

# Abberley House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY337964
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Wyatt
<b>Setting Address</b>	Abberley House, Droitwich Road, Claines, WORCESTER, WR3 7SW
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<b>Registered person</b>	Jane Betty Dallard
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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](http://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?

Abberley House Nursery is one of two nurseries run by the proprietor. It opened in 2007 and operates from the ground floor of a property standing in its own grounds, which is located in Claines on the outskirts of Worcester city. A maximum of 15 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 16.30 during term time, and runs a two week play scheme for four to eight-year-olds during the summer holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and to the setting's conservation area.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

Eleven members of staff, including the proprietor, work at the nursery. Of these nine have relevant early years qualifications. The setting has the support of a mentor teacher from the local authority. The nursery is represented at local early years partnership meetings and providers' forums.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health and welfare are promoted. Their health and medical history are discussed with parents and well documented. The setting's sickness, medication and accident procedures are clearly explained and parents alerted to these during settling in visits. Should children become unwell, have an accident or need medication prompt appropriate action is taken to ensure their well-being, to inform their parents and to complete relevant records. Most staff have a current first aid qualification.

Children are encouraged to develop independence in seeing to their personal care. They wash their hands regularly and understand the importance of these routines. Older children use the toilet independently, with discreet support from staff when needed. Younger children's comfort is ensured through regular correctly managed nappy changing procedures. Toddlers confidently respond to toilet training as this is managed in a relaxed way by staff, who ensure that parents' wishes are followed.

Children benefit from plenty of outside play and activities. They enjoy the challenges offered by varied apparatus and the chance to take part in really worthwhile outdoor experiences such as gardening, searching for bugs or constructing on a large scale from recycled materials. Some snacks and meals are held outside in the shade. Children are protected from the elements as staff are careful to encourage the wearing of hats and suncream when it is hot and to using shaded areas. Children wear appropriate clothing and footwear in inclement weather. Their rest needs are also effectively met. Good use is made of quiet times such as looking at books or games, and when children need a sleep, staff ensure they are comfortable and undisturbed.

Children are well nourished. They have a good breakfast and snacks of different fruits and some biscuits. Water, milk and fruit squash drinks are readily available. The setting works closely with parents to make sure children bring healthy packed lunches. Meal times are social occasions with children and adults sitting together. Children take an active part in food preparation such as getting plates, cups and pieces of fruit ready. They help to serve drinks and fruit at the morning snack 'café'. Children also grow their own fruit and vegetables. They enjoy picking and cooking rhubarb for crumbles, and are closely monitoring the progress of their crop of potatoes and strawberries. They eagerly take part in making cakes, flapjack or iced biscuits.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in safe, secure premises. There are robust procedures regarding door security and for ensuring children are collected by people nominated by their parents and who are known to the setting. Children use age-appropriate, sturdy toys and equipment. Effective health and safety procedures, including relevant risk assessments and good staff supervision, mean that hazards are minimised.

Adults are alert to certain children who may need more input with regard to their safety and plan in sessions to talk about specific issues. All children learn to take some responsibility for their own safety, so they use tools such as scissors and different apparatus correctly. Staff show them how to use the rope swing and how to manage different risks as they enjoy all the challenges and rewards of outdoor play, large scale construction and gardening.

Children are protected from harm as a result of good security, effective vetting procedures, and because they are sensitively introduced to strategies to protect themselves. The setting's child protection policy gives easy to understand guidance to staff and to parents to show how children are safeguarded. This includes how concerns will be followed up and details relevant contact numbers. Other difficult situations are explained such as what action will be taken should a child be lost or not collected. The proprietor and staff have access to national and Local Safeguarding Children guidance which includes action to take if an allegation is made against a member of staff. However, parents are not made fully aware of this aspect of the setting's responsibility as it is not reflected in the nursery's child protection policy.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very settled and contented. They love being at the nursery and are totally absorbed and captivated by the experiences provided. Staff are very sensitive to the needs of younger or less able children and work hard to help everyone to take part in activities at their level. Priority is given to ensuring children settle and to identifying their skills and characteristics.

A recognition of each child as an individual, as well as a clear understanding of the ethos of 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage, underpins the nursery's planning and assessment procedures. As a result, like their older peers, young children really benefit from the focus on outside activities, great opportunities to explore their environment and to access materials ranging from ice to jelly to wet or dry sand. All children grow in confidence and become inventive and self motivated in the way they respond and use the wide range of toys and equipment provided. A story about babies is then followed by rewarding dressing and bathing of dolls, leading to a mass washing of clothes, and expert pegging out of these on several lines. The introduction of some long foam 'giraffe' type figures leads to these 'grazing' along the hedge rows, held aloft by enthusiastic youngsters.

Children very competently explore the garden and all its different features. They sit on logs for stories, look at bugs through magnifiers, feed the birds and water plants. They thoroughly investigate the properties of natural materials, experimenting with the varied and interesting equipment provided such as long tubes and turkey basters during water play.

There is a warm rapport between children. They form friendships and take part in cooperative, and often involved, play together. They really benefit from the adults' involvement and interest, and the ways staff adapt their approaches according to the needs of the children, including stepping back so children take the lead. Children who find it difficult to communicate with or to relate to others, are gently introduced to activities and opportunities to interact with other children. This really helps them to settle well and to feel confident and reassured.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are competent, resourceful and enthusiastic learners. Staff readily encourage both their perseverance, for instance during group activities, and their independence, for example, during personal care routines and when helping with different activities and tasks. Through serving snacks, recycling water and rubbish, caring for plants, birds and animals in the garden children learn to take responsibility. They eagerly respond to these opportunities.

Children are supremely confident to handle materials in different ways. They show initiative and imagination as they use various resources and respond to different situations. Collecting sticks to compare lengths develops into a line of painted 'musical' sticks. A collection of ropes, boxes, cylinders, containers and wheels are anything from a building site to a complex wheeled vehicle or an explorers' transport. A drawing activity becomes a numeracy game as children stand up and line up their wax crayons in order to count them.

Children's self motivation is encouraged by the manager and staff challenging their thinking through open ended questions, problem solving and opportunities to express themselves. Children like to describe their experiences, so the current focus on babies leads to much information sharing about younger siblings or impending births. Children are developing good listening skills as staff encourage concentration during circle time discussions and well told stories. Children have a wealth of books to look at and to refer to.

Children competently apply their problem solving skills during worthwhile number activities. They count confidently and enjoy fun games, such as matching the right numbers of frogs to numbered lily pads. They invent their own games such as a large scale 'ladybird' race using various recycled materials, long mats and a dice. Placing numbers outside or on toys help children's counting and number recognition. During snack time preparations the child helping the adult counts out the required number of cups and bowls. Each child then uses two pennies to 'pay' for their fruit and drink. After watering the plants children help to measure and record the amount of water remaining in the water butt.

Children relish being outside. They show great interest and curiosity in all aspects of the garden and enclosed play area. Their awareness is supported by great resources and activities, so they use child-size tools, watering cans and buckets for their gardening. They harvest the fruit and vegetables and cook the produce. They explore and investigate their surroundings, including building a hedgehog house and feeding the occupant after hearing about hedgehogs from a local conservationist. The pond is a constant source of interest so that children see first hand the life cycle of tadpoles and endorse their findings through looking at books. They create a second 'pond', putting water and vegetation in a large sand tray and covering it with some grills. Birds are fed and bugs are humanely collected, counted and observed before being returned to their habitat.

Children are physically active. They confidently climb and balance, for example, using the rope swing or sturdy apparatus and they make their own obstacle courses. They throw and catch well, and create team games such as rolling items down mats or along a bench. They handle tools and equipment competently as they build and construct or pour water or dry sand from one container or tube to another. They fix small parts together, expertly weave different materials, for instance, through the fence panels or, on a smaller scale, as they put coloured beads on a thread.

Children are imaginative and creative. They consistently engage in cooperative role play such as caring for babies or general domestic play. They express their own ideas through their paintings, drawings, collage and modelling. They draw things they have done such as a favourite activity in nursery, and they make structures such as dens or a 'fish tank' for a magnetic fish 'initial letter' game.

Ongoing observations, sound assessments and versatile planning, which focus on the individual child, really promote children's learning and development. Managers and staff have worked hard to develop short term plans that truly reflect children's individual needs and which help

them to make rapid progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. The setting is careful to ensure children settle well. Adults use that time to observe and assess their abilities and interests and aspects which need further support. They ensure they cross reference to the Foundation Stage guidance and local authority profile when making judgements about children's abilities and when planning activities. Plans also clearly show how individual learning needs will be promoted or an activity extended to support children's interests and to give them further challenges.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are positively recognised. This is reflected in the nursery's support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the good relationships they develop with their parents. The proprietor's and staff's sensitivity and expertise, plus the benefits of interagency working, ensure appropriate plans and strategies are agreed to enable these children to be included in all aspects of nursery life.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This is reflected in their appreciation of the beliefs and lives of others, their behaviour, relationships, and their care for their environment. Children develop positive attitudes to aspects of diversity through looking at books and playing with toys such as dolls, dressing up clothes and small world figures. Special celebrations are part of the setting's activities so that, for example, during Chinese New Year the children join with the proprietor's other nursery for fun activities, including making colourful dragons. Adults working in the setting also share aspects of their cultural heritage with the children.

Children are very well behaved. They are busy, settled and confident. Staff are receptive to factors that can affect children's ability to concentrate or relate to others. When younger or less able children become distracted staff gently involve them in some other activity. They ensure that children's special interests or skills are accommodated during play and that their achievements are praised, so children feel valued. Kindness and care for others are encouraged and children respond by assisting their friends, showing concern and being helpful. They also readily contribute to nurturing and preserving different aspects of the garden and conservation area at the nursery.

Parents and carers like the nursery, they feel welcomed and well informed. The setting's ethos and the focus on outdoor life are highlighted by parents as significant factors to their children's enjoyment. Good settling in arrangements ensure that children feel secure and their carers well informed and reassured. During these visits parents have the opportunity to see the range of activities, meet children and staff and to find out how the nursery is managed and organised. Regular opportunities to speak to the proprietor and staff, plus access to leaflets, newsletters, the operational plan and displays all help parents and carers to be informed. Policies include clear procedures regarding the management and recording of any complaints. The nursery is developing ways of involving parents and carers more in the setting such as inviting them to assist children in planting up tubs. The development of a 'garden book' and plans to collate a portfolio of pictures and children's work for an individual record of their time at nursery, will give parents further insights into life at the setting.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are well informed about the intentions of Foundation Stage through leaflets, plans and displays, including an explanation about children's play in the home corner. Currently parents have more limited opportunities to be directly

involved in their children's learning at home or in the nursery. However, the nursery is already addressing this through requests for help and by ensuring parents are aware of forthcoming topics, and short term plans. Already parents' views on their children's skills and interests make an important contribution to the nursery's settling in arrangements and to staff's initial baseline assessments.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and settle quickly because of the small size of the setting, and the adults expertise in creating both a reassuring and most rewarding environment for care, learning and play. The emphasis on child-initiated play, use of the outdoor areas and access to worthwhile resources has had a big impact on children's self-esteem, their ability to express ideas, their confidence and their relationships.

There have been times when only one adult has been recorded as present, according to the attendance records. In the event the proprietor has taken prompt action to rectify the situation and at all other times children have excellent support from a caring, capable and enthusiastic management and staff team. Children benefit from the high adult to child ratio which is maintained at other times of the day, including one to one support for those who need additional help. Parents and carers are also reassured about the suitability of staff through effective vetting and recruitment procedures and ongoing staff development and training.

Children's care is supported by relevant documentation which the proprietor ensures parents complete before their children attend. These details are promptly updated with any changes. Records are securely stored and only shared with others in accordance with the nursery's confidentiality policy.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. The proprietor and staff have a clear vision for children's education based on an excellent range of activities and experiences, focussing in particular on the outdoors and promoting child-centred learning.

Adults working with the children have a clear understanding of their needs and of the intentions of the Foundation Stage. Evaluation of activities is used increasingly well to further develop good practice. Children's progress is effectively monitored in order to inform future planning. This information is used by adults to consistently develop activities to reflect children's responses, to promote their interests and skills and to support any specific learning needs. As a result children take part in, and often initiate, rewarding and challenging experiences which ensure they make rapid progress.

Children benefit as there is a commitment to the overall development of the nursery, with a particular focus on further enriching their outdoor experiences. This includes the collation of photographs and children's comments to form a special 'garden book' for everyone's reference, and plans to extend recycling and physically challenging outside activities. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable

## Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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 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):

- improve parents' awareness of child protection procedures by ensuring the setting's policy outlines action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- ensure there is a minimum of two adults on duty when children are present.

### 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):

- continue to develop opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning both in the setting and to follow up ideas at home.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)