

Apple Tree Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240994
Inspection date	18 July 2007
Inspector	Rachael Williams
Setting Address	The Cider House, Wild Country Lane, Long Ashton, Bristol, Avon, BS41 9AG
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Registered person	Apple Tree Day Care Nursery 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?

Apple Tree Day Care Nursery is located within a converted cider house in the village of Long Ashton, on the outskirts of Bristol. The nursery operates on two floors and children have access to a garden from each of the play rooms, with a separate garden area for younger children. There are five rooms available for different ages.

The nursery offers care Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year to a maximum of 81 children aged between three months and five years of age. The nursery provides 10 places under the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative. The nursery closes at 17.00 on alternate days during the third week of each month for staff meetings. Children attend the nursery from a wide geographical area. At present, there are 119 children on roll. There are currently 38 children who are in receipt of early years funding. The nursery cares for children who have learning disabilities and/or difficulties and has experience of caring for children for whom English is an additional language.

There are 29 members of staff; 26 of whom work directly with the children. Most members of staff hold level 3 or above early years qualifications. The directors of the setting have both achieved Early Years Professional status.

The child-centred nursery uses multiple early years approaches including elements of the High Scope philosophy. French sessions, dance classes and 'Stretch and Grow' are also available as an optional extra. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Most rooms within the nursery maintain children's health through effective practices and procedures which are well understood by staff. To minimise the risk of cross infection good practices are followed by most staff regarding nappy changing, including the sterilisation of the mat in between uses. Older children follow routines that help them to protect their own health, they are reminded to wash their hands before eating their lunch and after they use the lavatory. Pre-school children are aware of their own personal needs and visit the lavatories independently. They acknowledge when they are hungry and thirsty as they access drinks and raisins independently. They follow the sequence of photos to ensure that a clean cup is used which maintains their health. However, the communal bowl of raisins does not encourage hygiene as children do not wash their hands and place sucked fingers back into the bowl.

There are effective procedures in place to ensure children's health in regards to sun protection. Parental consent is gained to ensure appropriate sunscreen is applied. Children are protected in an emergency as most staff have paediatric first aid training. Accidents are recorded effectively and promptly shared with parents. There are robust procedures to ensure medication is administered appropriately and recorded confidentially.

Children learn the importance of healthy eating through relevant topics and visits, such as to the dentist where they learn about oral hygiene. Children are offered nutritious and appetising meals which are prepared in a hygienic environment, such as tagliatelle with sweetcorn and peas in a cheese sauce followed by cherry shortbread. The menu is shared with parents and children with special dietary needs are well catered for, for instance, vegetarian options are available. There is good provision for babies as food is provided which supports their developmental needs, such as finger food and liquidised meals. Children in the baby unit have named beakers of drinking water which are offered regularly, especially after strenuous exercise.

All the children in the nursery enjoy daily opportunities to be active and out in the fresh air. They all benefit from regular opportunities to walk around the village, to the farm and to the local parks. There is a good range of equipment to encourage children's physical development and to become confident movers. Consequently, children show good coordination and balance and muscle development. For example, the children enjoy exploring the trampette, sand, ride-on toys and parachute. Older children throw and kick balls with accuracy and control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff work hard to provide a comfortable and welcoming environment for children and their parents. The rooms are organised well and attractively decorated with many examples of children's own work on display. Staff deploy themselves well to meet children's welfare needs within the spacious environment. The range of activities available to the children is enhanced through good use of the local environment and the abundant range of easily accessible, high-quality toys and resources.

Children are protected as good safety procedures are well documented and implemented by staff. However, although children are closely supervised the registration system does not accurately record their times of attendance. There are robust systems in place to ensure the premises are risk assessed and checked daily. Staff are vigilant at ensuring all rooms and play areas are clean, safe and comfortable for children. For example, when spills occur whilst children use the water tray staff carefully clean the floor to avoid a slipping hazard. Children's security is paramount and they benefit from well monitored premises, for instance, through the use of the visitors' record. There are excellent procedures in place to ensure that only authorised people are allowed to collect the children. Children are becoming aware of their own safety, without being fearful, as they are involved in fire drills. There are good procedures in place to ensure children's safety on outings, for instance, when they use public transport.

Children are very well protected from abuse as key staff have thorough knowledge of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse. There are robust procedures in place should they have any concerns about a child. Staff attend regular child protection training and are meticulous ensuring their procedures meet local guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very settled, happy and confident within the nursery. They enjoy a rich and varied range of activities to stimulate their learning and development. A carefully planned, well-equipped learning environment encourages all children to be involved and motivated to learn, for instance, in the well-equipped sensory room where younger children show all in curiosity as they listen to the sounds and watch twinkling stars. Excellent relationships have been established and staff have very good knowledge of children's needs and interests through meticulous observations.

Flexible and robust planning incorporates and values children's interests providing opportunities for children to develop good learning through both adult led and child initiated activities. Children make decisions about their play and are well supported by good deployment of knowledgeable staff who challenge their learning effectively. Children achieve well as they are provided with effective support and interaction from staff which encourages them to make decisions, to problem solve, to explore and investigate the broad range of activities. For example, mobile babies are encouraged to 'cruise' the spacious environment of the hall. They enjoy the movement of the parachute, show good coordination as they manipulate the hoops and travel in a variety of ways to chase the textured balls.

Staff have good knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and implement it well to ensure younger children are offered a wealth of experiences to encourage their development in all areas of their learning. However, planned activities are not fully evaluated to influence

future experiences. Younger children's progression is well documented in an attractive diary format to positively identify next steps in their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their learning. Staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and maintain good records of carefully documented observations of children's achievements to plan for future learning. Staff have good knowledge of children's interests through pertinent observations to develop the weekly 'room layout sheet' which provides children with a good range of stimulating and challenging resources.

Comprehensive planning ensures children have a variety of experiences relating to a good range of themes, which includes at least three festivals or events to enhance children's cultural and religious understanding. Children are given clear direction from staff to ensure they understand what is expected of them in the focused activity. These activities are well monitored and there is good provision to support older and more able children. However, although the outdoor play space is well organised with a good range of stimulating resources, children are not fully supported in their free play in order to develop new skills, such as a team game with the rugby ball or further developing coordination skills on the ride-on toys.

Children are confident communicators. Staff are good role models, encouraging children to be active listeners and to communicate in a variety of ways. They encourage children to reflect on the process to enhance their creations, for instance, a child is encouraged to think about how she has made a robot and how she could improve it. She experiments with the recycled materials to ensure they will fit, showing good coordination and spatial awareness, before gluing them together. Children listen attentively to stories, responding well to the questions. They imitate staff and share their favourite stories with each other, turning the pages appropriately. Children organise themselves well when defining roles in their imaginative play. They speak confidently using a range of vocabulary to explore the life of Spiderman. They use props, such as Multilink to create spider web blasters, and manoeuvre around the available space well, adjusting their speed to avoid collisions, as they chase each other.

Displays are used well to extend children's experiences. For example, children reflect on their walk around the village and the map they created using 'Billy the Beebot'. This is then used to encourage children to discuss how they get to school and to draw the mode of transport. Children confidently label their illustration, some with clear and recognisable letters.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The excellent organisation of the setting ensures that children self-select from all activities and resources independently. Resources reflect positive images of diversity, such as small world figures, a range of cultural music, dressing up clothes and books. The local environment is used exceptionally well to promote children's understanding of community and the natural world. Excellent relationships are established with staff. Children are treated with respect and their individual needs are acknowledged and highly valued by caring staff, for example, children are encouraged to share their own experiences with others and reflect on differences through meaningful activities. Staff have excellent knowledge of children's individual needs through the regular exchange of information with parents, for instance, through daily dialogue to ensure that babies' routines are acknowledged and respected.

There is excellent support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) have very good understanding of their role and responsibilities in identifying and assessing additional needs to ensure they are fully supported. There is excellent communication with parents and outside agencies to ensure smooth transition and full integration into the fully inclusive environment, for instance, through the establishment of individual educational plans and well-documented observations. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well and are consistently managed by calm staff, who give them clear explanations. They respond very well to familiar routines, for instance, two-year-olds are encouraged to stop what they are doing and listen to clear instructions. They are keen to help tidy away in order to progress to the next activity. Behaviour incidents are routinely shared with SENCOs and well documented to ensure unacceptable behaviour is monitored effectively.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are warmly welcomed by staff who spend time getting to know them and their children's individual needs. There is a daily exchange of information and staff are readily available in order to provide a consistent environment for the children. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about the setting in the parents' room and on individual room whiteboards. Parents are well informed of their child's progress through written reports, daily key worker discussions and parents' evenings. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. Parents support the nursery wholeheartedly, for instance, through the development of a social committee to support charitable events.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very well-organised setting which is exceptionally well resourced and staffed by enthusiastic, caring and highly competent professionals. Appropriate grouping of children and the effective use of key worker systems, to provide a stable environment, ensure that children's welfare requirements are well met. There are flexible transition arrangements between the rooms to ensure that children are confident and settled. There are highly effective systems in place to ensure staff are suitable to care for children, for instance, through clear induction arrangements for new staff and robust screening procedures. Staff members are committed to ensuring the nursery is of a consistently high quality and have embarked on a recognised quality assurance scheme to fully monitor the provision. However, consistency in effective hygiene procedures has not been maintained in all areas.

Children are encouraged and enabled to start making decisions about their own learning and care needs, supported by the high ratio of experienced staff to children. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure accurate times of staff attendance are recorded, however, the system to record children's attendance, with accurate times of arrival and departure, is less robust.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. There are some highly effective systems in place to reflect on practice which ensures that children's learning is well supported. Staff work well within their teams and meet regularly to ensure consistency in practices, care and learning. Effective procedures to monitor staff's professional development ensures that training needs are tracked well and all staff play an active role in the further development of the nursery. The strong management team are highly committed to ensuring the nursery is well monitored, for instance,

through an effective action plan which is proactive in addressing improvements to ensure that children and their families in the area thrive.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were made relating to the provision of drinking water and child protection and points for consideration relating to nursery education. These have been comprehensively addressed.

Older children are able to access drinking water throughout the day. They do so independently through use of a photographic sequence to support the development.

A comprehensive child protection procedure is readily available to parents which documents staff responsibilities in order to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

A mark making area has been provided for children in the pre-school room to develop their early writing skills. Children have access to a wide variety of writing implements and are able to use these in their role play.

Parents receive a wealth of information on the Foundation Stage curriculum through daily feedback from key staff, the presentation of planning, parents' evenings, an informative letter explaining the six areas of learning and a comprehensive newsletter which provides parents with information on how to support their children at home and the inclusion of children's home achievements in the assessment records.

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):

- maintain high standards of hygiene in all areas of the nursery
- develop further systems to accurately record children's daily attendance to show times of arrival and departure

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 support for learning opportunities during outdoor play

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