

Ashcroft & Ramridge Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY278843
Inspection date	23 March 2007
Inspector	Carol Mansell
Setting Address	186 Ashcroft Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 9AB
Telephone number	01582 402 812
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Registered person	Ashcroft & Rambridge Tenants & Residents Ltd.
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Ashcroft and Ramridge Community Nursery opened in 2004 and operates from three rooms in a purpose-built building in Luton, Bedfordshire. A maximum of 46 children may attend the setting at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. The setting also provides wrap around care for 10 children and is open for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from six weeks to under five years on roll. Of these, six children receive funding for early education. Children attend the breakfast club and after school club from five to 11 years. Children come from the local catchment area. The nursery currently a number of children with learning difficulties and also a number who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a level 2 and seven staff are working towards a level 3 qualification. The setting has four volunteers. The setting has support from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The setting is part of a children's centre and provides additional services which are run on satellite sites. These provide health and education promotion for families as well as training for parents.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. They have appropriate policies in place regarding unwell children and ensure that parents adhere to the recommended exclusion times. This helps to protect children from infection. Children benefit, as staff follow strict hand washing procedures, they use an anti-bacterial hand spray regularly and provide wet wipes for babies before and after meals. They encourage the babies to wipe their own faces after the staff have wiped their hands for them. Older children wash their hands after toileting, before meal times and after messy play activities. Staff provide gentle reminders when necessary which helps children to understand simple good health and hygiene practices. Babies and young children have a quiet area to rest or sleep. They have their own bedding when using the travel cots and this is washed regularly. There are occasions when babies and young children are cajoled into staying awake a little bit longer but generally children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs. Children are generally safeguarded as staff ensure the accident and incident forms are completed appropriately. However, staff do not always obtain prior consent from parents before the administration of medications and parents do not sign the record of medications administered to acknowledge the entry. This compromise children's welfare.

Children benefit, as staff offer fresh fruit daily as snacks. They enjoy a wide range of tastes including pear, plum, kiwi fruit, apple and banana. The setting is part of a healthy eating initiative. They receive cooked meals from the adjoining school's kitchens. As a result of a recent parental questionnaire more fresh vegetables have been provided. Therefore the meals have increased in their nutritional value. Staff have a clear understanding of any allergies, intolerances or religious restrictions and ensure these are followed when ordering the meals. Children have a placemat which shows information about any dietary restrictions which ensures children have their health and dietary needs met. Children and babies are encouraged to have drinks regularly. Staff provide beakers of water for the younger children and older ones are able to help themselves to a drink from the water dispenser. This ensures children do not become dehydrated. Children benefit, as staff sit and eat with them at lunch time. This helps to build children's social skills.

Children enjoy participating in a wide range of indoor and outdoor physical activities. Staff ensure children are wrapped up warm before going outside. They have opportunities to use a wide range of outdoor equipment such as, wheeled toys, hoops, balls, skittles and space hoppers. Children confidently ride the wheeled toys around the outside area. They move around mindful of where other children are playing. Staff join in with the play and assist the children with their riding skills, offering lots of praise and encouragement which helps to build their confidence and self-esteem and enhances their physical development. Children enjoy participating in a wide range of indoor activities. They enjoy exploring malleable materials such as, water and cornflour mixture and plasticene. They use mark making resources and enjoy helping the staff to sort out the puzzles drawer. Children enjoy child-led activities for example, they use cotton reels to build towers carefully placing one on top of the other. They enjoy working with other

children to see who can build the tallest tower. This helps to build their social skills and their hand and eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are safeguarded as staff ensure the outdoor area is safe for them to use. They sprinkle salt on ice to ensure it melts leaving a safe surface for the children to play on. Children are generally cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. The staff make sure that suitable floor coverings are used for messy play in the baby room. Staff have taken sensible precautions such as installing a key pad entry system to the nursery room, a stair gate at the doorway of the kitchen and have placed socket covers in the electric points. Babies are generally protected from accidental injuries as anyone entering the baby room must remove their outdoor shoes and staff look through the window and knock on the door before entering to ensure no babies are playing behind the door. However, staff are not always aware of the need to update their risk assessments which may compromise children's safety.

Children benefit, as staff ensure there is ample space for them to move around between activities. Staff encourage the children to think about how they are moving and playing and the possible dangers for other children, such as, alerting them to the dangers of inappropriately climbing on apparatus. This helps children to avoid accidental injuries. All children have access to a wide range of toys and resources. These are stored in appropriate containers and clearly labelled. Children know that they can take the resources out to play with at anytime. Staff suggest that some items may need to be put away before others are taken out. If toys are stored on the window ledge staff make these accessible when babies indicate that they want to play with them. This ensures children are able to make choices and increases their independence skills. Children help the staff to check the toys and resources to make sure they are clean and undamaged. This ensures children have access to safe and suitable equipment. Children enjoy having outings to local facilities, they travel in the settings minibus using appropriate seats and restraints. Children understand the need to stay with the staff at all times. This helps to keep children safe on outings.

Children are generally protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. However, staff are not aware of the procedures to be followed if there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. This compromises children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies enjoy exploring water and cornflour mixture with their hands and mouths. They eagerly put their hands in it and move it around. Staff extend children's play by introducing additional resources such as, cars into the cornflour mixture, which helps to sustain their interest. Babies have built good relationships with the staff. They are happy and contented in the setting and are cared for by familiar adults. This helps them to feel safe and secure. Babies and young children enjoy splashing about in a tray of water. They have sponges and mini mops to explore and experiment with. They squeal with delight and enjoy the social interaction. Children benefit, as the staff plan activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This ensures a wide range of play opportunities are offered to the children. Staff are working towards a systematic approach to record these experiences in order to increase children's development.

Children develop their own games using the available resources. They devise a game rolling the plasticene across the table to each other. They use simple counting sequences encouraged by the staff which helps to develop their mathematical thinking. Staff talk, with the children and encourage them to participate in their favourite songs, rhymes and stories. They use action songs and rhymes in the baby room, providing lots of praise and encouragement. They clap and cheer to help babies realise that their efforts are appreciated. This helps to build their self-esteem and encourages their language development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Children have been receiving funded education for a short period but appear to be making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff generally sustain children's interest in the planned activities and most children focus on the task in hand encouraged by the staff. They ask children open-ended questions which challenges and supports the children's learning. However, the inclusion of all children is not adequately planned and monitored. Staff do not fully identify learning intentions in order to appropriately assess children's progress and all areas of learning are not covered equally which potentially hampers children's learning.

Children enjoy playing in the home corner. They imitate adult behaviour and use their previous experiences to enhance their play. For example, children use the hair brush appropriately and make cups of coffee for themselves and the member of staff. Children invite a member of staff to sit in the examination seat and use the stethoscope 'to see if their heart is alright'. Other children use the seat as a dentist's chair, showing staff how they had to open their mouth at a recent visit to the dentist. This helps children to make sense of their world and enhances their imaginative play. Children support each other in their play. When a glue stick becomes empty they offer 'let me go and get you another one'. Children know the routine well and are helping to settle other children into the group. They show them the different resources and encourage them to play. This helps children to build harmonious relationships.

Children have access to a range of books in the book corner. They choose to look at books throughout the session and enjoy sharing familiar stories at story time. They often ask a member of staff to read to them at other times. Children enjoy having their name cards available so they can use mark making equipment to try and write their name. Some children are able to recognise some letters within their name. They see labels around the setting which helps them to understand that print has meaning. Children spontaneously burst into song as they play. They enjoy singing into the tape recorder and listening as staff play the tape back to them. Children are learning to operate the tape recorder but have not fully understood the need to press the record button before they sing. Children are beginning to show an interest in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and are starting to explore how things work. This helps to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff encourage children to look at heuristic play resources and use these to help them to understand different concepts such as, heavy and light. This helps to develop children's mathematical thinking. However, staff miss opportunities to encourage children to count, for example at registration time. This limits children's opportunities to increase their counting skills. Children use pre-cut shapes and resources previously prepared by the staff which limits their opportunities to make and design their own creations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included in the life of the setting. Children benefit, as staff have a clear awareness of children's development and work with other professionals to provide appropriate care. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging. Children enjoy participating in a variety of planned and spontaneous activities which help them to develop an awareness of the wider society. They celebrate different festivals and try new tastes such as, Asian sweets. Children and staff support children with English as an additional language. They interact throughout the session and find a suitable means of communication. This helps children to become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Children enjoy using resources that offer positive images of different cultures, ethnicity and gender roles. They use different clothing such as saris in the dressing up clothes and have access to different puzzles depicting family groups from other cultures. This helps the children to gain an awareness of difference and diversity.

Children generally behave well and are able to sort out any disagreements with appropriate support from the staff. Children benefit, as the staff use incentives such as stickers and reward charts to help children to achieve manageable goals. This helps children to understand responsible behaviours. Babies and young children are well supported by the staff who successfully use distraction techniques. They encourage children to say sorry if they upset others which helps them to distinguish between right and wrong. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit, as staff welcome them and their parents into the setting. Staff have built good relationships with the parents and share information both verbally and in written form. This ensures parents of young children are aware of the care that has been provided, including the amount of food the children have eaten during the day. This ensures children are cared for appropriately. All parents receive a newsletter providing general information about the setting and tell parents what the topics will be for the next three months. Parents receive information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and know who their children's key workers are. Children benefit, as menu lists in the cloakroom area inform parents of the meals that will be provided and ensures they have opportunities to inform staff of their children's preferences. This helps to ensure children's individual needs are met.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive some information regarding the Foundation Stage. They are invited to a Parents Evening where they can see their children's progress records. Although the newsletter gives parents an idea of the topics for the next few months, staff do not offer suggestions of how parents can extend their children's learning at home. This does not encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning in a meaningful way. Parents complete a simple questionnaire when their children first come into the setting which gives an overview of children's daily needs. This information is not updated when children begin to receive funded nursery education as staff do not actively seek parents views of what their children's interests are outside of the setting. This potentially hampers children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children benefit, as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are protected and cared for by staff with adequate knowledge and understanding of child development. Staffing ratios are maintained at a high level which generally supports children's care, learning and play. The settings policies and procedures generally work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, the setting does not have a suitably qualified manager in place and this compromises children's welfare.

The quality of the leadership and management is satisfactory. The management have a clear vision for the care and education they wish the setting to provide. They involve parents by seeking their views and making appropriate changes when they can. The management have a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of the staff. They are encouraged to attend many different training courses to enhance the provision for the children. They have actively sought training for the Foundation Stage for all staff and work with the local authorities and other professional bodies to evaluate the provision as a whole. Overall, children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure all children are recorded in the register on arrival. The provider has revised her register and this now shows the times of arrival and departure of the children. Parents also sign their children in and out of the setting at the main door. This ensures children are safe and secure.

Complaints since the last inspection

October 2006. An unannounced visit took place following information received relating to National Standards 1: Suitable Person, 2: Organisation and 7: Health not being met. The inspectors found evidence that National Standards 1, 2, 4: Physical Environment and 7 are not being met particularly with regard to records of attendance, children not being provided with clean bedding, ineffective hygiene practices by staff in the nappy changing area, the system for recording complaints from parents and the lack of a suitably qualified and experienced manager. Five actions have been raised.

January 2007. Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 6: Safety, Standard 12: Partnership with parents and Standard 14: Documentation. As a result of the investigation a number of actions were raised. Ofsted are satisfied that 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the manager has at least a level 3 qualification appropriate to the post and at least 2 years experience of working in a day care setting
- obtain prior consent from parents to administer medication and ensure that parents sign the record book to acknowledge the entry
- ensure staff are aware of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures effectively and ensure all staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- ensure planning clearly states the learning intentions and shows differentiation in order to meet children's individual learning needs
- devise and implement a systematic approach to observations and assessments to ensure that all areas of learning are covered appropriately
- ensure parents views are sought, valued and acted on in order to establish children's interests and abilities and provide information to encourage parents to continue play and learning activities at home

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