

Abacus Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 200471 |
| Inspection date | 16 May 2007 |
| Inspector | Dianne Lynn Sadler |
| Setting Address | Weddington Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV10 0EQ |
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| Registered person | Dr Shailesh Patel and Mrs Linda Patel |
| 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?

Abacus Day Nursery is privately run and opened in 1998. It operates from six rooms, on two floors, in a brick detached building, situated on the outskirts of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. A maximum of 47 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 17:30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 85 children on roll from birth to five years. Of these, 26 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for appropriately in a clean, tidy environment. They stay healthy and thrive because some staff follow well written policies and procedures which reflect current environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Procedures, such as staff wearing gloves and aprons when dealing with bodily fluids and using anti-bacterial spray on tables and changing mats, help reduce the risk of infection. Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through the daily routine. For example, children wash their hands before mealtimes and after toileting. Children receive appropriate care when they have an accident or become ill. All staff have received appropriate first aid training and children who are required to complete a course of medication are appropriately cared for. Permission is sought in writing for all instances when administering medication. However, for some occurrences 'blanket' permission is used, which potentially compromises children's safety and welfare.

All children benefit from a varied range of healthy, nutritious meals and snacks, which ensures they are well nourished. There is a well written menu displayed outside each playroom which shows children enjoy meat such as gammon, fresh fruit and vegetables and homemade cakes. They also enjoy fruit at snacktime such as bananas and dried fruit and can choose from a variety of drinks such as water and milk. Older children can also help themselves to a drink of water throughout the day provided in a jug. The dietary needs of children are discussed with parents and recorded well, ensuring that children have their needs met appropriately.

All children are learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from accessing fresh air and well planned physical play experiences, both indoors and outdoors every day. Children enjoy playing in a stimulating outdoor play area which is divided into different areas. Children benefit from sitting in a pagoda from which sensory objects such as wind chimes hang. They grow grass from seed and access resources such books and writing materials. Therefore, play and learning is extended from the inside to the outside. Children develop their physical skills by climbing on large apparatus, riding wheeled toys and playing on the see-saws. All Children are able to rest and be active according to their needs. For example, there are cots available for babies to sleep and older children can select quieter activities such as reading books in the book corner.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for appropriately in a welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment, which helps them feel secure and comfortable. Children move around with ease from one area to another which helps them to settle well and feel confident. A clear and concise risk assessment is carried out on the premises and equipment on a regular basis by senior staff and adequately recorded. Any hazards identified are then recorded in the maintenance book for immediate attention. This protects children from the risk of accidental injury. Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe. For instance, all children are well supervised at all times and visitors are met by senior staff and sign the visitors book.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe furniture, equipment and play resources, appropriate to meet their different needs. Resources are easily accessed by children, for instance books are displayed on a low-level book shelves, therefore developing their independence. Children are

learning how to keep themselves safe. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure every term and discuss the need to hold a banister when walking down stairs.

Children are sufficiently protected from harm because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection. Staff are aware of what action they are required to take if they have a child protection concern about any of the children. However, children's welfare is compromised as the written child protection policy is insufficient. It does not include a procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children and babies settle well and are confident in the setting due to the good support given from caring staff. Children enjoy their time in the nursery and benefit from positive relationships with both adults and each other. They confidently interact with each other and with visitors. They benefit from a stimulating and interesting environment in which they are happy, content and secure. Many resources such as mirrors and displays of their work are displayed at children's height. Knowledgeable staff successfully use the 'Birth to three matters' framework successfully to provide stimulating and imaginative experiences which supports children's development and learning. They work well to ensure children and babies reach their full potential. Staff know the children well and explain the different stages that individual children are at and what steps are being taken to help them progress further. This is documented very well in children's individual 'Learning journeys'. This is a large booklet showing photos, activities participated in and examples of children's work throughout their time in the nursery.

Babies and young children are learning to be good communicators and competent learners. They explore and investigate their environment using all of their senses. For instance, they enthusiastically hunt for bugs and insects in the garden using magnifying glasses and benefit from using collage materials such as feathers, crinkly paper and lentils. Babies enjoy exploring sensory bottles filled with coloured water, twigs and pasta and enjoy selecting items from 'treasure' baskets which are made of metal, natural materials and shells.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. Consequently, all children are included and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan a wide range of activities under each area of learning. However, planning does not cover all aspects within each area of learning, which potentially compromises children's learning and progress in some areas. Staff have a clear idea of the learning intentions for children, which matches the programme of activities. Therefore, children extend their learning and are provided with sufficient challenge.

The assessment procedure is sufficient. Staff record some observations they make on children's development and transfer this information to assessment records. These are completed every six weeks. Assessment records include information gained from parents. However, some observations made are not included, therefore the assessment records do not give a clear picture of progress made. Staff know the children well and can identify the next steps in their learning. However, this information is not used effectively to help children move to the next stage in their learning.

Staff use a good range of teaching methods to maintain children's interest. Staff know that the children learn better when they are happy and relaxed, they ensure children are well settled before they concentrate on their learning. Staff sit with children, ask questions and offer support when needed. Staff effectively help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world and there are a good range of resources to promote this. Children are motivated and keen to learn.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff on arrival. Children are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. They assume responsibility for their personal care and their independence is being effectively developed. They choose whether to play indoors or outdoors and a helper is selected each day to help prepare the snacks and tidy up. Children behave well, responding positively to the boundaries set. They share and take turns. For example, children indicate they want to play at the computer by selecting their name card and displaying it on the computer cabinet. Children can speak clearly and confidently, sharing their experiences. For instance, after taking 'Charlie Bear' home they stand up at circle-time and tell the other children what adventures they have shared. Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show a good interest in books. They handle them appropriately and enjoy selecting a book from the nursery library to take home. Children recognise their names and are able to link sounds to letters. For instance, they identify letters of their name and know that 'm' is for mummy. Children also use language well to explore and describe experiences and objects. After finding a slug in the garden, children use their imagination and describe it as being 'slimy' and 'slummy!' Some children are developing good writing skills and know how to form letters correctly. For instance, some children are able to clearly write their names.

Children benefit from seeing numbers displayed in the environment and confidently use numbers for counting. They can count up to 10 with ease. Children demonstrate that they have a good understanding of shape, size and measure. Children match different colours and objects and recognise and re-create simple patterns when playing in the sand-tray. Children are developing an understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. They explore calculation when playing 'five speckled frogs' at the computer. Children develop an initial sense of time and place. They discuss the grass they are growing from seed in the garden and adventures 'Charlie bear' has with them at home. Children observe and identify features in the place they live and the natural world. They find slugs, woodlice and other insects in the garden outside and stare in wonder at a spiders web found on the shed. Children intently explore and investigate the insects by using magnifying glasses. They then use their imagination and declare, 'spiders don't eat flies they suck their blood!' Children are learning about everyday technology. They develop their skills using the computer and other everyday items such as scales, calculators and magnifying glasses.

Effective use of the indoor and outdoor space, helps children develop their physical skills. Children move confidently, when negotiating their way around the nursery and when playing outdoors. Children are able to travel under, over, through and around when negotiating an assault course planned in the car park and when playing a game called 'Help I'm trapped!' Children use one-handed tools competently as they paint their pictures using brushes and use scissors for cutting. Children take part in action songs and enjoy exploring different musical instruments. Children are able to express themselves freely through creative activities. They use collage materials such as cork, shiny paper, feathers, coloured pasta and make a textured tower when exploring buildings, displayed on the door. Children explore shape and colour when they paint different colour shapes on a white sheet hanging from the ceiling. They use their imagination in a variety of ways. They benefit from playing in the role play corner set out as a

jungle for the dinosaurs and pretend to make a pizza out of plastic foods such as onions and eggs. Children respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell and taste. At snacktime they are able to say which fruits they like and which they dislike.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Effective relationships with parents ensure the staff know the children well. Children receive appropriate care consistent with home because parents share information about children's care and development needs, preferences and cultural and religious needs. Good procedures ensure both parties are well informed. For example, parents benefit from receiving daily written information about nappy changes, routines such as sleep and activities their children have participated in. They also receive an informative prospectus which includes information about all policies in place.

Clear, concise policies work effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other and feel a sense of belonging. This develops good self-esteem and helps children feel confident. All children are warmly welcomed in the setting and fully included. They are valued and respected as individuals and have their individual needs met appropriately. There are good procedures in place, reflective of the Code of Practice, to ensure children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are supported well. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's needs are understood and met well.

Children are being made aware of the wider society. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider world. Children are made aware of all celebrations and festivals. In the pre-school room a display of summertime festivals ensures children are aware of May Day and the Dragon Boat Race. Children also participate in activities such as making Hannukah cards and Mother's Day cards.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is being developed well by staff with the use of praise and encouragement throughout the day. This is further promoted by children's work being valued. For instance, when they complete a piece of work they place it in their own individual trays to take home. Children are learning to understand responsible behaviour. They take turns, share play resources and show respect for others. This helps to ensure children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The behaviour policy is well written, understood by staff and effective in practice. Therefore, children's behaviour is managed well, promoting their welfare and development. Older children benefit from seeing the rules displayed on laminated cards and discuss the rules at circle-time.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways. This helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution. For example, parents receive an 'activities at home' booklet which details the three topics covered each term. Also, on 'colour days' parents dress the children in a particular colour once a month. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They receive an informative report each term and attend a meeting with the key worker each April. They also benefit from being given folders of the children's work to take home. Parents are able to share information with staff about their child's development observed at home by completing 'I can do books'. This information is then transferred to the children's development profile. Therefore the next steps planned for children's learning are appropriate. Parents receive good information about the educational programme

provided and the six areas of learning. The foundation stage curriculum is included in the nursery prospectus and parents attend a meeting in September. They know of the themes planned for children and activities offered each day. Consequently children's development in all six areas of learning is fully supported at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who are experienced, well established and committed to their well-being. Staff work well as a team, provide a stimulating and interesting environment conducive to the care, teaching and learning of all children. The recruitment procedures are good and all records in place, which effectively supports children's safety. A thorough induction and regular appraisals ensure that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards children. There is a vetting procedure to ensure staff are suitable to care for children but is not sufficient. It does not include the checking of staff's medical status and there is no system in place to ensure staff remain suitable to care for children. This potentially compromises children's safety and welfare. The level of qualified staff working with children is very good and there is a commitment to ensure staff develop their skills and knowledge by attending training courses. This has a positive impact upon children's care and experiences. Records and documentation in place are available for inspection and shared with staff and parents.

The leadership and management is good. Staff are motivated and have developed a supportive team approach, aiming for good quality education for all children. There is clear leadership within the setting. The manager and officer-in-charge offer appropriate guidance and are committed to improving nursery education. The monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provision and quality of teaching is good. There are systems in place for the manager and officer-in-charge to observe and improve practice and monitor children's learning. This positively supports children's learning and progress.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care.

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to ensure there are procedures in place for uncollected children. Significant improvement has been made. There is now a clear and concise policy detailing these procedures which keeps children safe.

Nursery Education.

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to evaluate activities, with regard to implementation and activity management. Significant improvement has been made. Staff now organise written plans to show staff linked to activities, intentions, how children grouped, resources needed and evaluation of activity. Which ensures children extend their learning and are provided with sufficient challenge.

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 the parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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 written permission is sought from parents before administering medication at all times, making sure permission is current and specific to each separate occurrence
- ensure child protection policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with 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 planning covers all aspects of learning within six areas of learning
- ensure assessment records show a clear picture of children's overall progress and are used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning.

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