

Ascot Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	108379
Inspection date	26 September 2007
Inspector	Judith, Mary Butler
Setting Address	1 Arundel Cottage, High Street, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7JJ
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Registered person	Pat Evitt
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?

The Ascot Nursery School opened in 1972. It is a privately owned group and operates from a house within the grounds of Ascot racecourse. The children have access to five playrooms and a conservatory on both floors of the property. Cloakroom facilities are available on both floors. The nursery serves the local area. A maximum of 32 children may attend the setting at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week throughout the year. Sessions last from 09.15 to 12.15 and from 13.15 to 16.15. Lunch club operates Tuesday and Thursday, offering sessions from 09:15 to 16:15 or 12:15 until 16:15 or 09:15 until 13:15. The nursery does not open to the children on roll during Ascot race days, but opens from 11:00 until 16:00 offering a crèche facility for parents attending the races.

There are currently 61 children on roll. Of these, 44 receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or English as an additional language.

There are 12 staff employed to work directly with the children. Of these, eight hold relevant early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected through the effective systems in place for recording all accidents and administration of medication. Parents are made aware of any incidents happening to their child and are requested to countersign all documentation. Children are developing their independence and many go to the toilet and wash their hands without assistance. Staff offer reminders to children about the importance of personal hygiene. Children are aware that there are germs and they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before cooking. Children also remind each other, for example, one child tells another that he must wash his hands before helping to ice the cakes for the grandparents' day.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to access fresh air through walks in the grounds and play in the garden. They develop their large muscle skills and access a range of equipment to assist them in these skills, such as climbing apparatus and sit and ride toys. Children particularly enjoyed the opportunity to run, freely chasing the member of staff at the end of the walk. They gain a sense of space when running and avoid collisions with other people.

Children enjoy a range of healthy, fun and nutritious snacks. They are independent and choose the amount of food they require to meet their individual needs. Staff encourage the children to try different food from the range available. Drinking water is available within the setting for children to drink as they need to. Some children bring a packed lunch from home and stay for lunch club. Staff ensure that this food is stored appropriately until it is needed. Staff and children sit together to eat their lunch, they chat to each other about the morning's events, past activities or what they are planning to do in the afternoon. Staff discuss the dietary requirements of the children with parents to ensure they are able to meet the individual needs and preferences of all children in their care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery premises are warm, welcoming, clean and well maintained. Children enter the setting happily and with confidence. They greet their peers and staff members as they enter. Children access a wide range of toys, equipment and resources to suit their individual age and stage of development. They make individual choices about the toys they wish to play with from the good range available to them each day. Effective procedures are followed by staff to ensure that all of the toys and resources are in good repair and suitable for the needs of the children attending the nursery. Children are encouraged to care for the toys and equipment and help to staff to tidy up at changeover times, for example, packing away the construction toys prior to having a snack.

Staff undertake daily safety checks to minimize risks to children. Effective procedures are in place to protect the safety of children, such as undertaking regular emergency evacuation procedures. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe. They talk to staff about walking safely and holding hands when crossing the road before they leave the nursery to go for a walk. Staff chat to children about safety in their everyday routine, for example, one staff member praising a child for holding onto the banister as he walks down the stairs.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children procedures and the signs and symptoms of child abuse. They regularly attend training and support meetings to update their knowledge. All staff are clear about the routes they should follow should they have concerns regarding a child in their care. This ensures the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery happily and with ease. Staff offer good support to children who require support in leaving their main carer. This enables them to feel secure and comfortable in their environment. Good relationships are fostered between children and staff. Children benefit from the individual time they have with the dedicated staff members and this ensures that they feel valued and special. They are developing confidence in expressing their needs, wishes and views, for example at group times when they are encouraged to share their news about events that have happened in their home lives. Children access a wide range for activities and toys within the nursery routine. They confidently select the toys and resources they wish to use from the wide and interesting range set out for them in each play room. Children have opportunities to be active and quiet each day and they are developing a sense of time, through the consistent routines in place.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children receiving funding for nursery education are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The stable staff team have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a good variety of interesting, fun and stimulating activities for the children. Children are confident and willing to speak out in large group situations, for example, recalling the names of the animals in the story. They are well behaved and are learning to share the toys and resources. Older children show co-operation in their play and take turns with the equipment provided for them. They are developing their independence and are keen to select the activities they wish to pursue. Staff guide the children through the session to ensure that they access a variety of toys, resources and activities. Children have many opportunities to mark make and practice their emergent writing. These include painting, writing their names on their pictures and the mark making area within the main play room. Older children are beginning to recognise their names and familiar letters; they enjoy books and stories and handle books correctly and with care.

Children develop their physical skills when out walking or playing in the garden. They access a range of equipment to assist them in developing skills such as climbing, running, and pedalling. Children participate in activities that assist them in developing their hand to eye co-ordination, such as threading the beads and completing the puzzles. They are confident in these skills and use a good range of age and stage appropriate equipment and tools such as scissors, pencils and crayons. Children enjoy music and singing and have a good repertoire of songs. They particularly liked singing to their grandparents who were invited to the setting to celebrate grandparents' day. Children have opportunities to develop their imagination further through a good range of role play and art and craft activities.

Children learn about different people and the world around them through the interesting range of topics and themes, such as celebrating Thanksgiving, Diwali and Chinese New Year. The range of resources reflects the diverse society and these include books, role play and small world toys. The children learn to grow and care for living things through the vegetable and fruit plot in the garden. They have recently harvested their pumpkins and enjoyed chatting to

staff about what they did to help them grow. They have access to a range of information and communication technology within their time at the nursery. Children are confident in their counting skills and share these with the staff team, for example, counting up to 29 beads threaded on the string. Staff reward children for their individual achievements by rewarding them with stickers and lots of praise. Children use mathematical language such as bigger and smaller in their every day vocabulary, such as comparing the bears and the sizes of the pumpkins.

Staff have a sound knowledge of the individual children in their care; they share information and discuss the children with the parents. Many families return to the nursery with their second and third children and are well known to the stable staff team. Staff chat to the children about their siblings in their play and this enables children to feel valued and comfortable in their surroundings. Effective techniques are in place to underpin children's learning, for example, recalling events they have taken part in, open ended questions and revisiting topics and themes. All staff undertake daily observations on the children and this enables them to identify individual children's next steps in learning. These observations are used to update the developmental profiles of older children; however there is no formal system in place to monitor younger children's progression through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff inform parents of their child's progress through daily discussions as the parents arrive and leave with their child. Regular open mornings offer parents an opportunity to discuss their child's progress and look at their child's records, work and achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a good awareness of children's needs and value them as individuals. They know each child well and develop sound relationships with the children and their families. This ensures that the individual needs of each child are met. Children are beginning to make friends with other children in the nursery and most show co-operation in their play. Children are well behaved and are aware of the simple rules and boundaries. They often display this knowledge to other children in the nursery, reminding them to share and take turns. Staff encourage positive behaviour through consistent boundaries, praise and encouragement. They display children's work and share this with parents, this enables children to develop their self-esteem.

Although there are no children currently attending the nursery with learning difficulties, disabilities or English as an additional language there are procedures in place to support all children and their families. Children are gaining positive messages about people with different cultural or religious backgrounds to their own and the world around them. Toys and resources reflect the diverse society. Children enjoy the opportunity to learn a different language through the time they spend with the French teacher each week. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff discuss the children with parents before they start at the nursery. Effective procedures are in place to record the individual needs and play preferences of the children, for example, the entry profiles parents complete and share with staff. The parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage through the prospectus, notice board, newsletters, notices and discussions with staff at the beginning and end of the day. The nursery operates an open door policy and parents are reminded that they can discuss their child's progress with staff at any time. Regular open days offer parents an opportunity to view their child's work and have a formal discussion about their progress. Verbal feedback about the nursery obtained from parents during the inspection is very positive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff make good use of the available space within the nursery and outside areas. They ensure the premises are well maintained, clean, welcoming and attractive to parents and children. Children move confidently around all areas of the nursery identified for their use. The good adult to child ratios ensure that all children receive appropriate levels of supervision and individual support in their play. Staff are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities and this contributes to the smooth running of the nursery.

Clear documentation and procedures are in place to record children's attendance. All of the required policies and procedures are held and are presented in an orderly fashion. However information contained within the prospectus, policies and displayed on the notice board does not hold the correct address of the regulator. Further documentation is in place to be completed by parents wishing to use the crèche facility offered on race days. This ensures the health, safety and welfare of all children at all times. All visitors to the setting are required to sign in and out and are supervised at all times within the setting. Effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place and this ensures the safety and welfare of children at all times. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management are good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and work well together to plan an interesting and fun curriculum. Children learn through a good variety of activities and resources. Staff undertake daily observations to record individual children's progress and next steps in learning. Clear policies and procedures support staff in working successfully with each other and parents. There are good links between home and the nursery and this enables the children to settle well. Staff attend regular meetings and these are used to discuss the routines of the nursery, planning, evaluation and individual children's progress within the setting. A robust induction and appraisal system is in place offering staff the opportunity to identify their individual strengths weaknesses and training needs. Staff regularly attend training and support meetings to update their childcare knowledge. This enables them to provide good outcomes for the children in their care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for day care there was one issue to be addressed. This related to ensuring that the complaints procedure contained the correct contact details of the regulator.

The management changed the procedure to reflect the change of address, however the address shown is no longer applicable.

At the last inspection for nursery education there were no significant weaknesses to be addressed, however the group were requested to give consideration to developing and extending the use of information and technology.

The group have now got a computer in place and older children have opportunities to work with a member of staff to develop their computer skills. A range of information and technological equipment is available to children and this includes programmable toys and electronic key boards.

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

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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 that all of the policies, procedures and information given to parents contain the correct contact address of the regulator

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):

- further develop the systems in place for recording younger children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

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