

Abbeywood Tots

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135952
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Inspector	Yvonne Campbell
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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?

Abbeywood Tots, on Station Road, is one of three private nurseries owned and managed by members of a closely related family group. The nursery is located in Filton, South Gloucestershire close to Abbeywood Railway Station and the offices of a national government department. Children come from a wide catchment area as many parents work close to the nursery. It opened in 1997 and operates from a large converted house. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Opening times are from 07.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday, all year round. Children share access to an enclosed outside play area and garden.

There are currently 49 children on roll; of these, nine receive funding for nursery education. The setting support a number of children who have English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions and some have full day care.

The nursery employs seven members of staff who have regular direct contact with children. These include: the early years teacher in charge of nursery education, three members of staff, including the manager, with Level 3 qualifications, two with Level 2 qualifications and a nursery assistant. They are supported by a senior staff team led by: the senior teacher, a senior care

practitioner, and the two nursery owners who respectively have a Level 3 qualification and previous experience in nursing. One owner is working towards the foundation degree in early years. Staff also have support from a meal time assistant.

The nursery has submitted an evaluation report for the Bristol Standard for Early Years which has been validated up to June 2008.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is promoted extremely well. They are cared for in very clean premises, where they are developing a thorough understanding of the need to maintain personal hygiene to prevent the spread of germs. Children wash their hands before meals and snacks. The wash area is easy to access and pleasant for children to visit, liquid soap and a warm air hand dryer are available. Older children have grasped the concept that germs are real though they cannot be seen. This is achieved through organised and well resourced practical activities and experiments. For example, a nurse visited the nursery and gave children a demonstration on how to wash their hands 'like nurses'. After washing their hands children touched objects and people. They then placed their hands under light boxes which showed that their hands were no longer clean.

Children are at low risk of contracting infection and illnesses in the nursery environment. As well as the regular cleaning of the equipment and all areas, the air conditioning and extractor fan system inhibits the growth of air borne germs and makes sure children breath in clean fresh air at all times. Outdoor shoes are not permitted in the base rooms where children under two are cared for. Children are appropriately excluded when unwell so that infection is not transferred to others. Children do not come into contact with contaminated material during sanitary procedures. As staff are vigilant and follow established health care routines such as hygienic nappy changing, disposal of soiled material and the immediate cleaning and disinfecting of areas and material where babies dribble or regurgitate milk. The nursery has achieved the Five Stars award for the South Gloucestershire Environmental Health department.

Children are happy and secure. Staff have an innovative approach which recognises the importance of achieving and maintaining healthy mental development in children of all ages. Older children are given opportunities to share how they feel with a trusted adult. They are also helped understand and express their feelings and how to improve. One member of staff has made contact with the child and adolescent mental health team.

Children have healthy appetites and they enjoy highly nutritious meals made from organic ingredients provided by local suppliers. Meals are freshly prepared in the kitchens of a nearby nursery, which is under the same ownership, and transported in at meal times. Children's dietary needs are met. Staff and the meal time assistant are aware of any allergies or preferences and provide alternative meals, such as vegetarian. Children express their liking for the meal and second helpings are available. The meals on the menu are checked to ensure that they are nutritionally and organically sound and seasonal variations of vegetables are included. The menu is displayed for parental information and comments.

Children have ongoing opportunities to learn about the food cycle in practical and meaningful ways. They grow vegetables such as carrots, cabbage and beans in the nursery allotment plot.

There is also a herb garden. They are also able to observe vegetables grown by other gardeners in the community allotment. Children help to prepare the fruit for snack time and under staff supervision they handle the fruit and cut it into small pieces. Children also learn about food production in other ways. As the nursery has established links with a local farmer and activities have included awareness of where chickens and eggs come from.

Children's physical development and learning opportunities outdoors are given high priority. The extremely well designed and fully resourced outside play area offers children the opportunity to play outdoors in the fresh air, in most types of weather, and also to take part in energetic activities of their choice. They build up large muscle strength as they play on equipment, including ride on toys. They coordinating movements while climbing steps to go down the slide or to play in the play house. Children enjoy organised dance sessions. They are very creative and develop and act out movements to support a theme, such as robots. Babies also have opportunities to be outdoors in the fresh air, where a grass covered section on the garden has been allocated for their use. They move around freely and safely under close supervision, using age appropriate equipment. The younger children also enjoy the challenge of crawling through equipment, such as the partly meshed tunnels placed on the floor in the base rooms.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a secure environment where they can explore and learn in safety as many safety features are in place on the premises. Most areas of the nursery, including the entrance and the car park at the side of the building, is monitored by close circuit television and the screens are displayed in the office. An intercom system is also connected to both base rooms and parents call and are recognised before they gain entry to the nursery. The base room door has a secondary security system as they have combination locks, codes are only known to the staff. Children play in a bright and spacious open plan base rooms. The former domestic property has been successfully converted and recently refurbished to meet the needs of children. For example, the downstairs area used by older children leads onto an excellent outdoor covered area beneficial for outside play and learning. Children move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas to choose activities. They also have a safe secluded area indoors if they want to read a story, listen to music, or be away from adult interaction.

A wide range of toys and learning resources are provided to support children's learning in all areas. These include colourful interactive items to promote younger children's sensory development. Older children have items for imaginary play, books, art and craft and various mark-making activities. Older children also learn to use natural material such as light-weight bricks, wood, sand and metal hammers. Toys are safe for children to use as they are good quality and are checked regularly for breakages. However, on one occasion advanced toddlers, who were taken downstairs to play with the older children, returned to the upstairs area with a small item which is not suitable for younger children.

Staff have a good understanding of safety issues and they take action to keep children safe indoors and also on trips. All cupboards in the open plan kitchenette area have safety locks and are inaccessible to children. Doors also have safety guards fitted to prevent accidents involving children's fingers. Children can be safely evacuated from the premises in an emergency as staff have regular fire drills and are aware of their individual responsibilities. Trips away from the nursery, such as the short walk to the allotment plot, are assessed to ensure children remain safe. Children are also learning about people who look after them and keep them safe. Public

workers, such as nurses and fire fighters, visit the nursery to talk about their work and give demonstrations.

Children's well being is safe guarded and promoted. Staff have a sound understanding of the categories of abuse and also signs and symptoms that cause concern. Staff are vigilant in monitoring injuries or incidents which happen both on and away from the premises. The nursery manager is the designated person for safeguarding children. She has contact with professionals in Children and Young People's Services and is aware of her responsibilities to children who are at risk. She has experience of attending case conferences with other child care professionals.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a nurturing and well organised environment. They thrive and make good progress as staff are knowledgeable about child development and provide planned and enriching learning activities for children of all ages. Babies are happy and contented as they are cared for in small groups in two cosy upstairs rooms. They have age appropriate toys and staff play along side them to stimulate their responses and involvement with the toy and during activities. Staff have good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. Children under two years take part in planned activities at their level of understanding. For example, children explore playing with water and getting wet. Staff remove their outer clothes in the warm room so children can fully experience the sensation of water touching their bodies. Children respond to music from the guitar played by a member of staff and they move their bodies and play their own instruments. Toddler aged children are increasing in confidence when a less familiar adult is present. They are aware of change, show curiosity and tentatively approach the adult to see what is happening.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident and enthusiastic learners. They start to play immediately on arrival in the nursery. Staff are available for a special play session with children as they arrive. They make the children feel special by engaging each child in conversation and also adding small complements. Registration times are very enjoyable and children have a sense of belonging. Each child gets a welcome from the whole group and hears their full name in song, with an engaging warm smile from the teacher. Children enjoy stories and books. A special secluded area is provided and children enjoy the cosy enclosed space. They visit the area often, individually and in small groups, to look at the books and listen to stories through the head phones. They are beginning to link letter sounds to words as staff sound out the beginning of words during interaction. Children also recognise their name labels on their coat hooks. Children count during every day activities, such as putting out the plates for lunch. They also count the days in the month and can match the shapes of numbers to the magnetic number line in the outdoor area.

Children explore a range of natural objects and nature cycles outdoors. They walk to the allotment, which is a short distance from the premises, and observe the seasonal changes in the plants and trees. They also observe small animals, such as chickens. Children also observe changes in the life cycle of plants which produce food. They plant beans and root vegetables in the nursery's allotment plot and know that they need to care for the plants and water them so that they grow. The allotment area also offers children a spacious area to use tools and natural materials such as hammer, nails and wood. Children are also furthering developing their understanding of what is required to create a strong structure when building. They use

lightweight bricks and apply a layer of damp sand between each layer of bricks. The well designed covered outdoor play area enhances children's observation of the weather and what happens when it rains. A well devised series of open water channels, leading from the roof, allows children to see water cascading down. They are learning that moving water has the power to move things as they place small objects in the channels and watch them travel to the bottom.

Teaching and learning is good. Children are supervised and taught by highly trained staff who have a clear understanding of the stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals. Children take part in a wide range of varied and interesting activities. Learning opportunities, such as trips and visits from community professionals, are planned to meet their learning needs. Staff have a good understanding of teaching methods. They talk to children about what they are doing and, when appropriate, add new information to extend their learning. Some activities are generated from children's own interest, such as the one on autumn. Written observations are carried out and there are assessments of the progress children make which are shared with parents. However, some unplanned learning opportunities are not recognised. For example, children know that plants need to be looked after and watered so that they grow 'big and strong'. However, when a plant dies the reason this has happened is not explored and shared with children. There are also missed opportunities for children to extend their vocabulary and use and learn words to describe what dying plants look like.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are given strong encouragement and have clear and meaningful information which enables them to begin to develop a positive view of difference, also to see themselves as a part of the wider world. Staff have established links with an orphanage in Zambia. The senior teacher has visited the orphanage and children have access to clear photographs with positive images of the happy and well cared for children who live in Africa. Children know that they are helping others as their parents are involved and help them to put together and wrap gift parcels, which are sent to named children in the orphanage. The director of the orphanage has also visited the nursery to thank the children and to share information with them about life in Zambia. Children have sent several disposable cameras back to Zambia so the children there can take photographs and return the cameras to England, so that children here can have a closer insight into their daily lives.

Children who are from different backgrounds are acknowledged during group times. For example, a boy shared a special waistcoat and cap he wore for Eid celebrations. Staff explained to the children that it was a special time, 'A bit like Christmas with lots of food and presents'. Children who come from traveller families are also welcomed in the nursery. Staff ensure that they feel relaxed by seeking suitable resources for children to explore during play, which replicates the travellers lifestyle. Children are fascinated by foreign language. They listen intently while a member of staff, who's first language is French, shares a story with them and teaches them a simple song with actions.

Children behave extremely well as they are kept purposefully occupied and enjoy learning and contributing to the simple task which needs to be done. Staff explain to children what is happening at the beginning of each session so they find it easy to comply when there is a change in the routine. They know the signal for stopping play is to stand still with a raised arm. Children take great pleasure in helping during lunch time. They collect their lunch from the serving area and help to wash up the plates after lunch. Staff praise them for helping and for acceptable behaviour, such as sitting nicely and listening at registration time.

Children's spiritual moral, social and cultural needs are fostered well. They have a sense of awe and wonder as carrots appear from the ground when they uproot the plants. Children are also fascinated by activities such as hatching chicks from eggs they collect. Some children have a strong sense of right and wrong and express themselves freely if they do not agree with what is said. A sense of morality is further enhanced by stories and discussions about doing what is right. For example, The French story about a shepherd boy who falsely asked for help several times and was not listened to when he really needed help.

Parents feel valued and know that their involvement is regarded as being essential to the effectiveness of the nursery. They have regular feedback on care and also written information in younger children's daily communication books. Children have continuity of care between home and nursery as their keyworkers are known to parents. Parents say staff take prompt action to address any concerns they have. For example, a parent brought to the attention of the owners that parents with children in separate base rooms found it difficult to get into a second room. An indoor bell was immediately fitted to alert staff that parents are outside the door. Parents meetings are held regularly and a representative is appointed to liaise with staff. Staff regularly seek the opinions of parents in other ways such as through evaluation forms.

Partnership with parents is excellent. Parents are motivated to become involved in their children's nursery education and development. They have comprehensive information about how children learn and what they do at nursery. As well as written information about the areas of learning parents are invited to specially planned Curriculum Evenings, where staff use a range of methods to demonstrate the importance of play. These include practical demonstration and video recordings of the children at play and staff explain the various steps of learning. Parents are highly aware of topic and learning themes as the senior teacher writes a detailed, but easy to understand, summary of planned learning for each term. This includes suggestions of how parents can support their children. Learning and fun continues at home for children as staff provide parents with words to some songs, so they can join in with children who want to share what they have learnt.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and make good progress at this nurturing family run nursery. Which has a small but committed group of staff, including two teachers, who know the children and their families well. Staff are well qualified and receive training and support as they present the exciting programme of learning to the children. This includes outdoor play and learning about nature and natural things during visits to the allotment, the farm and through observation of the weather. All staff are safe to be in close proximity to children as they have completed criminal records checks. Staff continue their personal development through regular in-service training organised by the senior teacher. They also have opportunities to upgrade their qualification level. For example, one member of the senior staff group and the nursery manager are working towards The Early Years Foundation Stage Degree.

Children have the required level of care and supervision as the adult to child ratio is maintained at all times. Another nursery, also run by the owners of this setting, is located close by and staff who have special skills regularly travel to this nursery to lead sessions for the children. These include, singing, guitar music and learning French. Other occasional staff include the creative dance teacher. The record of attendance is maintained and is kept up to date. Parents sign children in and out. Staff also keep a record of attendance in each room. There are clear procedures in place for the induction of new staff, probationary periods and annual appraisals.

Students are closely supervised by a named member of staff, who takes responsibility for ensuring that their agreed learning aims are being met during their time in the nursery.

All documents and policies are in place including information on children and their families. There are also written observation and assessment of children's progress. Records are available to parents on request and are also shared during parents evenings.

Leadership and management are good. There is an established senior leadership team of practitioners, who are very knowledgeable about their roles and are very committed to improving the remit of the service they offer to children in the surrounding areas and beyond. This includes a mobile crèche and an outreach service to children in a deprived area of Bristol. The owners of the nursery have put procedures in place to: monitor improvements, increase the awareness of the learning needs staff and to also support them emotionally and practically.

Staff morale and self esteem are high so children have ongoing contact with staff who are familiar to them as staff retention is good. Regular training sessions are held on Friday mornings and staff take turns to be present. These are carried out by the senior teacher who has an inspirational and innovative approach. She has a creative approach to problem solving and works with all staff in a very enabling way as she has the full support of the owners. For example, when carrying out The Early Years Foundation Stage training, the owners arranged for this to take place at a venue in Paris. Staff were engaged in not only learning about this important forthcoming government initiative for children, but were also involved in enjoying the environment and creating a strong team spirit.

The senior teacher is aware of the strengths and weakness of the group. She is currently in the process of ensuring that all members of staff are confident in delivering the programme of learning to children to an increasingly high standard. She offers individual support around various development issues. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for who it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, staff agreed to a recommendation to ensure that parents signed the record of accidents and also a further recommendation to ensure that actual hours of children's arrival and departure are recorded.

The procedures for promoting children have now improved and all records of accidents are signed by parents before being filed. The organisation of documents which support care procedures have also improved as parents now sign their children in and out of the nursery recording the exact times of arrival and departure.

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 Standard.

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):

- further improve procedures for keeping children safe and assess the risk to children in regards to younger children having access to play materials which are not age-appropriate

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 enhance the methods used for teaching nursery education and ensure that unplanned opportunities for further extension of learning are recognised and explored with children.

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