

Ashfield Nursery & ELC

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY242765
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Inspector	Lynne Pope
Setting Address	South Tyneside District Hospital, Harton Lane, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 0PL
Telephone number	0191 4557777
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Registered person	Ashfield Nursery and ELC 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 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?

Ashfield Day Nursery and Early Learning Centre is one of three provisions run by a private provider. It opened in 2002 and operates from purpose built premises in the grounds of South Tyneside District Hospital in South Shields. A maximum of 72 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 until 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year.

There are currently 96 children aged from six weeks to seven years on roll; of these, 29 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to spacious playrooms where there is a satisfactory state of cleanliness. They benefit from staff taking steps to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they wear disposable aprons when changing nappies and handle food safely. Nappies are disposed of appropriately for children under the age of two years. However, the nappy bin in the main bathroom does not have a lid on to protect children should they touch it. Children learn about personal hygiene as they are guided appropriately by staff. Children over the age of three years are becoming independent as they use the bathroom. An effective sickness policy is in place which protects children from the spread of infection. Appropriate consents and records are in place for the administration of medication and recording accidents. However, the medication record is not consistently signed by parents at the end of the day to acknowledge that they have been informed.

Children's wellbeing is enhanced as they access a well balanced, healthy diet. Meals are freshly prepared on the premises. A selection of fruit is provided for snacks which are set out on a side table for children over the age of two years. They can decide when to have their own snack. Children over the age of three years enjoy the responsibility of helping to prepare the fruit. Most children are developing knowledge and understanding of how exercise helps them to stay healthy. They enjoy taking part in ring games in the garden, using the slides, running around the spaces and using hoops. Children aged over three years enjoy taking part in movement to music tapes where they move their bodies or do actions in time to the music. Children under the age of 15 months have limited access to the outdoors. They go outside when the weather is suitable or are taken for walks in the local environment. All children are able to rest or be active as they need.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to a well organised environment. The indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively, enabling children to explore and take risks while being supervised. A wide variety of artwork, which includes children's attempts at writing, is displayed on the walls in each area which gives them ownership of the environment. They use a satisfactory range of safe, well maintained toys and equipment suitable to the age and stage of their development. They are confident as they develop their independence well, accessing resources freely for themselves.

Children are cared for in a very secure environment and are well protected by the procedures in place. All visitors to the building are monitored. Written risk assessments are in place that covers all areas. Fire drills are carried out with the children so that they are aware of the routine. Children develop a good awareness of their own safety through sensitive reminders, such as to be careful when using the hoops outdoors. Babies and young children sleep safely and are comfortable. They are frequently monitored. Children are well protected by staff that are confident and secure in their knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. They give high priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff in the setting provide a calm, consistent environment where children are happy and settled. Good relationships are developed with staff and peers. Staff interact well with children as they sit at the child's level and encourage them with appropriate language during their activities. Most children are motivated and interested in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities which provide good levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, babies explore a spacious environment where they are able to develop their crawling skills and pull themselves up prior to walking. They explore various toys that are interactive as they move or make a noise. Children aged 15 months to three years use their concentration well as they attempt to thread the beads onto laces. They enjoy sitting in small groups as they listen to stories or look at the pictures. Children aged 15 months to two years are happily occupied with the coloured water. In particular they enjoy making a big splash. However, there are no plans in place for this age group which addresses children's individual development needs, both indoors and outdoors. Written plans are in place for the rest of the age groups. They are based on individual children's needs each week backed up by written observations of the activities. Individual progress files are kept which staff refer to for future planning.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are settled and confident in the setting. They all have a positive approach to activities being eager to take part. The use of the High/Scope principle during the session, focuses children on what they are doing. It enables them to select their own activities which they then recall in a group. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation stage. They regularly monitor and assess children's developmental progress with the result that they have a good knowledge of each child's stage of development. Written plans and evaluations cover small group time, however, they do not differentiate how activities would be adapted for children of different ages and abilities.

Children are becoming very confident speakers. On arrival, they are eager to fill in the news board where they attempt to, or are successful in, forming letters. Lots of discussion arises from someone having chicken pox at home. In planning time they are confident as they decide what activity they would like to do and what they are going to do there. Recall time later on, helps them to describe what they did. Their imagination is used really well. Resources include a travel agents area which is stocked appropriately. They realise that you can travel to somewhere in the world as they point at the map and look at brochures. Number is used in their play as they say numbers and press the keys on the telephone. At lunch time, they help to set the table after discussing how many places are needed and how many knives, forks and spoons need to go on each table. Great curiosity is shown outdoors when they discover some worms. This leads to discussion about what they eat.

Information technology supports their learning well as three-year-olds learn how the computer works. Four-year-olds are confident as they explain that they play games on the computer and write their name. They are developing a heightened awareness of time. A time line is displayed of the routine of the day which includes photographs. Children are aware of certain times by following this, for instance, stating it is time to go outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude towards others and gain a good understanding about the wider world. Various festivals are celebrated during the year. Outings are made into the local environment. The staff member with responsibility for children with learning difficulties or disabilities is developing her knowledge as she attends training courses. This ensures the provision would meet the needs of individual children. Staff are calm and consistent in their approach to behaviour management. They use timely interventions where they use distraction or clear instruction which protects the child. Positive behaviour is encouraged through praise which develops children's self-esteem and confidence. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are beginning to learn to cooperate well together. They share resources such as books. Older children play together in small groups as they share the same interests.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from a two way sharing of information between staff, parents and carers which enhances their learning. Parents and carers of young children are informed about their day through a daily record sheet. Parents and carers of older children receive information verbally. They have access to their child's development file and are able to attend an annual review of their child's progress. Regular information about activities is provided through newsletters. The complaint procedure is shared with parents and records show that they are aware of what to do should they have a concern. However, the record of complaints linked to the National Standards does not include any action that is taken or the outcome of the investigation.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. The required policies and procedures are in place which supports the care of the children. However, the operational plan is not up to date. All records are kept up to date and are available on the premises. Organisation of the premises allows children to select their own resources and take part safely. Children have access to age-appropriate playrooms to aid their development. There is a satisfactory balance of indoor and outdoor play, however, outdoor play is not always covered in planning and children under the age of 15 months have limited access to the outdoors. Staff enhance their skills through access to relevant training and appropriate support, such as staff meetings. In practice they work towards keeping children healthy and safeguard their welfare.

The leadership and management is good. The manager has an overall view of the setting. She meets regularly with staff and observes practice within the rooms. Staff work well together as a team. Detailed planning is in place that covers long, medium and short term development. This is supported by the evaluations following activities and children's individual development files. In practice staff adapt activities as they take place. However, evaluations and written plans do not differentiate between individual children to support their individual needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous day care inspection, recommendations were made to: review the routine to ensure that children benefit from purposeful staff interaction; review written systems to ensure rigorous risk assessments are in place; and increase staff's knowledge to enable them to effectively meet the needs of children with learning difficulties or special needs.

Good routines are evident in each room of the nursery and older children are developing a heightened awareness as they follow the routine during the day. Staff interact well with children during their activities, ensuring that children gain the most benefit. A comprehensive written risk assessment is in place that covers all areas of the nursery. A member of staff has been designated with responsibility for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She attends regular training which she shares with staff.

The previous nursery education inspection raised points for consideration to: increase staff's knowledge to enable them to effectively challenge older and more able children; organise time and resources effectively to enable children to progress fully; and develop procedures to effectively monitor the positive impact of observation and evaluation to inform future planning.

The deputy manager has attended training for the Foundation Stage and has a good knowledge which is reflected in the planning of activities. There is a well developed routine which children are aware of. Resources are organised so that children can make their own choices and develop their independence. Development plans are in place for individual children with written observations of their progress. Staff refer to the observations of achievements when planning future activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been three complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. Three complaints related to National Standard 2: Organisation and one complaint related to National Standard 6: Safety. In May 2006 concerns were raised over staff:child ratios in the baby room. On the 26th May 2006 a childcare inspector visited the premises to investigate and two actions were raised. As a result, the provider put in place signing in and out sheets in the rooms and ensured that part-time staff are available to cover staff leave or sickness. Ofsted were satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed. Concerns were raised in July 2006 over staff:child ratios for children aged two years and regarding the security of the premises. A childcare inspector visited the premises on the 18th July 2006 to investigate. As a result, three actions were raised in relation to safety and documentation and a compliance notice was issued with regard to staff:child ratios. As a result, the provider extended risk assessments in the baby room and children were moved to their own playrooms at 07.30. Ofsted were informed of any significant changes. A childcare inspector carried out a monitoring visit to the nursery on the 22nd August 2006. Ofsted was satisfied that the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the monitoring visit took place. Concerns were raised in February 2007 regarding staff:child ratios. A childcare inspector visited the premises on the 22nd February 2007. As a result, an action was raised relating to recording staff's and children's attendance that included the hours of attendance. The provider put in place a new record of attendance that addressed when children joined together in rooms. Ofsted were satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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.

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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 nappies are disposed of in a safe and hygienic manner in the bathroom
- provide regular opportunities for children under the age of 15 months to access the outdoors
- ensure that staff are consistent in gaining parent's signatures to acknowledge that they have been informed that medication has been administered
- ensure that planning is consistently in place for children aged 15 months to 2 years and that it includes outdoor activities with an expected outcome for children
- ensure that the operational plan has up to date information about how the nursery is organised and staffed
- further develop the complaints record so that it includes any action taken and the outcome of the investigation

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):

- include differentiation in planning for small group time for different ages and abilities
- develop evaluation of small group time further to cover individual children's development

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