

Askham Bar Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321595
Inspection date	03 July 2007
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner

Setting Address	Askham Bar, Tadcaster Road, Dringhouses, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 1LW
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Registered person	Lyn Dyrdal
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?

Askham Bar Day Nursery is a privately owned provision, which opened in 1996. It operates from a building situated on the edge of the Askham Bar park and ride site, off Tadcaster Road in York. Care is provided in three playrooms with toilet facilities situated off the main playroom. An enclosed area is available at the rear of the premises for outside play.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Opening times are from 08.00 to 18.00. A maximum of 32 children may attend at any one time and there are currently 62 children on roll, of whom 22 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery welcomes and supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are 10 members of staff working with the children. Of these, one is a qualified teacher, one has a level 4 qualification in childcare and is working towards level 5, four have level 3, one has level 2 and one is working towards this. In addition a cook is employed. The setting receives support from the local authority development workers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy because staff follow good practices in their daily routines to minimise the risk of infection. For example, they ensure toys and resources are cleaned on a regular basis and they check the cleanliness of the toilet area at regular intervals during the sessions, and record their findings. They wear disposable gloves when changing nappies and fully implement the nursery's policy for the care of children who become ill.

Staff effectively encourage the children to follow good practices in their self care and they ensure they explain the reasons for these. For example, they clean the younger children's hands with disposable wipes before they eat and they explain to the older ones why they need to wash their hands after toileting and messy play and before eating. Notices are displayed as a gentle reminder and pump soap dispensers and paper towels are provided to minimise the risk of cross infection. As a result the children wash their hands independently and clearly understand the importance of these routines. For example, they explain that they need to get rid of germs that might make them ill.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. There are well stocked first aid boxes within the nursery and a member of staff is assigned to check the contents of these on a regular basis. The majority of staff hold a valid first aid qualification and they ensure any accidents are recorded and shared with parents, who are also given a copy of the record.

Children have good opportunities to take part in physical activities, which help them to develop control of their bodies. For example, they have access to a good range of resources, both indoors and outside, including, balancing equipment, wheeled toys, balls and a parachute. Babies are taken out into the fresh air and staff support the youngest children to develop their skills as they help them to use equipment. The three and four-year-olds are developing very good physical skills. They move around confidently and with good control, and learn to move well in a variety of ways. For example, they confidently negotiate a pathway as they run and chase each other and successfully complete an obstacle course when they skilfully use equipment, such as balance beams.

All children are able to rest according to their needs. For example, staff follow the youngest children's sleep patterns as discussed with their parents and the older ones are able to sit quietly as and when they want.

Children benefit from varied, nutritious meals and snacks, which help contribute to a healthy diet. Meals are prepared on site using fresh ingredients and staff ensure these comply with any special dietary requirements the children may have to ensure they remain healthy. Babies are fed according to their individual routines and the older children sit together to eat their meals, which provides valuable opportunities for them to develop good social skills and manners. Staff ensure children have plenty to drink throughout the day. For example, they are offered a drink with their meals, drinking water is made readily available in all areas for children to access as and when they become thirsty and babies are offered cooled boiled water on a regular basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. The entrance has lots of useful information displayed for parents and the playrooms have colourful displays, which prominently feature the children's own work. This shows their efforts are valued and appreciated and provides them with a rich and stimulating environment in which to learn. The premises are kept secure at all times. Parents and visitors are only admitted by staff and the identification of visitors is checked and their presence recorded.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised effectively because staff use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, all areas are risk assessed on a monthly basis and staff have responsibility for checking safety equipment, such as fireguards, and socket covers are in place on a daily basis. Staff effectively raise children's awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, they regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them so they know what to do in the event of a fire and it is evident the children understand the importance and urgency of this. They clearly describe how they have to line up when they hear the whistle and quickly go outside, without stopping to get their coats. They also learn about road safety as they go for walks in the local area and discuss the people who help keep them safe, such as fire fighters and police officers, as part of topics.

Children use a very good range of well maintained toys and resources both indoors and outside. These are all appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, very young children have access to a good range of colourful manufactured toys and also have opportunities to explore the textures of both natural and found resources in the sensory room. All toys and resources are well organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access and are checked by staff on a regular basis to ensure these are safe, with any damaged items being removed for disposal.

Children are well protected from possible abuse. Staff have a clear understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures in regard to protecting and safeguarding children. They demonstrate a good understanding of the possible indicators of abuse and are fully aware that they must report any concerns to the designated member of staff. The nursery policy does not, however, reflect the recent changes in relation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The nursery has good settling-in procedures. For example, each child is assigned a key worker who takes a special interest in them and pre-placement visits are encouraged to help those who are new to the nursery to settle and feel comfortable in their surroundings. Children develop very good relationships with the staff, who are genuinely pleased to see them each day. For example, they greet the children with a smile and listen with interest as they share their news with them.

Babies and children under two-years-old separate easily from their parents and are happy and settled in the staff's care. They make good progress because they benefit from routines, which are consistent with their experiences at home and they take part in a very good range of age-appropriate activities, which are well planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. These include opportunities to experience a wide range of textures as they explore, amongst other items, wet pasta, dough, paint and 'gloop'. They play with a good range of manufactured

toys and they respond to the colours and sounds of these with great interest. They also have good opportunities to develop their communication skills. For example, staff respond to the children's sounds as they play and enthusiastically lead singing time when the babies listen with interest and the toddlers make very good attempts to join in with a variety of songs and action rhymes.

Children between the ages of two and three-years-old are very confident in their surroundings. They play happily together and with adults as they explore small world toys, imaginative resources and construction toys. They benefit from the good range of activities, which staff plan for them using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For example, they learn to identify different fruit as they make fruit salad for their snack. They confidently direct their own play and are happy to gather for group activities. For example, they become fully immersed in role play as they care for the dolls and they learn to concentrate as they listen to stories as part of a group. They benefit from mixing with the older children and often follow their lead and copy what they do. For example, as they take part in an obstacle course they put out their arms to help them balance as they have seen the older ones do. However, on occasion staff do not always successfully extend children's learning during focused activities. For example, whilst learning about different fruit, the children were not encouraged to handle the items so they could experience the different textures and smells.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is evident in the planning of activities. These clearly show how all the six areas of learning are covered and how the activities relate to the stepping stones and the stage each child is at. The intended learning outcome is clearly identified and most focused activities are well planned and presented. Detailed assessment records are in place to chart children's progress towards the early learning goals, which are made readily available to parents. These include examples of the children's work and written observations of their responses to activities, which support staff's findings and show the children are making good progress.

Staff pay very good attention to providing lots of opportunities for children to see print in their environment. For example, resources are clearly labelled, the helper of the day is displayed and children are encouraged to help write the captions for the various displays. Staff use resources very well to support children's learning and they use open-ended questions effectively to promote their thinking. They also make good use of the learning opportunities presented during everyday routines. For example, they encourage the children to count the number of cups needed at snack time. They have good relationships with the children, demonstrate a calm and consistent approach to behaviour management and effectively encourage children to take on responsibility.

Both the three and four-year-olds are very confident. They arrive happy and keen to learn and have good relationships with both their peers and the adults who care for them. They thoroughly enjoy directing their own play, particularly role play and they take a real pride in the nursery. This is evident from the colourful displays they have produced to decorate the walls. They concentrate well during most whole group activities, particularly story and they behave very well. They are very confident to approach visitors and are very polite when doing so. They are very aware of their own needs. They access the toilet independently, wash their hands when necessary and many can put on their own coat.

All children enjoy listening to stories. They sit quietly and show great interest when staff read to them and they access books to look at independently or to share with their friends. They hold these correctly and clearly relate what is happening in the picture. Some of the books, however, are not in a very good state of repair. For example, some have pages missing, which means children are not always able to use these effectively. They show a good understanding that print carries meaning. For example, they self-register on arrival when they find their name card and put it in the post bag, and they use mark making for a purpose very confidently as they write appointments and patients' notes as they pretend to be a doctor or a nurse. They are beginning to recognise letter sounds. For example, they correctly identify the letters in their name and those of others at registration and delight in making up nonsense words as they use magnetic letters. They clearly explain what they are doing during activities and enjoy talking about their experiences. For example, they enthusiastically described a visit by a doctor to the nursery and how they heard their heart going 'boom, boom' as they listened to this through a stethoscope. They are developing very good writing skills. For example, most children can write their own name and some can also write other familiar words. They also help to write the captions for the displays, when they either write over the top of the text, copy this or write words independently.

Children's mathematical knowledge is developing well. They confidently use counting for a purpose as they count the number of cups needed at snack and they know that only four can access activities, such as the sand at any one time. Displays show they have made a simple graph relating to eye colour and that they regularly use the height chart to record how much they have grown. They show a good understanding of simple calculation as they take part in number rhymes and board games. For example, at the end of each week they play a particular board game when they enthusiastically compare their scores to see if they have beaten the previous week's. They can correctly sequence the days of the week and can identify many numerals. This is evident as they discuss the day's date and find the corresponding numbers. They show good spatial awareness as they turn pieces of jigsaw around to fit and they learn about capacity as they fill containers in the sand.

Both the three and four-year-olds have a vivid imagination, which is particularly evident as they access the role play area to act out both real and imagined situations. For example, they become fully immersed as they dress up as doctors and nurses. They bandage the dolls, prescribe medicine for the various ailments they diagnose and gently tuck their patient into bed. They dress up as kings and princesses when they make cloaks from material and decorate their own crowns, and they enthusiastically make up their own plays, when they assume the role of director and actors. Displays of their artwork show their creative development is good. These include, drawings depicting their recent experience of a school visit and characters from the 'Goldilocks and the three bears' story made from collage materials, such as tissue paper.

Children are interested in nature and their environment. For example, they care for the nursery plants both indoors and outside and show an interest in the weather as they correctly complete the weather board each day. They understand how to operate the group's computer and other electronic toys and confidently use various construction materials. They also show that they understand the purpose of an x-ray as they pretend to be a doctor, explaining this is a picture of someone's bones taken with a special camera to see if they are broken.

Children's physical skills are developing very well. They use balance equipment confidently as they take part in an obstacle course, can negotiate a pathway as they run and chase each other, and they show an awareness of others as they line up sensibly to go outside. They show good

fine motor skills as they use pencils to draw recognisable pictures, use knives to cut up fruit as they make fruit salad and use cutlery correctly at meal times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and are highly valued as individuals. Staff find out about their individual needs before they start at the nursery and meet these well. For example, important information is collected on the registration form and babies' home routines are discussed and followed. In addition, parents are asked to complete an 'all about me form', which is tailored to each age group where they can detail, amongst other things, their child's likes, dislikes and interests. Parents are also encouraged to bring in photographs of important people in the children's lives, such as grandparents, which they put in an album and discuss with the children. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very welcome to attend and are supported well. Individual play plans are in place and staff ensure they work very closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's particular needs are met and that they are fully included.

Children behave very well and a calm and productive atmosphere is evident throughout the nursery. Staff have a good understanding of behaviour management and are good role models for the children to follow. They use very effective strategies to promote good behaviour. For example, they help the youngest ones to learn about sharing and turn taking and use an effective reward system with the three to five-year-olds. The children clearly understand and value this system and are keen to see how many steps they need to achieve in order to receive a certificate. They readily help to put the toys away when the 'tidy up' music is played and are keen to take their turn as helper at snack time. They show a kind and caring approach towards the younger ones and wait patiently for their turn during activities, such as board games and an obstacle course.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local environment through a range of purposeful activities. For example, they learn about festivals from around the world, such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali and resources, such as books, jigsaws, posters, dressing-up clothes and dolls also help to raise their awareness of diversity. They regularly visit the local supermarket, nearby pond and adventure playground and have also visited the theatre, railway station and a travel agent's. They also benefit from visitors to the group who share their skills with them, such as a doctor, fire fighters and a florist. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All children benefit from the nursery's positive partnership with the parents and carers. Staff greet parents on arrival, which makes them feel welcome and they provide them with useful information about the service. For example, the weekly menu, leaflets and posters to promote children's health and photographs of staff, their roles and responsibilities and qualifications are displayed in the entrance. Staff ensure parents are well informed about their child's care and the activities that they have been involved in each day. For example, good verbal interaction is evident, photographs are displayed, children's records of progress are sent home regularly and a daily sheet is completed for the youngest children. Parents spoken to at the inspection were keen to express their satisfaction with the service, many stating that they had been using the nursery for a number of years as their family had grown.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is good. Staff provide parents with clear information about the Foundation Stage and they are able to

access their child's record of progress at any time so they can monitor their progress. They are fully informed about forthcoming events. For example, information about the current topic is displayed so parents can encourage their child to bring in objects relating to this and parents are welcome to come into the nursery and share their skills with the children. Sheets detailing words to the children's favourite songs and instructions on how to make various types of dough are available in the entrance so parents can share these activities at home with their child. Staff also encourage the children to take the nursery's empathy doll home with them and ask parents to detail the doll's experience in her adventure book.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care needs are met very well and the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The premises are well organised and the available space is utilised well to maximise play opportunities for the children. Activities are well planned and presented overall, however, on occasion large group activities for the three and four-year-olds do not sustain their interest effectively. For example, during an activity to make fruit salad the children spent a lot of time waiting for their turn as only one member of staff was assigned to the activity.

Children benefit from high levels of qualified and experienced staff, many of whom have been at the nursery for a number of years. They all have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, work very well together as a team and show they are keen to further their professional development and improve their practice through training. They understand the importance of regularly reviewing the quality of the care and education and do so through evaluating activities, staff meetings and the input of a qualified teacher who attends the setting once a week to support the activities of the funded children. Robust systems are in place for the recruitment and vetting of any new staff, which have been effectively reviewed and amended to ensure they are in line with the recent changes in legislation. There are effective induction processes in place and good support is provided for any students on placement, who are made fully aware of what duties they can and cannot perform. This means that children are well protected.

Clear policies and procedures are in place, which cover all areas of the service, including those to be followed in an emergency, such as a child being lost or requiring hospital treatment. The registration certificate is displayed and the conditions of this adhered to. All legally required documentation, such as child records, accident and medication records are in place and there is a system to record any complaints that may be received from parents. All documentation is well organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. The nursery's child protection policy does not, however, reflect the recent changes in relation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection it was recommended that children be afforded privacy when using the toilet, the resources in relation to diversity be increased and the fire officer contacted for advice on the fire evacuation procedures. Resources have been purchased to raise children's awareness of diversity, including dolls, books and posters and are all in regular use. The fire officer's recommendations have been followed regarding the number of evacuations that should be carried out annually and arrangements are in place for doors to be fitted to the toilet cubicles.

At the last nursery education inspection it was recommended that the opportunities be increased for children to use everyday technology and programmable toys, to access climbing and balancing equipment and to self select resources and be independent when doing creative work. The nursery has purchased a computer, programmable toys and a cassette and compact disc player, more opportunities are provided for children to use the large equipment at the nearby park and staff now regularly set up obstacle courses using various equipment, such as balance beams and small climbing frame. In addition, children now have free access to resources, such as paper, glue and collage materials, which they use to create independent artwork.

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 all focused activities for the two to three-year-old children are planned effectively to enable them to take a full and active part
- ensure the child protection policy reflects the recent changes in relation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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 range of books to effectively support children's interest in reading
- improve the organisation of large group activities to ensure children's interest is sustained.

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