



# The Academy Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY341607
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Anne Rice / Abigail Caroline Cunningham
<b>Setting Address</b>	1 Hartwith Way, Harrogate, HG3 2XA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 569400
<b>E-mail</b>	fccc.academy@virgin.net
<b>Registered person</b>	First Class Child Care 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 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?

First Class Child Care Limited provides full day care at The Academy in Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Children are accommodated in four areas according to their ages and stages of development. There is a baby room, tweenie room, toddler room and a pre-school room. Bathroom and changing facilities are accessible and an enclosed outdoor area is available.

A maximum of 80 children may attend aged from three months up to five years. The nursery is open all year round, Monday to Friday from 07.30 to 18.30. There are currently 127 children aged from five months to four years on roll. Of these 38 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and are drawn from the local area and wider community. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 22 staff. The majority of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and three members of staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from an advisory teacher and the emphasis is on learning through play.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is inadequate.

The children benefit from the diet they receive as meals and snacks are healthy and nutritious, for example, the children have macaroni cheese with bacon and leeks for lunch. The nursery employs a cook, a menu is displayed for parents to see and meals are freshly prepared. Children have independent access to drinks at all times and babies are offered drinks regularly. All staff are fully aware of individual dietary requirements and preferences which are discussed in full with parents. The staff treat mealtimes as an opportunity to help children enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves. Young children have many opportunities to feed themselves using fingers, forks and spoons.

The staff do take some positive steps to promote the good health of children, for example, there is liquid soap and paper towels available in the toilets and staff wear gloves and aprons during nappy changing. The nappy changing mats are kept clean and in good condition. Additionally, staff wipe tables down using anti-bacterial spray prior to children eating meals. The staff are good role models, they wash their hands after toileting, nappy changing and before serving food. The children are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating. However, at sleep time, some children go to sleep on a large quilt which they share with each other and the quilt cover is not washed until the end of the week. As a result, this practice does not protect the children from infection. Plus, the sand pit in the outside play area is open to contamination as this is not covered.

Children are made to feel special by key persons and parents handling young babies directly to each other at the beginning and end of the day, for example, staff shifts are organised so there is a familiar member of staff available from each room. Furthermore, staff from the same room are not allowed to be on leave at the same time. Staff have flexible routines which allow young children to pursue their interests which reduces the incidents when children may feel frustration and conflict. Practitioners recognise that children need a predictable environment in which to feel safe which encourages independence. Staff are aware that changes of staff or moving to another room may temporarily affect confidence, for example, when a child is due to move rooms, a letter goes home explaining the process and a familiar member of staff visits the new room with the child until they are fully settled.

Very good arrangements are in place for administering first aid and medication, there are fully stocked first aid kits available in the office and most of the staff hold a current first aid certificate. Written policies are in place regarding sickness, accidents and administration of medication; these are fully implemented and shared with all parents.

The children have frequent opportunities for physical play, both inside and outside. The setting extends opportunities for physical play and development by arranging for external specialists

to provide soccer and dance sessions on a weekly basis. Older children enjoy playing inside, jumping between several large circles positioned like stepping stones on the floor. The children confidently negotiate a pathway, for example, while running and weaving around the cones at high speed and skilfully manage to avoid knocking these over. More able children are beginning to recognise the importance of being healthy, they know how to warm up and stretch their muscles and that exercise is good for them. Children experiment with different ways of moving, such as jumping and running. Children are beginning to recognise the importance of being healthy, for example, a three-year-old explains that 'sweet corn and bananas are good for you'.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Although the staff carry out regular risk assessments, they have failed to identify some risks and hazards. This is because the staff have not removed hazards from the outdoor play area, such as the water butt and stagnant water. Additionally, the laundry which is used to store dangerous substances has not been made inaccessible to children, resulting in the children being exposed to danger.

Some safety measures are in place, for example, socket covers, safety gates and a secure outdoor play area. The children are developing a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations regularly. The children are supervised closely at all times, are unable to leave the premises unattended and are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted. The system for managing access to the premises is good as unauthorised persons are unable to gain entry and there is a record of visitors. Children are protected well from possible abuse or neglect. Staff have access to child protection contact details, such as social services. Most staff have received child protection training and all staff have received staff induction training which covers the implementation of the setting's child protection procedure.

Sleeping babies are frequently checked and the staff discuss sleep routines and preferred sleeping techniques and equipment with parents. However, not all the equipment used for sleeping babies meets parental preferences, as there is only one cot available in the baby room. Some babies and young children are sleeping in equipment that is not designed for this purpose and is bad for their posture, such as the baby swing. Mobile-babies and toddlers are also using sleep equipment which is not suitable for use, for example, large play mats that are worn in places. Toys are stimulating, fun, interesting and provide sufficient challenge for the children, for example, good quality wooden toys and an extensive range of heuristic materials are available. As a result, the children are interested in and want to play with what is provided.

The children are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment. The premises are currently being improved, for example, there is new flooring on the ground floor. Children's work and photographs of children playing are displayed attractively on the walls in the playrooms. Parents, children and visitors are warmly welcomed on arrival. The children enjoy coming to the nursery, they settle well and are happy and confident. The reception area is informative, the setting's policies and procedures, registration certificate, menu and staff qualifications are on display.

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

The provision is good.

Some staff working with the younger children have attended 'Birth to three matters' training. They confidently implement the framework and planning and assessment systems are effective for this age group. Young children enjoy attention and being physically close to other children and familiar adults, for example, while being bottle fed. In the baby room, the babies gravitate to the sensory area, where they play with for example, wooden toys and beads, a bubble tube, wooden clothes pegs and other natural materials. The staff plan and provide a broad range of practical activities which develop children's knowledge and understanding. Activities are presented in an interesting and thoughtful way, for example, baking gingerbread biscuits. Staff encourage children to try new activities, such as playing with coloured spaghetti and shaving foam.

The staff are very interested in the children, what they say and do. They consistently talk and listen to them, ask questions to make them think and they respond enthusiastically giving praise and encouragement, for example, while going down the slide. Children are fully involved in their activities, such as playing with the sand, water and while looking at books. Staff talk to young children explaining what they are doing which encourages children to link words with actions. They create inviting areas for children to sit and chat with friends which encourages them to be with others and make conversation, for example in the various book areas and the sensory area within the baby room.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching is appropriate for all groups of children. Practitioners understand the children's needs and provide a broad range of activities and experiences. The main member of staff working directly with the funded children has a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, uses a good range of teaching methods and has a good understanding of how young children learn and progress. However, some of the other staff who are working with the funded children are less skilled in applying the curriculum. Assessment records clearly show the children's approach to learning, their achievements and progress. Additionally, these clearly identify what needs to be included in planning for children's individual next steps in learning. Staff have demonstrated their commitment by their attention to planning, they monitor this to check that there is a balanced programme over time. As a result, there is comprehensive planning in place, which covers all areas of learning. However, there are missed opportunities in some areas of learning for the children to develop their skills and understanding, such as personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and creative development. Practitioners manage the children and their behaviour appropriately. They provide a secure environment which reflects the background of the children. They make good use of their time and resources to support children's learning, for example, all areas are well stocked, all planned activities are taking place and the staff work well together.

Both three and four-year-olds are able to respond to simple instructions, such as jumping. Staff help the children to further develop their vocabulary as they talk about 'Mr Smarty pants'. Children listen to favourite rhymes and join in with repeated refrains, anticipating key events

and important phrases, such as 'ring a ring a roses'. Three-year-olds begin to use talk in imaginary situations, for example, one child says 'I'm going to a restaurant'. They talk activities through, reflecting on and modifying what they are doing. Fun, practical activities for children to link sounds to letters are limited, as the setting mainly uses work sheets to promote this area. All children handle books carefully, hold books the correct way up and turn pages appropriately. More able children can recognise some familiar words as they recognise their names. Children give meaning to marks as they demonstrate emergent writing and more able children can write their own names. More able children can recognise, name and write numerals from one to six and can count to 20. They show an interest in number problems, for example, a three-year-old knows that two bricks add two bricks is four bricks. The children observe and use positional language. They are able to use size language, such as 'big and little'. More able children use language to compare size, such as 'bigger'.

Children show interest in why things happen and how things work, for example, they put objects through the neck of a large plastic bottle to see what will go through. They examine objects and living things to find out more about them, such as shells. Children talk about sound and volume and show an awareness of sound changing. They show an interest in the world, are able to talk about the weather, for example, 'It's windy'. The children realise tools can be used for a purpose as they make marks with pens. They know how to operate a simple programme on the computer. The children learn about other cultures, for example, through looking at books about Passover. Children explore what happens when they mix colours. They enjoy playing musical instruments and making a noise. They enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes. The children play alongside other children engaged in the same theme, for example, hide from the bumble bee. They confidently use their imagination during role play activities. However, overly adult led art and craft activities, hamper the children's creativity in art and design. Overall, the children make sound progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and starting points.

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

The provision is good.

The setting has a good equal opportunities policy, which is clearly visible to parents and visitors as it is displayed in the entrance. This policy is successfully applied since the staff respect the individuality of all the children and meet their needs accordingly. There are, for example, bilingual books to help those children who speak English as well as French and German. There is a good range of toys and books which portray the diversity of the world in a positive light. Very good systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The staff have, for instance, attended additional medical training in order to meet children's specific needs, which clearly demonstrates their commitment to ensuring that all children are able to access the nursery.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The parents receive clear and detailed information about the educational provision through regular newsletters, notice boards and the policy file. Parents have good opportunities to share what they know about their child through discussions with staff and regular parents evenings. They are well informed about their child's achievements and progress. The parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. They are

able to add their comments and observations to their child's profile. However, they are unable to easily access these records, due to where they are stored.

The staff have a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour, which is reflected in the setting's behaviour policy. The staff are skilled in encouraging good behaviour and helping children understand what is expected of them. As a result, all the children are well behaved, for example, they share, take turns and co-operate at tidy up time.

Children separate from their main carer with confidence. They talk about significant events, their home and community, such as discussing birthday party arrangements. The children initiate interactions with other people and they seek out others to share experiences, for example, a three-year-old asks two other three-year-olds if they would like to play 'Mums and Dads'. Children demonstrate flexibility and adapt their behaviour to different events and changes in routine as they noisily enjoy playing with musical instruments, then quieten for tidy up time. Children form good relationships with adults. They can take initiatives and manage developmentally appropriate tasks, such as taking off their shoes and independently putting them in their trays. However, there are missed opportunities for children to further develop their independence, for example, during lunch time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The staff team are committed to improving care and education and have regular opportunities for staff development, such as attending training, staff meetings, planning meetings and appraisals. Some, but not all, staff who work with the funded children have completed Foundation Stage training. This means that some staff have a greater knowledge and confidence than others, with regard to implementing the curriculum. The staff regularly work with an advisory teacher from the Local Authority to improve their practice.

The environment is generally well organised. The staff are well established and work well as a team. Children benefit from well deployed staff, who consistently interact with them and give children effective support and encouragement, which helps them feel secure and confident. As a result, satisfactory staff-child ratios are in place at all times, for example, the staff stagger their breaks over the lunch time period and bank staff are brought in to cover staff sickness and holidays. All the required documentation is in place, is easily accessible and stored securely, such as emergency contact and registration details. A good system is in place to record the staff and children's daily attendance and this is accurate and up to date.

The staff know their roles and responsibilities and are able to implement routines. However, there are some weaknesses in the attention to health and safety measures in the nursery and in the outdoor playground, which has a negative impact on the children.

Overall, the provision does not meet 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 complaint 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 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 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 that the sandpit in the outside play area is protected from contamination
- improve procedures for the use of the children's bedding to prevent the spread of infection
- assess the risks to children in relation to the water butt and the stagnant water and take action to minimise these
- make the laundry facilities inaccessible to the children
- provide a suitable and sufficient range of sleeping equipment to meet the developmental needs of babies and young children from 0 to under 3 years.

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):

- improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum
- improve parents' access to the children's assessment records



- extend teaching methods for the children to link sounds to letters
- develop opportunities for children to express their own creative ideas and imagination through art and design
- extend opportunities for children to increase their independence, for example, during lunch time.

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)