

Apple Tree Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135973
Inspection date	10 December 2007
Inspector	Jan Healy
Setting Address	Deers Lodge Scout Hut, Deerhurst, Soundwell, Bristol, BS16 4YE
Telephone number	07765 436634
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Registered person	Apple Tree Pre-School
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 satisfactory. 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?

Apple Tree Pre-School opened in 1995 and is a committee managed group. It operates from the Scout Hall in the residential area of Soundwell. The children have access to a large hall, a smaller room and an outside play area. The group opens Monday to Thursday from 09.00 to 11.30 with lunch club between 11.30 and 12.30 and then finish at 15.00. On Friday the group operates from 09.00 to 12.30 during term time only.

The group offers care for children from two years to under five years. Currently 50 children attend throughout the week on a variety of sessions. There are 40 children receiving nursery education funding. The group support children who speak English as an additional language and who have a learning difficulty or disability.

There are 10 members of staff working with the children of whom eight hold a relevant qualification in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children benefit, as the staff have suitable knowledge and understanding about how to prevent the spread of illness and infection. They keep the premises clean and regularly wash the toys and resources, to rid them of germs. The children are taught to make use of paper tissues for the blowing of their nose and to cover their mouth when coughing. The children wash their hands before snack, however, they share a bowl of soapy water, which is unhygienic. Individual paper towels are in use for the drying of their hands, which are disposed of after a single use. Nappy changing allows the children a suitable level of privacy and the staff prevent cross-infection, by the wearing of gloves. Sick children remain at home and if a child becomes ill during the session, they are swiftly reunited with their parents. This helps to prevent the spread of sickness. The parents are requested their written permission for the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice, to eliminate a delay in the children from receiving appropriate medical attention. The staff are trained in first aid and are confident and capable to deal with an accident. All accidents are carefully recorded and are shared with the parents, so they are fully aware of any injury to their child.

The children enjoy a healthy and nutritious snack, which they enjoy whilst sitting together at child sized tables and chairs. This makes for a pleasant and sociable occasion, as the children chat happily about their lives at home and about events that are important to them. They take part in the preparation of foods, such as making sandwiches and toast, which furthers their understanding about of the importance of food hygiene. The children who have a food allergy or intolerance are protected, as the staff prohibit the swapping of food. Fresh drinking water is readily available, so the children do not suffer from dehydration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The provision takes place in a scout hut, which contains two playrooms, although the majority of play takes place in one. The provision is shared with other groups, however, this is organised well for the benefit of all. Children's artwork adorns the playroom walls and the staff display colourful posters, which makes for a child friendly environment. Play is separated into areas, such as a mathematical area, writing area and home corner. The children are able to self-select most of the resources which are set up by the staff before the children's arrival. A fully enclosed garden is where the children participate in physical activities, such as climbing and riding on wheeled toys.

Child sized tables and chairs are available, so the children sit and play in comfort. There are child sized toilets and sinks in the bathroom, furthering the children's independence, as they do not require adult help or supervision. Liquid soap and paper towels are within easy reach. All toys and equipment are checked for any hazards and if found are repaired or discarded, to prevent accidents or injury. However, there is no provision for the children who stay all day, to rest without disturbance.

The staff take appropriate precautions to ensure the children remain safe at all times. A safety gate is fitted, so the children do not enter the kitchen without adult supervision. Hot liquids are kept out of the children's reach and electrical sockets are covered. The children take part in regular fire drills, so they become familiar with the routine to leave the premises swiftly in

an emergency. An effective system is in place for the arrival and departure of the children and the staff are constantly aware of the number of children in attendance.

The staff have appropriate knowledge about child protection issues, with one member of staff taking responsibility to ensure the children remain safe at all times. However, all the staff attend regular training, so they are up to date about any changing legislation. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and about the procedure to follow when a concern is identified. An existing injury record is maintained, with the parents being requested an explanation. Therefore, protecting the children's health and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children and staff share a warm and affectionate relationship with the children, as the staff are friendly and approachable. The children are given reassurance when tackling a new activity and have the benefit of staff who understand how young children learn. Therefore, they engage in a wide range of age appropriate and interesting activities. Fair and consistent boundaries are in place and the children learn how to cooperate with each other. The children learn right from wrong through role play and stories and respond to their senses when making use of a wide variety of media.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have taken steps to become familiar with the Foundation stage of learning, through the attendance of training courses. They plan for a wide range of activities, building on what the children already know, which helps to further their development. The older children are set further challenges through play, with observations being taken to assess their progress. The teaching methods in place, meet the needs of all the children in attendance, as the children are taught in many different ways. There are times when activities take place on a one to one basis, in small groups and in large groups. The children take part in table top activities, in floor play and in outdoor play. They have the opportunity to join in with creative and pretend games, so they are able to extend their imagination and to share and to test their ideas. The children are able to demonstrate what they know and what they understand when gathering together for register and circle time.

The children are making good progress in their mathematical development. The older children are able to count proficiently, whilst the younger children are learning this skill. They have the advantage of making use of an abacus to aid their counting skills and to join in with counting rhymes and songs. The children use tape measures and stacking bricks to find out who is the tallest and who is the smallest. Posting boxes and a shape carpet help to teach the children to recognise and to name a variety of shapes, including oval and hexagon.

Strong progress is being made in the children's creative development. They take part in painting activities, printing using various vegetables and in the creating of collages. There is a wide range of dressing up clothes and accessories that the children wear, when pretending to be characters of their choice. The children enjoy listening to the different sounds the musical instruments make and sing with confidence.

The children are making significant progress in their physical skills. They have the use of small tools, for example, rolling pins when playing with dough. They ride wheeled toys in the outdoor play area, learning to avoid bumping into each other. They climb, which strengthens their

muscles and run, which increases their fitness. The children are learning to throw and to catch a ball with increasing accuracy. They are learning about how to keep themselves healthy, about the importance of their bones, their veins and their skin.

Progress is being made in the children's communication, language and literacy. The children have the advantage of having words as labels in many languages, however, not in the languages that are relevant to the children in attendance. There are boxes which contain, for example, paper, however, not all are labelled with words or pictures, which discourages the children's autonomy. The children have the opportunity to write for various purposes, for instance, menus when the home corner becomes a café and lists when pretending to shop. The children have the benefit of a wide range of books, which they access independently, including resource and picture books. They are learning to turn the pages one at a time and enjoy listening to the stories the staff read to them.

The children are making effective progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They enjoy digging in the outdoor play area and looking closely at the insects they find. They have the provision of a wide range of toys which aid their understanding about everyday technology, including a telephone, cash till and electronic toys. The children enjoy celebrating their birthday and other major festivals, for instance, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday and the Chinese New Year.

Good progress is being made in the children's personal, social and emotional development. They enter the group with confidence and are happy to approach the staff for assistance when necessary. They listen carefully to the instructions during register and speak in a group situation. The children are learning to care for themselves as well as to care for their friends. Annually, they make a trip to Bristol Zoo, where the children adopt a gorilla and penguin. This helps their understanding of the importance of the care of animals and about how they live.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children play and learn in a happy and discriminatory free environment, where their feelings, thoughts and individuality are respected. They celebrate major festivals, including harvest festival, when they donate items of food, which are presented to a local cause. This aids the children's understanding about the need to care for others, who are less fortunate than themselves. The children learn about equality and justice during play, when they are taught about how their behaviour has an effect on others.

The staff work with the parents when a child is identified as having a learning difficulty or disability, so plans can be made, which are specifically designed to help further the child's progress. Regular reviews take place, so all who are involved are kept up to date about any new concerns or about any advice learned for example, from the educational psychologist, which are shared for the good of all.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children behave very well, as they are content to be in attendance and they enjoy the company of the staff. The staff are good role models, whom the children emulate, therefore, making for a pleasant atmosphere. Responsibility is encouraged, for example, when tidying away the toys after they have finished playing with them. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with sensitively, as the staff are aware that the children are learning to manage a wide range of emotions as they grow and develop.

The parents have the advantage of being provided with a prospectus, detailing relevant information about the setting, such as the days and times of opening. A staff list is displayed on the notice board, which also details their specific responsibility, therefore, preventing a delay in the parents from speaking, for example, to their child's key worker or special educational needs coordinator when necessary. There is a clear complaints policy in place, but it does not detail the address and telephone number for Ofsted, which may result in a delay in a concern being resolved. Regular newsletters keep the children up to date about forthcoming events, such as day trips and visitors to the group.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents have the benefit of being provided with written details about the curriculum the children are following, so they are able to continue their learning at home. The parents are welcome to join the children during the session, which furthers their understanding of the reason why such activities take place. They are invited to participate in training courses, workshops and conferences, so they have the opportunity to learn about how young children progress in their development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The staff have a fair understanding about the National Standards and have the ability to meet them. They provide warm and consistent care and keep up to date with changing legislation through the attendance of training courses. The person in charge is supernumerary, so is able to maintain a high adult: child ratio. The children are grouped according to their need with the available space being organised to provide the children with a broad range of play opportunities. An attendance register is in place, which details the times of the children's arrival and departure, so they are accounted for in an emergency. All records are stored confidentially, to protect the children's personal details. All documentation is readily available for inspection, so historical checks can be made.

Leadership and management are good. The person in charge has strong knowledge about her role and responsibilities, which she executes well. She has a clear vision of the quality of child care she wishes to provide and steers the work of the setting. The professional development of the staff is a priority, to maintain an appropriate skill level. The person in charge assesses the groups strengths and weaknesses, and successful teaching strategies are shared amongst the staff. Weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been acted upon, for the benefit of the children. The children are safe whilst in her care and they are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the staff were requested to ensure the toilets were hygienically maintained. These have now been replaced, making for a pleasant environment. The staff were requested to ensure references for new employees were sought, which is now in place, for the safety of the children. The staff were also requested to update their knowledge and understanding about child protection issues. A member of staff takes responsibility for this area and the staff have received training. The child protection statement has been updated, to include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made about a member of staff.

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 satisfactory. 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 that hand washing routines are hygienic
- improve the children's comfort during sleep and rest
- update the complaints policy to include the address and telephone number for Ofsted

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 the children's independence by labelling the toy boxes
- provide labels in languages that are relevant to the children in attendance

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