



Abbotsbury School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337315
Inspection date	28 February 2007
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	Abbotsbury School, 90 Torquay Road, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 2JD
Telephone number	01626 352164
E-mail	
Registered person	Richard John Manley
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abbotsbury School is an independent school for children aged from two to seven years. It registered for day care in 2006. The school is located in a Victorian villa, situated close to the railway station, in the market town of Newton Abbot in Devon. It is registered to provide care for up to 16 children, aged under three years. There are currently 13 children aged under three years and 38 funded three- and four-year-olds on roll. There are four classes for children aged under five years, and some of these groups are amalgamated in the afternoons, as fewer children attend afternoon sessions. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas. The school employs 10 members of staff to work with the children, all of whom have teaching, child care or teaching assistant qualifications. The school is open every weekday in term time, from 08.30 to 16.30.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mainly well-protected from infection. The premises are very clean and staff are meticulous in checking and cleaning toilets, throughout the day. The kitchen is spotless and staff carefully disinfect tables, before they are used for serving food. Children's personal care is hygienic, as staff change soiled clothing in the bathroom, wearing gloves to prevent the spread of infection. However, children's health is less well promoted, when toys and resources are not maintained in a clean condition. For example, some books, dolls and building bricks are very dirty. Children learn good hygiene routines, as staff remind them to wash their hands after painting or using the toilet, and before they eat. They wear aprons when eating lunch. Children receive appropriate care when they are unwell or injured. Most staff have current first aid qualifications, and records of accidents and medication are comprehensive.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to be physically active. They play outdoors, where they run freely, use wheeled toys or climb and balance on large equipment. They sometimes enjoy additional outdoor sessions, when they exercise or develop their throwing and catching skills. Indoors, they take part in twice-weekly music and movement sessions. Children benefit from eating mainly well-balanced snacks and meals. Parents are asked to provide healthy snacks and children eat freshly-cooked lunches, including some organic products and fresh fruit and vegetables. They have opportunities to taste a variety of different fruits, which are regularly provided by the school. Children also develop their understanding of healthy eating through regular discussion about which foods are good for them. They have plenty of fluids, as drinks are offered regularly and fresh drinking water is always available. Their special dietary needs are carefully recorded and met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. Their security is assured, as staff lock and monitor the entrance and accompany them when they leave the room. The outdoor area is completely enclosed and the gate is secured with a chain. There are good systems to ensure that children are collected only by authorised adults. Children choose from an adequate range of toys and resources, which are checked regularly for damage. Broken toys are immediately removed, to protect children from harm. Resources are stored at low levels, so that children can access them independently and safely.

The youngest children have ample space to move around freely. Staff have a good understanding of safety issues and they regularly risk assess the areas used by children. For example, they check floors, the door and the gate daily, to reduce risks. Children are safe in emergencies, as fire equipment is tested regularly and evacuation procedures are practised often enough for staff and children to know the routine. They are safe from abuse or neglect, as staff have undertaken relevant training and have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues. Good systems are in place within the school, to deal with any child protection issues which may arise, although the policy lacks some details.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children aged under three years enjoy a good variety of appropriate activities. They play in a bright classroom, where current displays are used effectively, to create a child-friendly environment. Children use their senses to explore wet and dry sand, mould dough and mix paint. They develop their creativity, as they make collages, using wool and glitter. They engage in role play, dressing up as policemen or princesses and posting letters to family members. They develop their physical skills, as staff help them to use scissors or fix straws to paper, to make daffodil stems. They enjoy stories and regularly share books with adults.

Staff plan activities, using many aspects of the Birth to three matters framework. They know children well and skilfully develop their understanding. For example, they discuss children's ideas and paintings, using questions to challenge their thinking and language. They do not always provide a wide range of resources, such as cushions, mirrors and photographs, which help to develop children's sense of self and sense of belonging. Overall, the youngest children make good progress, enjoying their play and becoming confident and independent learners.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan interesting and appropriate topics and activities, covering all areas of learning. They observe children's achievements and record their progress, although little detail is recorded about the development of the younger children, as the stepping stones are not used. Staff ratios are good and staff know children very well, so are able to challenge each child effectively and help them to move to the next stage of development. They use questions and discussion, successfully promoting children's knowledge and understanding. For example, able children are challenged to try different ways to join the parts of a model windmill, so that the sails turn. Assessment information is used appropriately, to plan for children's future development.

Children enjoy attending the school and make good progress overall. They are offered an appropriate balance of free play, physical or creative activities, and structured teaching. The oldest children play freely each morning and when adult-led tasks are completed. Younger children choose activities independently in the afternoons and have some opportunities for choice in the mornings. All children develop their creativity in regular art and craft activities, such as making masks, painting and model-making, when staff usually encourage them to develop their own ideas. Two groups of children have limited space in morning sessions, which sometimes restricts opportunities for free creativity and role play. Children develop very good control of small equipment, such as scissors, pencils and brushes, as staff carefully support their efforts. They confidently run, pedal, climb and balance, developing good co-ordination.

Children make excellent progress in their understanding of letter sounds and in the development of early reading skills. They discuss sounds and recognise letter shapes in a range of practical tasks, such as when finding their named snack box. They write their own name and use writing for different purposes, such as recording their week-end news. Children count in daily routines, as when mixing dough or folding paper. Staff effectively challenge able children to develop their understanding of number patterns, when they discuss, for example, how many biscuits

will be left if one is eaten. Children recognise and name shapes, as when they fold a square and discover that they have made triangles. They develop a sense of time, as they discuss dates or take part in topics about day and night. Older children use a computer to extend their understanding of technology. All children have opportunities to construct models, using plastic bricks or craft materials. They learn about the natural world, through topics such as 'seasons' or 'day and night'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's care is consistent, due to the school's good communications with parents. Initial visits enable children to settle well and parents to learn about the school's policies and procedures. Parents find staff approachable and they exchange information daily, about all aspects of their child's care and development. The school's partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive termly reports, outlining their child's progress towards the early learning goals. They meet formally with staff once a year, and informally at any time, to discuss their child's development. Older children take reading books home and parents and teachers comment on progress, in shared notebooks. Parents feel well-informed and able to support their child's learning, although they do not have detailed information about the Foundation Stage curriculum or about younger or less able children's progress through the stepping stones.

Children behave very well. The school has high expectations for behaviour, combined with clear routines and a very positive approach. Children enjoy plenty of praise for their efforts and staff use warm and appropriate methods to remind them how to behave. For example, when a very young child forgets to wait for staff before leaving a room, he is cuddled and gently reminded to wait. Children learn to share resources and to take turns, as when they wait for their turn to use the painting easel. All families are welcomed and included, and children's individual needs are known and met. Staff are adaptable in meeting differing needs, such as offering flexible times of arrival and departure for the youngest children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn about cultural differences, as they celebrate festivals from many different faiths, such as Diwali and St David's Day. There are currently no children with learning difficulties or disabilities on roll, but appropriate systems are in place to monitor and support children who may have additional needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by well-qualified and experienced staff. They play and learn in a very safe and secure environment, which is mainly hygienic. Ratios are good, so children enjoy plenty of individual attention, especially during afternoon sessions. The youngest children have sufficient space, which is used to provide a good variety of play opportunities. They have access to a satisfactory range of toys and resources, most of which are in good condition. Children's care is underpinned by all the required documentation, although some is incomplete. The child protection policy does not include procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Complaints procedures do not fully conform to recent changes in regulations,

and the behaviour management policy does not accurately reflect the good practice of the school.

Leadership and management are good. The Headteacher is directly involved in planning and monitoring the quality of the nursery education. He ensures that children's learning needs are met, by planning appropriate activities for each age-group, in consultation with other staff. He carefully monitors the performance of staff, through direct observation and sampling children's work. He has accurately identified the school's strengths and areas to develop, including the need for some children to have more space for creative activities. The school meets the needs of the range of 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

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):

- further protect children from infection by making sure that all toys and resources are clean
- further develop resources and activities which develop children's sense of self and sense of belonging, using the Birth to three matters framework
- make sure that children's care is always underpinned by current and comprehensive documentation, including complaints records which are confidential and available to parents, a child protection policy which includes procedures to be followed if an

allegation is made against a staff member, and a behaviour management policy which accurately reflects current practice.

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):

- provide children in all age-groups with sufficient space and resources to enable them to learn effectively through their play and consistently develop their creativity, throughout the day
- enable parents to fully support their child's learning, by providing information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and details of how their child is making progress towards the early learning goals.

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