



## Attwood Farm Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	959223
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Fler Wright
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Attwood Farm Nursery School opened in 2001. It is privately owned and operates from a converted barn near Herstmonceux, East Sussex. Children have access to a two secure outside play areas and surrounding farmland. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 16:00, 47 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered to care for 34 children at any one time and there are currently 55 children aged from one to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery also cater for children up to the age of eight years during the school holidays. The nursery are able to offer support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to those children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight staff. Five of the staff, including the owner and supervisor hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member staff is about to start working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Well established hygiene routines for children of all ages help to ensure they learn about the importance of washing their hands to help maintain good health from an early age. Staff try to be vigilant with regards to hygienic procedures although the soap is not always available and children occasionally use the same water for washing their hands. The environment is clean and tidy and children learn about how to keep their teeth healthy and why they should visit the dentist. Children who are infectious do not attend, thus preventing the spread of contagious ailments. Parents have easy access to the list of illnesses and exclusion periods helping to ensure they are well informed of the procedures followed at the nursery. Children are independent and see to their personal needs themselves. For example, they wipe their own noses using strategically placed tissues, and visit the toilet on their own, only asking for support if they need it. This encourages their independence and understanding of being healthy. Most of the staff have attended an appropriate first aid course, and there is also a qualified nurse on the premises, helping to ensure children are well protected in the event of a medical emergency.

Children have access to a variety of fresh fruit on a daily basis that parents bring in for them to share. This is supplemented with a low-fat biscuit on occasion to help ensure their dietary needs are met. Children learn a lot from snack time as staff talk about the types of fruit children have bought in, and children help to cut it up and hand it out, increasing their knowledge and independence. Hot meals are served at lunch times and older children usually help with the serving of these, helping to ensure they gain the most from the experience. Children of all ages often ask for second helpings, showing they enjoy the meals provided and their dietary needs are met. Children know they can access drinks at all times, and have the confidence to ask staff should they feel thirsty. Children help to pour their own drinks at meal times, encouraging their motor skills and independence.

Children enjoy a range of activities that help to develop their physical skills. They enjoy movement sessions, and have daily access to the garden in order to get some fresh air and regularly go for walks on the surrounding farmland. Older children have access to a lovely purpose built outdoor play area where they are able to practise their balancing and climbing skills on a daily basis. Children are confident when selecting and using small equipment such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes and show good co-ordination when jumping and running.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a warm, clean and welcoming environment with photographs and displays of their work showing that staff value their contributions. There are three main rooms arranged over two floors that are organised effectively to ensure children are able to

move around their dedicated play space freely and safely. Children have safe and independent access to a range of developmentally appropriate resources that are stored appropriately so that children can access them as they please. Each room has a dedicated quiet area with soft carpeting and cushions, helping to create a cosy atmosphere for children to relax and look at books should they wish to do so.

Staff have a sound understanding of safety issues helping to minimise potential hazards around the nursery. The premises are very secure and staff are well deployed, helping to ensure children are well-supervised and safe at all times. Staff know what to do in the event of a fire although the evacuation procedures are not practised at the required minimum intervals, putting children at some risk in the event of an emergency situation, and limiting the ways children learn about staying safe.

Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take should they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures they quickly recognise when a child is in danger and can act in the child's best interest.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy, relaxed and enjoy the time they spend at the nursery. They relate well to staff, and confidently approach them for support indicating trusting relationships are built. They participate in a good range of exciting activities and worthwhile experiences such as gardening, feeding farm animals and learning about road safety using role play. Sensory experiences such as cornflakes, oats, flour and weetabix are also on offer and help towards ensuring children of all ages make good progress in their development.

Children in the older rooms enjoy a well organised circle time each morning where they learn and reinforce what they know by talking about the days of the week, the weather, and their own lives. Staff use the opportunity to question children appropriately and further children's learning.

Children have access to good quality, stimulating toys that provide balance and challenge. They are organised to encourage children to take initiative and develop increasing confidence and independence as they are easily accessible. The play is predominantly adult-led although children enjoy the activities immensely and they are given regular opportunities for free play. They are interested in the activities and experiences on offer, and spend time concentrating on self-chosen games.

Staff know each child well and are very enthusiastic in their interaction with them. Their genuine caring nature helps children to thrive in the nursery environment. They spend time playing with children, helping them to develop new skills and make progress in their learning. They increase children's self-esteem by using positive interaction, and use effective questioning and make helpful statements in order to further promote children's learning and development. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery as parents fill in keyworker forms. Staff use this information to complete an individual education plan for each child helping to ensure they progress well,

and these are complimented with regular observations enabling staff to have a secure knowledge of each child.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as the activities and experiences on offer cover the areas of learning on a daily basis. The curriculum is well balanced as most staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the owner is a qualified Montessori teacher, increasing the opportunities for children to develop. Planned topics such as 'Africa' or 'springtime' help children to learn about a broad range of subjects. Activities are predominately adult-led although children gain a lot from the experiences as staff are skilled in their interaction with them. Staff know each child well as they record daily observations that are used to plan the next steps in their learning. However, the profiles used to correlate this information are not regularly updated, making it difficult to see exactly how each child has progressed during their time at the nursery.

Children are developing good relationships with others and get on well with peers and staff. Staff listen with interest to children's thoughts and stories, and ask lots of open-ended questions and make thought-provoking statements, helping to extend learning. Children are well-mannered and patiently wait their turn during snack time and sit for extended periods at circle time as they are totally engrossed in the sessions. Children put their own coats and shoes on when going outside increasing their feeling of independence. They enjoy being read to, and listen with interest to stories. They know their phonics, and children are able to write their names on their work using correctly formed letters.

Children are confident in counting numerals 1 to 10 and beyond, and many recognise the numbers on the number line. They are given many opportunities by staff to recognise numbers, calculate and use subtraction in everyday situations. For example, when deciding how many boys and girls there are and adding the groups together to get the total number. Children are starting to show an interest in information technology, and show good exploration and investigation skills when participating in activities such as looking at plants and bulbs. They use good language to describe the parts of a flower and know that soil and water helps things to grow. They have a good understanding of past and present, frequently discussing people, places and events in their lives, especially at circle times. Children have free access to a variety of creative materials and enjoy experimenting with different media such as pencils and paints during their play. Children in the Gosling's room have free access to dressing up clothes helping to ensure they use their imaginations frequently, and the older children upstairs have access to a playhouse and enjoy putting bandages on one another when role-playing as doctors and nurses.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff encourage all children to participate in the activities and experiences provided, helping to ensure they have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. The environment is warm and welcoming with displays of children's work, showing staff value their contributions.

The designated special educational needs co-ordinator has an appropriate understanding of her role and responsibilities helping to ensure children's individual needs are met. There are a range of resources and activities available to promote diversity, helping to increase children's understanding of anti-discriminatory practice and the wider world. Topics such as 'Africa' inspire children as they are able to wear national dress, talk about the culture, the climate and the animals that live there, as well as learn some Swahili.

Children are well behaved and benefit from lots of praise and encouragement from staff to help build their confidence and self-esteem. Children show an understanding of working co-operatively, of each other's needs and of responsible behaviour as they share popular resources, and are willing to help each other and wait their turn during group times.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are very happy with the care provided and particularly like the staff and the activities. They are also pleased about the way their children progress. Parents provide appropriate and relevant information about their children to the staff in the form of keyworker sheets that help staff to find out where children's starting points are, and plan the next steps in their learning. Annual parental consultations and termly reports help to ensure parents are kept very well informed of their child's progress and are an effective opportunity for both parties to share information. Children take it in turns to take home the weekend book or stuffed toy and draw and write about what they have done, helping parents to feel involved with what's going on at the nursery. Staff speak to parents daily about how their children have been, and the white board in the entrance hall effectively summarises what each room have been doing during the day, helping to establish an effective partnership. Information about the Foundation Stage is shared with parents in the prospectus although it does not currently include any information about Birth to three, slightly limiting the opportunities for parents to learn more about this framework.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

All of the required documentation is in place, and is complemented with a variety of additional paperwork, helping to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. However, some of the policies are basic and require updating in order to bring them in line with current guidance and good practice. For example, the complaints procedure, special needs policy and the register amongst others. Staff say they are aware of the need to maintain confidentiality when completing records such as the accident book.

The nursery is relatively well organised, and the space time and resources are well utilised. However, the fire procedures are basic and do not meet the minimum requirements putting children at a slight risk in the event of an emergency. Children receive appropriate adult support to help them feel secure and confident as staffing ratios are met and more than half of the staff have an appropriate childcare qualification.

Leadership and management is good. Staff are passionate about their roles and the children they care for. Clear aims reflect a commitment to providing high quality care and education and generally effective communication links help to ensure a consistent, stimulating and well-balanced programme is available to all children. Staff have a strong desire to improve the

quality of the setting. Overall, staff meet the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the nursery were asked to consider enhancing the book corners to make them more inviting to children to encourage them to access books more frequently; ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote positive images of disability and to ensure that the child protection procedure includes the policy for allegations made against staff members. On the funded side, they were asked to improve assessments and recording to provide a clear link with the stepping stones and early learning goals that informs (1) children's next steps in their learning and (2) future planning; look to improve parents' continual involvement in their child's learning and ensure the balance of the stepping stones within the planning and everyday activities.

Since the last inspection, the book areas have been made more inviting thus encouraging their use, and the range of activities and resources available to promote equality have increased, helping children to learn more about the wider world. The child protection policy has been updated to include the procedure to follow if an allegation was made against a member of staff which helps to clarify it to parents and staff should this scenario occur. The planning and observation system has been improved, although the profiles require updating more frequently to ensure children's progress through the stepping stones is easily tracked. Parents are very involved with their child's learning - they attend regular parents evenings, receive daily updates and highly praise the way their children progress. Each of the stepping stones are included in the planning and staff ensure all of the areas of learning are encouraged on a daily basis helping children to progress well.

### **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 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 fire drills are carried out at the required intervals
- update policies and procedures in line with current guidance

### **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):

- improve the planning to include more child-led activities and ensure all children's profiles are updated regularly so that it is clear how they are progressing in their learning

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)