



Abacus Teaching Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY297847
Inspection date	06 June 2005
Inspector	Shirley Peart
Setting Address	1 Taberna Close, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE15 0BW
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Registered person	W.O.W! 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?

Abacus Nursery was registered in October 2004 under the present owners. It is located in the village of Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. The nursery has sole use of a building which is near to local shops and amenities in the village. The nursery comprises of a main play room and baby area, three additional rooms, children's toilets and wash basins, kitchen and office space. There is a fully enclosed outdoor area for outside play.

The nursery provides care and education for children from the local and surrounding areas. Wrap around care for the local nursery school and after school care for children aged up to eight years, is also provided. The nursery is open from 07.30-18.30 Monday to Friday all year round, excluding bank holidays.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 41 children at any one time. There are currently 68 children on roll. There are nine three and four year olds who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language.

There are 14 staff who work directly with the children and the owners often work in the setting. Most of the staff have relevant childcare qualifications and some are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from relevant workers in the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a very clean and well organised environment. Young children's needs are met effectively regarding sleep, feeding and nappy changing routines, as staff recognise and respond to children quickly. These routines are very well recorded to ensure children's care is monitored well. Staff follow good hygiene practices during children's nappy changes, to ensure babies are protected from cross infection. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene as they wash their hands after play, before eating and after using the bathroom. The nursery is implementing Healthy Pathways which has improved the dietary intake, hygiene and emotional wellbeing of the children very well. For example; they wear their slippers indoors and can brush their teeth after eating if they wish. They are given a very healthy diet such as fruits, carrot and celery sticks for snack and a substantial lunch and tea. Children's special diets are well catered for. Children can help themselves to regular drinks from the water machine. This ensures that children's nutritional needs are met very well.

Good procedures are in place should children need medication or have an accident. The person in charge regularly attends health authority link sessions, to ensure she is up to date with current practices, such as the exclusion of children on health grounds.

All children have very good opportunities to use the outdoor area on a planned basis throughout the day. Babies are taken out for regular walks in buggies to collect other children from school and nursery. They have excellent opportunities to kick and roll balls indoors so that their need for physical play and fresh air is enhanced very well. Younger children use their large gross motor movements successfully during group singing and ring games and when playing with balloons, which they all thoroughly enjoy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure, warm and welcoming environment. Children currently have limited privacy in the toilet area and plans are in place to address this, for the benefit of the children. The good implementation of procedures, use of safety equipment, and staff's vigilance throughout the nursery ensures that children's welfare and safety is monitored well. Effective recording regarding risk assessments, fire drills and children's care routines enhances the safe practice. The addition of new policies such as the sun and door procedure ensure that staff work towards developing the provision so that children are safe and very well cared for.

Children access their age appropriate toys and equipment easily, safely and independently. These are sturdy, clean and in very good condition. Toddlers walk independently from one area to another within the nursery while being encouraged and closely observed by vigilant staff; older children know the boundaries as they line up at the door and walk slowly to the outside area or to the bathroom. Children play outside with good protection from strong sunlight by use of sun cream, hats and an outdoor canopy. Relevant information and procedures are in place regarding child protection which ensures children's welfare is protected appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy and settled in their environment. Younger children's individual needs are met very well. They benefit from responsive, encouraging staff, who give lots of reassurance, cuddles and warm, natural interaction. Well planned activities are linked to the different development stages of young children. Children from babies to three years have lots of opportunities to engage in sensory activities as they play with and explore natural materials and objects. For example; they use spaghetti, jelly, vegetables, wooden and metal objects, such as wooden spoons and metal pots, in well planned activities. Toddlers are very independent as they run enthusiastically to the carpet area for large group singing time, they are animated and thoroughly enjoy their action songs. Babies and toddlers are fully engrossed and fascinated by the sight and feel of paint and glitter during their creative/painting activities. Staff are currently updating their knowledge on the birth to three framework by attending relevant training. This ensures that children benefit from staff who are well informed and up to date on new developments.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Relevant staff attend regular training on the foundation stage which enhances their knowledge well, so that effective learning opportunities are on offer for the children. Detailed planning is in place which covers a wide range of topics and includes the learning intentions which are appropriately linked to the stepping stones. However, as the weekly activities are not evaluated staff cannot easily identify if the children have achieved the learning intention set out. Staff provide lots of challenges during activities and introduce new words which assists children's learning and language development well. The 'classroom' area is well set out with appropriate labelling and where children can access the equipment

easily. They find their own trays for their work and are given the time and space to concentrate and to complete tasks. Children's achievements are generally well recorded as most children have come through the nursery. Therefore, their progress has been documented and monitored effectively, in their personal development files. However, some assessment files are not up to date, therefore staff are unable to track children's progress in relation to the stepping stones.

Children are very independent and helpful for example; they tidy away their toys, give out cups, plates and peel oranges at snack time. They are settled and are keen to talk about the things they bring in from home and their pictures at 'come together time'. Their behaviour is good, they share well and are able to take turns successfully. Both three and four year olds are able to write and draw confidently using a range of tools such as stencils. They talk about their experiences confidently and listen attentively to stories. They can easily answer questions on a familiar story and can finish the endings enthusiastically.

Children use counting and numbers well in everyday play situations. For example; they can count the children and how many pencils are needed, four-year-olds spontaneously count the children at the snack table correctly. They can count, classify and match the correct number of objects during fun, mathematical games. Good creative activities assist children to learn about movement and shape such as using blocks and wheeled toys to make patterns with paint. Children thoroughly enjoy their action songs and join in enthusiastically.

During planned activities children have good opportunities to discover how things work. For example, when they look at, talk about and explore cameras. Children gain a good understanding of their world and the things in it. They are involved in suitable activities such as visits outside of the nursery and interesting visitors who come in. Generally they have limited opportunities to use information technology or programmable equipment.

Children have good, regular opportunities to play outdoors on a planned basis. They enjoy warming up before outdoor play and are able to recognise changes to their bodies after exercise. They can follow instructions well and can find their own space by holding out their arms, they know not to go over the line or the 'crocodile' will get them. Varied physical activities and use of different equipment enables children to develop their overall physical skills very well. For example, they can stand on one leg, hop and jump and make good attempts to skip. They use ribbons, bikes, cars and climbing equipment successfully. They can manipulate small tools well to achieve their aim.

Overall children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A stable key worker within each group ensures that children's individual needs are met well. Good monitoring systems ensure that care needs are maintained, in line with the child's personal routine. Young children can bring in and play with their

favourite items from home which helps them to settle and move between home and nursery. Interesting visitors come into the nursery, such as the Zoo Lab. Regular nature walks and celebrating festivals, enable children to learn about their environment, the things in it and traditions. Although children have access to some multi-cultural toys and books, there are limited images and objects on display for the children that reflect positive non-stereotypical roles, racial, cultural diversity and disability.

Staff are calm, competent and good role models, therefore children's behaviour is good. Older children are helpful and tidy away their toys, younger children are well supervised to ensure they begin to learn right from wrong and how to be kind to each other. Older children enjoy helping the younger children with their self-care tasks, such as washing their hands, which gives them a good sense of responsibility.

Children with special needs and special educational needs are well supported and fully included in the activities and daily routine. Staff ensure that they liaise with parents and relevant outside agencies so that specific care and education is provided for the children.

Partnership with parents is very good and parents speak very highly of the nursery. They feel that their children receive excellent care and that staff ensure sufficient information is gathered regarding the needs and routines of their children. Good information is available for parents; notice boards, large graphics on the entrance door and regular newsletters, keep parents well informed about the nursery, what their children will be doing and how they can be involved. Each child has a daily diary which updates parents on the care and the activities that their children have been engaged in. Parents are suitably involved, alongside the nursery staff and children, when specific visitors come into the nursery and when the local community has festivals, which gives children a good sense of belonging.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The owners of the nursery are very committed to the staff and the children. They provide hands on assistance, they are improving the nursery environment and help the staff to develop, which ensures a secure environment for the children. Staff attend regular training which updates their knowledge and keeps them up to date with developments, such as the Birth to Three Framework. A positive, friendly and competent staff team clearly enjoy their work. They provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment for the children. The good organisation of the nursery, such as the flexible daily routines, clear staff roles, deployment and planned outdoor play sessions, means that the nursery flows very well in a natural way. Staff: child ratios are good. Staff use their time and the space in the nursery effectively which ensures that the facilities available benefit the children, so that their all round development is fostered well. The main key workers are experienced for the age group of children that they look after and the system ensures that each group of children has good continuity of care. Policies are currently being up dated and new ones are being implemented, which ensures the protection and welfare of children is of paramount

importance.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The person in charge is experienced and motivated. Good induction procedures are in place. Regular communication in the form of meetings, staff appraisals and planned parents evenings, ensures that all parties are well informed. The person in charge supports the staff well with regard to planning the curriculum. The education provision is evaluated appropriately, via the regular meetings held. She ensures that the relevant staff member, who works with the three and four-year-old children, maintains good links with the local nursery school teacher based in the nearby school, so that the educational provision is effective for the children. Overall the setting meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- consider displaying a range of positive images and objects to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial, cultural diversity and disability
- continue to improve the bathroom environment to ensure that the dignity and privacy of children are respected.

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 that the weekly planning is evaluated so that the learning intention can be checked and ensure that children's individual assessment files are maintained, so that staff can track children's progress in relation to the stepping stones
- continue to develop the programme for Knowledge and Understanding of the World, by providing children with more opportunities to use Information Technology and to operate simple equipment.

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