confidence and self-esteem as they are encouraged to communicate their ideas and thoughts. Positive relationships with staff are therefore formed, with children being happy and settled in their company. The good attention to planning and effective means of observing children's achievements contributes to them making steady progress as practitioners implement the Birth to three matters framework. All practitioners endeavour to help all children reach their full potential by enhancing children's existing skills and building on any areas for development. This is an area that continues to be reviewed and moulded.

Children engage well and are motivated in their play because practitioners plan an interesting programme of activities that covers all aspects of learning. Children express themselves with confidence and develop their ideas during creative activity that includes music, dance and sensory play. Children experience lots of fun in the well resourced outdoor play provision. Younger children develop their physical skills as they manoeuvre wheelie toys around with great gusto, play catching and throwing games with different sized balls, and learn to balance as they walk and run whilst changing direction. Children enjoy experimenting with different mark making materials and learn about colours when potato printing and how the colours change when mixed together. They show good levels of sustained interest during planned activity, with practitioners who are on hand to support and guide them, as they develop and refine their emerging skills.

Practitioner's growing knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework is having a positive impact on improving younger children's achievements. They show an awareness of the range of experiences that enable young children to make greater use of their senses and creative abilities. Exploration with textured and natural materials, including paint, water and dough, helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. The stimulating environment encourages young children to explore and investigate by being attracted to the musical toy or the shiny mobile.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make sound progress because practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They develop a curriculum plan which gives equal weighting to the six areas of learning. The children's individual learning needs are assessed by their key worker and recorded to show their progress along the stepping stones. Practitioners make links between the observations and assessments they carry out so they can plan for extending children's various abilities as they move along the stepping stones. For example, learning outcomes are identified and recorded when they are met. In this way, children's individual learning needs are accommodated.

All children experience warm and caring relationships with their key worker and each other. This supports their play, learning and enjoyment of the setting very well and ensures that their individual needs are met as a result. Children who have learning difficulties are supported well in the setting and participate fully in all activities because the practitioners are competent at arranging and planning activities to meet their individual needs. Children are motivated to learn and willing to try available experiences like the climbing apparatus. They are very well settled in the setting and respond positively to learning about themselves and each other, showing

kindness and good manners. This is a strength within the setting. Children are benefiting from regular opportunities to develop their language skills, such as at 'circle time'. They enjoy stories, both being read to them and looking at books alone and with others in the book area. They benefit from resources stored at low level and activities which engage and capture their interests.

Children make sense of the world around them in imaginative and creative play and learn with interest about the celebrations and customs of others. They are introduced to other beliefs through planned activities to celebrate festivals such as Divali or the Chinese New Year. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced through activities that explore nature in the nursery garden, and information technology as they learn how to use the tape recorder and use the mouse to complete tasks on the computer. Children benefit also from learning about their own locality when they walk to the nearby sister nursery. They explore and learn about insects when they dig in the garden and show great interest when looking at two ladybirds walking along a plant stem. In these ways the learning environment offers opportunities for children to develop their interest in the wider world as well as their immediate community.

Children are developing good skills in making three dimensional models from recycled materials and also when they use construction toys. They are enthusiastic in joining in action songs like The Wheels on the Bus as they pretend with gusto to be the 'mummies' on the bus. They are learning about their bodies through regular music and movement sessions and can successfully negotiate space and follow pathways well as they skilfully negotiate their bikes around the path in the play garden and take part in obstacle races. Opportunities for more able children to climb and develop their gross motor skills are provided for well as children confidently negotiate the slide and the climbing frame outside. They are learning to use small equipment and tools, such as scissors, paint brushes, rollers and musical instruments, as they become competent in finer muscle movements and can skilfully control their eating utensils at lunch time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well into the nursery as practitioners ensure that they have detailed information from parents and carers about each child from the outset. Key workers take time to discuss all aspects of nursery life with them during introductory visits thus helping children to settle smoothly into their new environment. Clear written information about the setting and its organisation is shared so that parents and carers are well informed and which explain all elements in detail. For all children, the key workers communicate with parents and carers both verbally and through the daily written record books. Children's activities and learning experiences are shared with parents and carers through the art work displayed on the walls, newsletters, notices and individual progress reports, open events and at the daily handovers. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children love to take their work home each day to share with family members. As a result, children's self-esteem is boosted as they share their nursery stories at home. Children feel secure because of the positive approach their parents and carers display towards the setting and the friendly relationships they can see exist.

Children are confident and their self-esteem is promoted effectively by practitioners who help children to feel good about themselves, encouraging them to contribute positively to their nursery community. They thrive on the close relationships with their key workers and know that they will have their contributions valued as they eagerly share their art work or their success at completing the game on the computer. Their decision making is actively encouraged as they make choices in their play and are supported to contribute at story and registration times, thus promoting their confidence and self-esteem as they learn to take turns and answer to their name. Children learn about difference by having access to a variety of play resources and books as well as taking part in planned activities and celebrations. In these ways, all children develop their awareness of other people's differences and similarities.

Children show good care and concern for one another. They understand what friendship means and how they can support each other as staff guide their interactions. For example, children help one another when sharing tasks such as helping to tidy the toys before lunch and at snack time. They behave very well and imitate good role modelling from practitioners who frequently praise children and support them as they come to learn about how their behaviour may affect others. Children chat socially together and discuss and laugh out loud when they gather together, for example, at meal times or when playing games outside. Children relax at sleep and rest times as they listen to quiet classical music.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Practitioners work well together as a team; they organise the environment effectively and plan a variety of activities both indoors and outside that children find fun and exciting. Children are therefore eager to attend and settle well into their play. Because children are supervised effectively, they have opportunities to explore the various activity areas with ease and the ability to make choices with confidence. The staff team are aware of their roles and responsibilities which contribute to the smooth running of the setting, and they work hard at getting to know all the children so all their individual needs can be met effectively.

Documentation is well organised and available to staff and parents alike. The operational plan is detailed and available easily to parents and carers and practitioners along with the setting's policies and procedures. Precise attention is paid at every session to the maintaining of the attendance register and the monitoring of children's movements within the nursery. As a result children's care and well-being is very effectively maintained.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. There is ongoing monitoring by senior staff of the delivery of the foundation stage to three- and four-year-old children. The process of assessment and monitoring of children's progress along the stepping stones requires further development to ensure that children gain maximum benefit in their learning. Strategies are in place to continually develop practitioners' knowledge of the stepping stones and the early learning goals so they can plan and promote children's individual progress towards reaching their full potential.

Regular staff meetings, both formal and informal, are held to build a motivated team. This has a positive effect on the quality of care the children receive. A training needs analysis identifies areas for individual practitioner's development, taking into account the skill base as a whole and across all age ranges. Training relating to the Birth to three matters framework and also other relevant childcare areas, including first aid, are attended by practitioners. Children thus benefit from practitioners who are motivated to extend their professional development so that the care and learning experiences they deliver to children are enriched.

Overall, 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

Since registration, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 that written parental permission is obtained for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure that low tree branches in the outside play area do not pose a risk to children.

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 develop assessment and monitoring tools so that staff can take account of children's individual knowledge, skills and interests when planning for the next steps in their learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk