



Abbeyfields Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126949
Inspection date	17 January 2007
Inspector	Annie Williams
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Registered person	Matthew Howell and Sharon Howell
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abbeyfields Day Nursery is privately owned and opened in 1985. The nursery has access to three floors, a separate baby unit, an office, toilets, staff room, a kitchen and an outside area. The nursery is divided into a toddler room for children aged 18 months to two years, a nursery room for children aged two years to three years, a pre-school for children aged three to five years and a separate baby unit for babies nought to 18 months. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding towns. A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year. Children attend a variety of sessions. Freshly cooked meals and snacks are included and all children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 130 children on roll; of these, 48 children are funded to receive nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 members of staff; of these, 17 members of staff including the provider hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Meal times are a social occasion where children are actively involved because practitioners have given careful consideration to children's needs and abilities, enabling even the toddlers to serve themselves from the table. Children enjoy an excellent range of nutritious meals that are freshly prepared and cooked on site. Careful thought is given to food and drink to promote children's health, for example, a balanced menu is produced each week, children have fruit everyday and only milk or water is offered. Consequently, children learn to make healthy choices and know about healthy foods. Babies' needs are met sensitively and their individual routines are respected; they sleep and feed according to their individual schedules provided by parents.

The premises are clean. Effective procedures help to prevent cross infection and sustain good levels of hygiene throughout the setting. This includes practitioners wearing disposable gloves for nappy changing, wiping surfaces with antibacterial spray and individual bed linen provided and washed systematically after each use. Particular attention is paid to the cleanliness of toys and equipment in the baby unit to contribute to the babies' good health.

All but one practitioner has up-to-date first aid training and parental permission is obtained to enable the setting to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Therefore, practitioners are able to act in the best interest of children in the event of an illness or accident. Through the daily routine, children learn about personal hygiene. Even the babies wash their hands before meals and after nappy changes. Older children are able to articulate why we wash hands stating 'to get the germs off'.

Children throughout the nursery play outside everyday if the weather permits. They run and play in the garden and use a range of equipment that promotes their large muscle development. Because they do not have their own area to keep them safe, babies have less chance to play in the garden. Nevertheless babies are able to freely hone their physical skills in the baby unit; they pull to stand and cruise around the furniture, crawl and climb with the gentle support of practitioners where necessary.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting is calm and pleasantly decorated, contributing to a welcoming environment. Children's art work and photographs are displayed showing them that they are valued by

practitioners and providing them with a sense of belonging in the setting. Toys and equipment are kept clean and checked regularly to promote children's care, learning and play.

The premises are safe and secure because the provider applies rigorous risk assessments. Adults can only enter the building with practitioners consent and there are effective procedures for arrival and collection to protect children.

A clear policy underpins practitioner's sound knowledge of procedures for outings and lost and uncollected children to contribute to children's well-being. Fire drills are carried out periodically and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building to promote children's safety. A clear knowledge and understanding of the recommendations for sleeping babies and practitioners understanding of child protection means that children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and babies are secure and settled because practitioners are gentle, kind and caring in their approach towards them. An effective key worker system is in place and as a result practitioners know the children and babies and their needs very well. Practitioners discover from parents the games their babies enjoy and use these as a basis for play to help them settle and enjoy their time at the setting.

Babies and children are provided with opportunities to explore wet play and delight in sensory exploration and mess making with a range of materials, such as baked beans, crazy foam and jelly. Exploration is encouraged by providing objects, such as plastic bottles filled with water and coloured pebbles. Sensory baskets and 'magic bags' contain objects for children and babies to explore and investigate. Mirrors are carefully placed in the rooms to help babies and young children to explore what they look like and who they are.

A variety of role play resources encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings and help them make sense of the world; children pretend to be doctors and nurses in the hospital and look after dollies in the nursery school. The framework Birth to three matters is developing throughout the nursery to help practitioners plan and provide a range of experiences for babies and young children's development. Children are able to make some choices in their play but not all toys and resources are readily accessible to the children to provide them with complete independence in choosing from the full range available.

Nursery Education

Children really enjoy their imaginative play, for example, the shop and dressing up; they pretend to be a butterfly flapping their wings or Irish dancers dressed up as Snow White and a Lion. Children explore using a range of materials, such as corn flour, paint, crazy foam and pasta. A range of displays within the pre-school show how children have explored different art and craft activities. The pre-cut templates used clearly show practitioners hard work, however, this does not allow children to represent their unique perception of the world unrestricted by adults.

Children are confident and readily approach adults and their friends. They clearly enjoy each other's company and play together. Practitioners respond to children's achievements with praise and encouragement, such as 'good cutting' and 'good balancing' and as a result, children are generally well behaved. There are occasions, however when children are not fully engaged in play and display inappropriate behaviour unseen by practitioners and therefore unchallenged. Children learn to share and take turns through the routine, for example, they share play dough and take turns in serving their meals.

The environment reflects the importance of print through signs, labels and notices. Letter sounds are introduced to the children through the Jolly Phonic songs and the letter of the week, enabling children to link sounds to letters. The book area has recently been developed but is still not as clearly defined as other areas and some books are out of children's reach, as a result, children do not make the most of the books on offer. Children enjoy playing in the writing area and make marks on their paper with different writing materials but the writing area is not always attractive and carefully prepared to encourage children's participation. A further range of tools are available and used to develop children's small muscle skills, such as glue spreaders, construction and scissors. Children are very confident speakers and regularly approach staff and friends to chat. They recognise their names because name recognition is a regular feature of the day, for example, self registration. Counting is a usual element of the routine. As a result, children count confidently. They learn about simple calculation through their active involvement in simple number rhymes, such as five currant buns in the baker's shop and five little speckled frogs. Children explore shape in the environment as they help to fill and empty containers, handle objects and complete puzzles. Practitioners have abandoned previous practice of teaching mathematical concepts through work sheets in favour of practical activities. Water and sand play is clearly popular amongst the children and encourages them to become familiar with simple mathematical language and concepts.

The setting has a computer which is a firm favourite amongst the children. Children are able to complete simple programmes to support their learning, such as 'Fireman Sam'. Children receive opportunities to explore and investigate using a wide range of materials, such as jelly, pasta, sand and water. They become involved in growing projects to develop their awareness of change and a clear routine enables children to develop a sense of time and know what will happen next. Plans are developing to introduce sand timers to further promote children's sense of time and to manage turn taking at popular activities, such as the computer.

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners are developing their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to support children in their learning. Planning and assessment is evolving amongst the new staff team within the pre-school. The supervisor of the room takes responsibility for planning the activities and therefore not all practitioners are familiar with the learning objectives. Even though many children start at the nursery as babies, pre-school practitioners do not yet make effective use of the useful information gained from previous experiences in the setting to identify children's continuing learning needs. Observations are undertaken on children to identify next steps but children's development records do not fully reflect their abilities to enable effective planning and challenge for all children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Babies experience occasional outings in the local community to enable them to develop an awareness of wider world; they visit the local park and the duck pond to feed the ducks. During fine weather babies experience outdoor play which is carefully managed so that the older children's play does not impact on the babies. Children are well behaved in response to practitioners praise and encouragement. Pre-school children are aware of the rules and are able to describe them and are generally well behaved. All children are welcomed into the setting and their personal cultures are recognised by practitioners through an effective partnership with parents. Planned outings enable children to find out about the local community and visitors into the setting, such as the zoo lab and the dentist provide children with a knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Children find out about different cultures through planned festivals and resources. Some areas of the environment include photographs and posters of differences to further extend children's awareness of the diversity in our society. Print reflecting different home languages of children attending the pre-school was recently pulled down and has not yet been re-located. Practitioners have learnt some special words to demonstrate to the children that they and their home language are valued. A special educational needs coordinator is in post within the setting and is able to provide the necessary support to practitioners in caring for and teaching children with LDD. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are extremely happy with the care provided by the setting. They are greeted warmly by practitioners who are friendly in their interactions. Each day parents receive a 'hand over' by practitioners, which involves sharing details of their child's day such as, what their child has eaten. In the baby unit, toddler room and nursery room parents are provided with a contact book containing written details about their child's day. The contact book is available in the pre-school but is not as popular. An attractive prospectus, posters, displays and regular newsletters keep parents informed of the nursery practice and procedures. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Although development records are kept on each child detailing their progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, they are not regularly shared with parents. Parents and practitioners talk to each other every day about their child's care within the pre-school. However, opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's development records, share what they know about their child and become involved in their child's learning are not fully explored.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The practitioner team within the pre-school is new. They work hard to provide a balanced range of activities for the children. Practitioners meet regularly and are supported in their role by the manager. Planning and assessment is evolving in the pre-school. Systems to monitor review and evaluate the consistency of teaching and the children's assessment records are not yet fully effective to ensure children are sufficiently challenged in the educational programme.

Practitioners work well together and are a happy team. They are well supported in their role within the setting and meet regularly to discuss and improve practice. The provider is able to identify strengths and weaknesses within in the setting to develop outcomes for children. Systems to review, monitor and evaluate include staff appraisal and staff meetings. In addition there is a CCTV camera situated in the office which is used to reassure parents and as a useful training tool and sometimes the basis for improvement.

A robust and rigorous recruitment procedure ensures that all adults working at the setting are suitable. Most practitioners are qualified and therefore are familiar with children's care, learning and play needs. The attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration and the certificate is prominently displayed to keep parents and visitors informed of the setting's conditions. With the exception of meal times in the pre-school room the routine is well balanced to include elements of active play, quiet play, meals and rests according to the babies and children's needs. Consequently, children are happy and settled at the setting. Policies and procedures are included in the induction programme and are therefore understood by practitioners in providing care. All the required records for the safe and efficient management of the setting are well maintained and stored securely for the welfare and care of children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made related to practitioner's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children and documentation within the setting. Practitioners have a clear knowledge and understanding of child protection and therefore children's welfare is safeguarded. All the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting and for the welfare, care and learning of children is maintained correctly, contributing to positive outcomes for children.

There were three recommendations made relating to nursery education. These were to plan and provide more opportunities for children to regularly experience role-play and musical instruments, plan and provide more opportunities for more able children to experience suitable challenges in all area of learning, and plan and provide more opportunities for the outdoor area. With the exception of weakness in ensuring all children are sufficiently challenged, the setting has been successful in addressing these recommendations and promoting positive outcomes for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- improve the organisation of meal times so that children do not spend too long waiting
- arrange toys and equipment to make them more accessible to the 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):

- develop observations to inform the planning, based on children's interests and their next steps in learning
- improve assessment records to provide an accurate picture of children's development and ensure all children are appropriately challenged in the activities provided
- improve consistency of teaching and children's assessment records by developing rigorous systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the nursery education
- ensure all the useful information gathered about children's development as they move through the whole of the setting is used effectively in pre-school.

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