

ABC Rainbow Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	119519
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Inspector	Anne Daly
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Registered person	ABC Rainbow Day Nurseries Ltd
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?

ABC Rainbow Day Nursery is one of two privately owned nurseries run by ABC Rainbow Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1990 and operates from four rooms within a converted house in Westcliff-on-Sea. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens on five days a week all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays and one week over Christmas. Session times are Mondays to Fridays from 07:00 until 19:00. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The funded children's room contains a fish tank.

There are currently 78 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as a second language.

The nursery employs 17 staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Essex Day Nursery Association (EDNA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted because they are protected from infection through the staff's close attention to hygiene procedures. They benefit from staff undertaking regular routines to ensure the maintenance of a clean environment, such as, by cleaning surfaces with antibacterial liquids and by regularly checking and cleaning toilets to minimise cross-infection. Funded children are developing good levels of personal independence, understanding the need to wash their hands to prevent illness from germs, especially before handling food or after using the toilet. They are being actively reminded of such good practices through posters and signs. Younger children are developing good levels of personal independence through staff encouraging them to be responsible for washing and drying their hands with minimal help. Staff follow good procedures when dealing with body fluids, such as, wearing disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and disinfecting mats after use to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children's accidental injuries are effectively managed by numerous staff holding current first aid qualifications. Children's needs are considered by appropriate accident records being shared with their parents or carers to ensure that they are fully informed. Children's individual needs, care and welfare are given good consideration by staff, for example, by allowing them to rest or sleep if tired at any time.

Children's individual needs are actively promoted by the nursery ensuring that high priority is given to the promotion of healthy eating, including the provision for special diets and for individual choices. There are freshly prepared hot or cold meals at lunch time, when all children enjoy eating fresh fruits and vegetables, with either milk or water to drink. Children aged from 15 months are growing a variety of vegetables and herbs in the garden, providing purposeful first hand experiences to encourage them to develop their knowledge of from where food comes and to extend their range of healthy foods eaten. Children understand, with staff support, their need for drinks of water when thirsty or hot to avoid dehydration. Older children's independence is being encouraged by them being able to freely pour a beaker of water at any time, although their independence is not consistently maintained at meal times.

Children of all ages are able to participate in a good range of activities to promote their physical development and co-ordination. They benefit daily from fresh air to stimulate their minds and bodies by being allowed to play outside in all but the worst weathers. Funded children are beginning to develop an understanding of how their bodies work by discussing the changes after physical exercise, such as, knowing that their hearts beat faster. The outdoor facilities allow children many opportunities to practise and refine their skills in all areas of learning. They are able to run freely in the large garden, to climb on, over and through the large climbing frame and to balance on logs.

Staff have a good understanding of the needs of younger children and provide appropriate activities and resources to support their physical and emotional development. The children are active, becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies and learning new physical skills, such as, crawling through a tunnel. They are developing their physical and emotional independence and are being encouraged to independently feed themselves and to explore new tastes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a child-friendly, stimulating environment, in which they are able to explore and to take 'risks' under appropriate supervision. They are able to see colourful and interesting images and displays all around them to promote conversation and ultimately their learning. Their artwork is attractively displayed to effectively promote their good self-esteem by showing them that staff value their efforts. For example, when funded children were learning about the emergency services, they made telephones which are still on display to help them learn that dialling 999 will call the emergency services for assistance.

Children's safety and security are priority. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of them and risks are minimised by the use of restraints on all large opening windows, allowing plenty of ventilation while safeguarding children from possible dangers on both levels of the building. Children benefit from being cared for in age and stage-appropriate base rooms. The oldest children can independently use an open plan cloakroom area off their room, where their dignity and privacy are respected if they wish to utilise alone. However, the nappy changing arrangements do not enable children's privacy to be fully respected as limited space in the youngest children's toilet area results in staff having to change nappies on mats on the floors of their base rooms.

All children benefit from a well-organised learning environment, in which they are provided with a worthwhile range of age-appropriate resources and equipment. Children's toys and resources are maintained to a good standard, with staff monitoring and immediately removing any broken toys or other hazardous items to fully safeguard them. Funded children have good child accessible storage to encourage them to become independent and to help them to extend their play and learning at their own pace. They know where their resources are kept and can confidently put away toys at 'tidy up' times. They understand how to safely use toys and equipment and that toys must be picked up to avoid their friends tripping and hurting themselves on them. All toys within the reach of under twos are safe for 'exploring' by using their hands and mouths, although children of rising two sometimes only have a limited range of activities in their base room to promote their development.

Children regularly practise fire drills so that they know what to do in an emergency. They also take part in planned activities to promote their understanding of how to keep themselves safe, such as, learning how to safely cross roads. Younger children are able to safely investigate and explore their surroundings. They are developing an increasing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and learning self-control in order to avoid hurting others, for example, by staff explaining why they should not throw toys.

Children are protected because there are clear policies and procedures for safeguarding them. Staff have attended child protection training to enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and how to act if they have any concerns. The detailed policies for non-collection and the arrangements for recording pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring that children are fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in a broad range of well-planned activities designed to help them to progress and develop. Staff use both 'Birth to three matters' and Foundation Stage frameworks to ensure

that all children are provided with age and stage-appropriate play opportunities during various inside and outside activities. The good level of care and the effective key worker system enables children to settle quickly into the nursery. Children are linking language with physical movements during action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences, such as, cookery and gardening. Staff know the children and parents well to enable them to talk to children about special events and people in their lives.

Children show great interest in what they do. Babies are using movement and sensory exploration to link up with their immediate environment, for example, sitting in cornflakes to stimulate them to reach out their arms and legs and to explore noises. They are acquiring new knowledge and skills when turning flaps of books to listen to a variety of cultural music. Children thoroughly enjoy listening to and experiencing a wide range of background music throughout the day. Rising two year olds are beginning to understand that some things belong to them, that some things are shared and that some things belong to other people. However, a limited choice of activities may potentially result in conflict or frustration. Children are able to explore using their bodies and a range of mediums, responding to challenges when making marks on paper and when squeezing and feeling paint. They have plenty of opportunities to practise their skills and can successfully fill containers in the water tray to give them the confidence to pour their own drinks. They are acquiring new knowledge and skills by watching what happens when they mix ingredients to make play dough, before exploring the malleable material with their hands or by using simple tools, such as, pattern rolling pins, to change the effect of the dough. Children's individual needs are met by staff observing and recording what they do and using their observations to plan the next steps for their play, learning and development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage, the stepping stones and how children learn. This knowledge enables them to plan a good range of both indoor and outdoor activities covering the six areas of learning. The majority of children receiving early years education have been through the nursery, so that staff have a good knowledge of their starting points and capabilities from developmental records. However, staff do not complete base line assessments for new children to ensure that they know their starting points. Staff effectively plan and adapt activities and experiences to ensure that the less able children are given good support, while providing the more able children with sufficient challenge to maintain their interest and motivation. The weekly indoor plans clearly show how activities are adapted to suit individual children. Staff plan specific outdoor activities, but such short term planning does not always indicate how it can be adapted for the differing needs of individuals or groups of children to ensure that all are learning effectively.

A variety of effective teaching methods help children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff observe and note what children know to enable them to plan for their next stages of learning. Children are encouraged to try new experiences and staff's effective interaction with them enables them to assess if they understand what they are doing. Children with learning difficulties are fully involved in activities and staff support them to ensure that they gain the most from the different experiences. Staff manage children's behaviour skilfully and encourage them to understand the need for self-discipline. This enables children to understand the effect that their behaviour has on others and ensures that they are learning in a stimulating and safe environment. Staff successfully use both the resources and the accommodation to promote all children's learning and to enable them to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good and underpins their learning in all the other areas. The calm atmosphere created by staff and children fosters a positive learning environment. Children use initiative and are able to be self-sufficient within their learning by choosing activities and by freely accessing their own resources. They are very curious and keen to explore the available resources and activities. They fully participate in adult-directed activities as well as enjoying developing their own ideas and play through self-selection. Children are polite and helpful because these social skills are promoted through planned activities and by staff being good role models.

Children's competencies are developing well across all aspects of communication, language and literacy. Their language skills are very effectively being promoted through conversations with staff, while children also enjoy listening to stories. They become very excited by the story sack, confidently anticipating what happens next when using visual aids to tell traditional stories. Children are learning to write their names and to correctly form letters. They are able to recognise their names and are starting to recognise simple words on the computer and the many words and labels displayed around the room. More able children are able to confidently link sounds to letters by naming and sounding letters. Staff are providing children with many opportunities to mark-make and to practise forming letters, for example, by tracing captions under some of their pictures.

Children are enjoying mathematical learning through staff ensuring that it is both purposeful and fun. It is being effectively promoted through a range of daily spontaneous or well-planned activities, such as singing number songs at circle time to solve simple number problems by calculation. At circle time, children are encouraged to count up to the date of the month before recognising the numbers which will make 26. Children are learning concepts, such as, weight, volume, length and height, when undertaking practical activities using sand and construction equipment. Children can readily count cubes, before comparing which is the longest length.

Children are learning about the world they live in through staff planning various practical experiences, such as, children growing a range of vegetables, fruits and herbs. They are learning through their senses, such as, being aware that mint smells like their toothpaste. They have varied opportunities to learn about technology as they can independently use the computer to confidently demonstrate their skills by following simple educational programmes. They are learning about saving the environment on the computer by confidently sorting and moving a variety of items into the correct recycling bins. They particularly like the 'metal crusher' and worms taking fruits and vegetables into the compost bin.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities to help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. Their confidence and self-esteem grows when they successfully create a 'tree house' by using wood and plastic construction toys of different sizes. They are able to fix them together in a variety of ways, for example, by twisting, pushing or slotting through.

Children are learning to be creative through their senses, having many opportunities to use imagination in art and design, music, dance and imaginative role play. They enjoy singing and musical sessions and freely accessing and exploring instruments to create music. Children confidently 'paint houses' on the computer, with some of them recognising whose house is whose through their individual names. They are able to paint, draw, cut and to make models of their own design using a wide range of materials during both planned and free-play activities. They have varied role play experiences in which to develop their imagination, such as, at a flower shop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a good sense of belonging when entering the setting with confidence. They understand the routines by hanging their outdoor clothing on individual pegs. Displays of their work or photographs of themselves taking part in the activities enable them to feel that they are part of the nursery. All children and their families, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive sound support from staff to enable them to thrive and to make progress. Staff attend training regarding special educational needs to ensure that they are able to meet children's individual development and welfare requirements. They liaise well with other agencies and welcome other relevant professionals to work with the children to ensure that their individual needs are effectively met. The area special needs advisor observes children in the setting with parents' or carers' permission.

Children's welfare is being well promoted through staff working in partnership with parents and carers to meet their needs. Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers to ensure that they can work alongside them to support their children's individual or specific needs. Key workers liaise with parents and carers on an informal basis about important care practices, such as, toilet training and weaning. However, the current arrangements for nappy changing in the 'Tweenies' and 'Toddlers' rooms, where children are changed on the playroom floor, do not ensure that their privacy is respected. All parents and carers receive regular newsletters to help them to keep up-to-date with any changes in the care provided and their children's monthly learning topics. Parents or carers of children under two receive daily written information about their child's day at the nursery to enable them to monitor continuity and their child's progress. Staff display the activities on the entrance door to enable parents and carers of two year olds to know what their child has been learning about during the day. Parents and carers are provided with appropriate information about the nursery's policies and procedures. They know how to make a complaint and the registered provider is adequately aware of the required actions to be taken to address parental concerns.

All children are beginning to develop an understanding of people's similarities and differences through seeing a wide range of positive images and by playing with toys and resources reflecting diversity. They are all beginning to learn basic baby sign language, with staff currently introducing eight words to children and their parents or carers, so that all can work together when children sign their basic needs.

Children's behaviour is generally very good when playing happily together. The majority of children are rapidly displaying a good understanding of what is considered to be acceptable behaviour and why restrictions are imposed on them. They are encouraged by staff and enjoy taking responsibility for tasks within the setting to increase their self-esteem and independence. For example, funded children have a 'daily classroom captain' who is given specific responsibilities during the day. Children are generally helpful and well-behaved as a result of staff giving them plenty of praise and encouragement. Younger children are testing out the boundaries with adults who they trust and are learning about the boundaries and how to handle their frustrations. Staff clearly explain the 'rules and limits' to help children to distinguish right from wrong and they encourage them to say sorry when they have done wrong. However, at some times during the day the rising two year olds do not have sufficient choice to help them to feel that they have some sense of control over their day.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are able to have tranquil moments quietly looking at a book alone or when confidently making conversation

with staff, visitors and other children. They have varied opportunities to learn about the wider society through topics and projects on other countries to foster their respect for other beliefs, cultures and traditions, such as, by celebrating Diwali and the Chinese New Year.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. They receive clear information about the educational provision through a prospectus, a welcome pack and newsletters. Weekly plans are displayed in the room, but some parents and carers require more daily information about focused activities to enable them to fully support their child's learning at home. They are well informed about their child's achievements and progress through informal and formal channels of communication. Their child's individual profiles are freely available at any time and they receive written reports in all six areas of learning to ensure that they are aware of their child's next steps.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are supported by a caring and well-qualified staff team. They are protected and their welfare promoted because there are appropriate systems in place to ensure that all adults working with them are suitable to do so. They benefit from staff being motivated and interested in their professional development by attending regular training to enhance their skills and knowledge. The minimum required adult-to-child ratios are met at all times within each room. There are relief staff employed at lunch times and at the end of days to ensure that full-time staff can take their breaks during the day. These relief staff also effectively cover staff absences through holidays and sickness.

The required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management and to promote children's welfare and safety. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the policies and procedures, which the registered provider regularly reviews and updates as necessary to ensure that they fully safeguard the welfare of all children.

The leadership and management is good. The registered provider and manager form a strong team and aim to inspire staff to influence the quality of teaching for the benefit of the children's learning. Appraisal systems and staff induction programmes ensure that they are fully aware of their roles and that their development can be supported by relevant training. Staff are working extremely well as a team and are all actively involved in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. They know their strengths and weaknesses and set clear and realistic targets about the actions to be taken for the beneficial impact on children's well-being and learning.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the registered provider undertook a review of nappy changing facilities, purchasing some screens, but these proved hazardous to children, who kept pulling them over resulting in an unsafe environment. The registered provider feels that all parents or carers are aware that, when their children move from the baby room, they are changed on a mat placed on the playroom's floor. Therefore, this issue has not been adequately addressed in the 'tweenie' and 'toddler' rooms to ensure that children's privacy is respected during nappy changing.

At the last nursery education inspection, there were no key issues to report, although the registered provider was asked to consider making a wider choice of tools and equipment easily

accessible to children, when modelling and constructing using found/recycled materials, and teaching techniques to encourage experimentation with different methods of joining and assembling materials. Since the last nursery education inspection, the registered provider has provided a unit to enable children to have free access to a wide choice of creative materials and different means to join and assemble materials to enable them to freely explore and to express their ideas.

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 that toileting routines consider children's need for privacy
- ensure that rising two year olds have a varied range of activities throughout the day.

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 outdoor planning to ensure that it can be adapted for the differing needs of individuals or groups of children
- ensure that existing information is made more visible to parents and carers to enable them to be more fully informed of their children's learning to enable them to become more involved.

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