



## Abacus Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY335501
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Teresa Ann Clark
<b>Setting Address</b>	Abacus Nursery, 44 Neal Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, OL6 6PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 3440068
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	J and K Nursery's LTD
<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 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?

Abacus Day Nursery has been registered since 2006. It operates from a single storey building in the Ashton-under-Lyne area of Tameside. Children have access to four play rooms and fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

A maximum of 71 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 07.30 until 18.00 and closes for one week between Christmas and New Year. There are currently 60 children on roll. Of these, 18 children are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports children who have English as an additional language.

There are 12 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, eight hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

There are generally effective hygiene procedures in place, such as staff wearing gloves and aprons for nappy changing and regular cleaning of toys, which helps prevent the spread of infection. Children learn about personal hygiene as part of the routine. For example, they wash their hands before meals and after visiting the toilet. The nursery operates an effective sick child policy which ensures children are protected from illness and infection. However, the storage of children's dummies and bottles does not promote the safety and welfare of children. For example, bottles are not clearly labelled to ensure babies are given the correct formulae and dummies are left lying about uncovered. The documentation in relation to children receiving medication does not clearly show that parents have given prior written consent for children to receive medication. This also poses an element of risk to children's welfare.

Procedures to respect children's dietary requirements are in place and copies of this information is within all areas of the nursery and also held by the cook. This ensures children receive the food they require and ensures they remain healthy. Children and babies attending the nursery receive meals and snacks that are generally healthy. Opportunities are provided for babies and young children to feed themselves using fingers, spoons and forks. Meals are served at specific times during the day. However, baby room staff accommodate babies' individual feed routines. Children are offered regular drinks to keep refreshed and hydrated, these include fresh drinking water. Although, some children are given juice at the request of parents.

Babies' individual sleep routines are respected and they are able to sleep safely during the day because staff make regular checks and provide individual bed linen. Children, including the babies have insufficient opportunities to access the outdoor area. As a consequence, they do not benefit from regular fresh air to promote their good health and opportunities to use outdoor equipment is limited.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from bright and spacious rooms with a good deal of natural light. The organisation of space in the baby room allows children to explore their environment safely. The pre-school room is generally well organised to promote children's independence, with most resources accessible and some defined learning areas for children to develop their own play ideas. However, the organisation of the Tigger and Piglet room is not stimulating and children have limited choice because activities are mostly set out by staff. Many resources in the Tigger room are stored out of children's reach, on high shelves or in cupboards. The home corners are not inviting because the equipment to support this area is stored in boxes, which are not easily accessible for young children.

Children are kept safe due to effective security measures. The premises are secure as doors are kept locked and visitors are signed in and out of the building. Risk assessments are carried out and measures, such as door handles being out of children's reach, finger guards on doors and

safety gates contribute towards keeping children safe. Regular fire drills are completed, which ensures children remain calm and know what to do in the event of an emergency. The nursery has a good range of resources and equipment, including suitable cots and highchairs for young babies. Toys and equipment are safe and suitable, these are regularly cleaned and checked to ensure they do not pose a risk to children's safety.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a satisfactory understanding about their role and responsibility with regard to child protection issues. All relevant information and contact details are in place. A written policy informs parents about the role and responsibility of the nursery to keep children safe. However, this has not been updated to reflect the recent changes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and generally well settled in the nursery. They separate well from their parents with reassurance and cuddles from staff. They wave goodbye to their parents through the window and soon settle to the nursery routine. Staff are developing confidence in using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan a satisfactory range of activities and experiences for young children. However, some staff are not confident in talking and listening to children which means opportunities for children's learning is not maximised. Children are involved with a range of appropriate toys and resources, which are set out by staff and they move freely between the activities. They experiment with glue as they arrange different shapes and materials on to the paper. They enjoy exploring the texture of paint and develop their hand-eye coordination as they use paint brushes to mix colours and create their own pictures. Singing familiar rhymes and songs is enjoyed by all the children as part of the daily routine.

Babies are generally happy and content. They benefit from warm and caring relationships with their key worker. Staff get to know the babies well and respond to their individual needs, for example, they know when they are tired or hungry. Resources in the baby room are laid out to encourage young children to develop their gross motor skills. They enjoy pulling themselves up using the standing bar and tapping their reflection in the mirror. Babies enjoy making connections as they press buttons and turn switches and are engaged by the outcome of cause and effect toys. Space is organised so mobile babies can freely explore, but ensuring the safety of non mobile babies who can play safely in a separate area.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are developing their understanding about the Foundation Stage, but they are not always sure what children are expected to learn from activities because they are not secure with their knowledge and how children learn. For example, during the cornflour activity staff lead the activity and do not involve children by letting them add the water or questioning them. As a result, children move away from the activity after a short time and opportunities for their learning are limited. There are new planning systems in place which staff are becoming familiar with and regular observations are carried out to complete children's assessments. However, the links between assessments and planning are not yet developed to ensure children's next steps are identified. Relationships are good

between the staff and children. When a member of staff enters the room a child puts her arms around her and says 'I missed you'.

Children are developing some independence as they choose where they want to play and take themselves to the bathroom. They are learning to take turns when playing, for example, one child says to another 'You have one more turn then it's my go'. Children confidently ask staff for assistance and help with activities. They enjoy looking at books and have their favourite stories. Children ask the inspector to read 'Don't put your fingers in the jelly Nelly' and eagerly join in with the familiar rhymes. They are beginning to recognise their names with the use of name cards and older more able children are attempting to write their name. When looking at the name cards they sound out familiar letters in each other's names 'My name begins with a J'. They practise their mark making skills as they complete their work books with their news.

Children are developing an understanding about numbers and simple problem solving. For example, when sharing out the dominoes and children have four each a child says 'You need one more to make five'. They count the letters in their name and the number of children sat at the table for lunch. They describe different shapes as they explore objects in the feely bag, for example, they describe the objects as round, circle or oblong. However, the lack of resources limits children's understanding about size and measure. Children use their imagination well as they construct the farm, a child says out loud 'This can be the roof of the house and this can be the baby's chair' as he fits the pieces together on the board. They learn about change through activities, such as baking and growing seeds. There are insufficient resources for children to explore and find out how things work.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing some understanding of diversity through a satisfactory range of resources which include jigsaws, books and some dressing up clothes. The inclusion of some planned activities enable children to develop an understanding of their own community and those of other cultures. The children have been learning about Chinese New Year. Discussions with parents establish children's individual needs and there are systems in place to record these. Children bring their own comforters from home which help them feel secure, for example, one child keeps his teddy bear close by.

Children are developing an understanding about what is right and wrong. Staff use appropriate methods to manage children's behaviour and the use of praise and encouragement fosters children's self-esteem and confidence. They are learning to share and take turns with support from staff. Older children are polite and well mannered, using please and thank you to staff and each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff provide a welcoming atmosphere and have warm and friendly relationships with parents. Parent's wishes regarding the care that their children receive are respected, thereby, providing consistency and continuity of care for children. There are suitable procedures to inform parents about the provision including a welcome pack which includes most policies and procedures. They also receive regular newsletters and are invited to parent's evenings. Information is also shared verbally at the beginning and end of the day which helps provide continuity and

consistency of care for children. Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. They are informed about the education provision and a shared reading scheme helps parents to be involved in their children's learning. Written reports and the sharing of children's development files keeps parents up dated about their children's progress and achievements. Parents are invited to contribute their own ideas and suggestions to children's assessments and reports.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Recruitment and vetting procedures work adequately to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by suitable staff. An initial induction procedure ensures staff are clear about policies and procedures of the nursery. Staffing levels are organised to ensure the nursery is within ratios and children receive appropriate levels of attention and support. All policies and procedures are in place, but these require updating to conform to current legislation. The register in the nursery does not always reflect accurately the children present at any one time. The parents are responsible for recording the times of attendance and this is not always accurate. As staff rely on this for a record in the event of a fire, children's safety is at risk.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The owner and manager work directly with the children. The provision is under new ownership and is going through a period of change. The owner acknowledges there are areas for improvement and a development plan is in place. Recent changes include the improvement of the learning environment for the pre-school children. The setting is receiving regular support from the local authority to help improve the provision. However, there are no systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of the education provision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the 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 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**

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve hygiene practices in relation to children's dummies and feeding bottles and ensure these are stored appropriately to ensure children's safety and welfare
- improve the organisation of Tiggers and Piglets room to provide a stimulating environment where children can make choices about activities and develop their own play ideas
- improve the quality of practitioner's interaction with children so they make the most of all opportunities to develop children's learning and thinking (also applies to nursery education)
- review the system for recording children's attendance to ensure registers clearly show when children are present
- ensure all policies and procedures are up to date and conform to current legislation, improve the documentation for medication to clearly show parents have given prior written consent for medication to be administered 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):

- ensure all staff working with the children have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn
- provide resources to promote children's understanding about size and measure and for children to find out how things work
- provide regular opportunities for children to play outdoors to promote their physical development and ensure the outdoor environment is planned to include all aspects of the curriculum (also applies to care)
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the planned programme of activities.

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