

Ashridge Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148638
Inspection date	09 November 2007
Inspector	Carol Patricia Willett
Setting Address	Keep Hatch Primary School, Ashridge Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1PG
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Registered person	The Trustees of Ashridge Nursery Parents Association
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Ashridge Nursery has been registered since 1980. The nursery which is operated by a parents committee was established to serve the local community in Wokingham catering for children from three to five years. The nursery accommodation is in a modern purpose-built building in the grounds of Keep Hatch primary School with a secure outdoor play area.

The setting is open from Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 11:30 and from 13:00 to 15:30 during school term times. The nursery accommodates 30 children with 73 children on roll which includes 65 funded three and four year-olds. Support is provided for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

There are eight staff with most qualified to level three and a qualified first aider is present at each nursery session. Ashridge Nursery receives support from the Early years Development Partnership and a qualified teacher mentor and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the National Early Years Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in clean, well-maintained premises. They stay healthy because staff are aware of good hygiene procedures to prevent the spread of infection. For example they ensure the room and tables are clean by undertaking additional cleaning throughout the day to ensure good hygiene for both morning and afternoon sessions. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene as part of the daily routine and they develop independence in their personal care. They use tissues to wipe their noses and go and wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack-time and after messy play.

Children's healthcare records are maintained appropriately and any accidents involving children are recorded promptly and parents sign the record as children are collected. All members of the staff team have attended paediatric first aid training to ensure they treat children appropriately in the event of an accident.

Children benefit from very good opportunities to spend time outside in the fresh air as the preschool adopts a free flow policy for an hour of each session. This allows children to make their own decisions about whether they wish to play indoors or outside. Many children enjoy playing outside, opting to play here for a sustained period. Children move around indoors and outside with control and co-ordination. They participate in a variety of activities that enable them to be active and maintain a healthy body. For instance, they competently manoeuvre wheeled toys and practise their throwing and catching skills as they play with balls. Children have fun as they excitedly dance and march around in the play room during lively music and movement sessions. They display good spatial awareness as they avoid collisions, whilst following instructions on the Sticky Kids tape with staff joining in with almost as much enthusiasm as the children.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of breadsticks and cheese cubes, though they have no choice, on a daily basis. They choose whether they would like milk or water to drink and they generally manage to pour out their own drinks totally independently. Staff ensure that they place a jug of water and cups on a table throughout the session that children can easily reach so they can help themselves as and when they feel thirsty. Staff seek relevant information about children's individual dietary needs and take positive steps to meet these. Snack times are sociable occasions as staff sit with children and engage in conversation with them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children stay safe as they have access to a self-contained building which is bright and airy with good levels of natural light and is well maintained. Staff organise the premises well so that children can move around freely and independently and initiate their own play. Children easily access furniture, play materials and equipment and the stimulating outside play area. Children's artwork is displayed attractively with a labelled space for each child if they choose to put up their pictures. They have named coat pegs and peg their photos on a line as they self register on arrival. This helps create a warm and welcoming environment and adds to children's sense of belonging and pride.

Children are protected because staff give high priority to safety. They take positive steps to ensure security with a locked coded door and visitors sign in and out. Staff identify and minimise areas of potential risk as safety checks are undertaken daily and there is an annual risk assessment. Children and staff regularly participate in fire drills to develop their confidence and awareness in an emergency and required fire safety features are in place. Staff closely supervise children at all times through good staff deployment including when children play outside.

Children use a wide variety of good quality age appropriate resources. These are stored on low shelving in opaque plastic boxes so children can see and select and change resources freely. The outside area is equally well equipped to provide a stimulating interesting play area and to enable children to develop in all areas of learning. Staff regularly check items to ensure their safety and they remove anything that is broken or dangerous. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury through simple rules such as not running inside. Staff gently remind them to reinforce their awareness.

Children are safeguarded as staff display a secure understanding of child protection issues and the procedure they should follow if they have any concerns. Parents are informed of the preschool's responsibility through the child protection policy so they are aware of the need to inform them of accidents and record any existing injuries.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and are happy and at ease within the nursery as staff are warm, friendly and caring and show good interest in all the children do. Children form good relationships with the staff and the other children as they develop friendships and join together for play and help each other to solve problems, such as fitting all the toys into the boxes to pack them away. They are enthusiastic as they join up with their friends to develop their creativity and imagination, acting out scenarios as they play with the dolls putting them to bed and reading stories before taking them shopping. Children come readily into the group and separate easily from their parents as they are warmly greeted by staff and the room is set out ready for their arrival. Staff treat all children with respect and affection. They provide a good range of activities both inside and out to ensure that the children have an enjoyable and worthwhile experience during their time at the nursery. Children move freely around, choosing to play inside or out, exploring everything on offer. They benefit from a good balance of child initiated play and adult focused small group activities and positive adult interaction as staff join in and support their play and learning. Staff make children's learning fun as they play board games, join in with Sticky Kids music activity sessions and have fun with the fallen leaves in the outdoor area as they try and sweep them up.

Staff organise the provision well and provide a good range of activities linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure children make good progress in their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development.

Nursery Education

Children are interested, enthusiastic learners who are actively engaged in their chosen activities as staff prepare well and offer good support to the children. Children's independence is well fostered as staff encourage them to get themselves ready for outdoor play and to make their own decisions about what they do and where they want to play. Most children recognise their

written name and successfully select the correct card to hang on the line for registration. They develop friendships and play co-operatively, for instance as they explore the small world toys or act out scenarios in the home corner. Most children are confident speakers and converse readily with others. They listen to stories with obvious enjoyment, listening and participating well. They develop writing skills as they paint and make marks on paper and in the sand. Some write using correctly formed letters, for instance as they try to write their names on their work. Children join in enthusiastically with rhymes and songs. Children enjoy books, handling them well as they select them for pleasure during play. However, staff do not provide information books in the book area in order to further stimulate and interest the children.

Staff encourage children to use mathematical language during their play. They count and calculate in board games such as the snail race. They engage in conversation about the size of their constructions comparing the tallest. They make comparisons about the different sized sieves they are using to find the buried treasure in the sand. They name shapes and colours. Children take turns to use the computer. Some have good mouse control skills, they select the games they wish to play and successfully complete these. Staff use photos of the children as a screen saver and this interests the children as they see themselves and their friends who have left. Children develop their fine motor skills and hand/eye co-ordination using a range of tools such as scissors and hole punches. Children freely talk about their home lives and they find out about change in the season as they grow tomatoes and flowers in the outside play area and talk about the leaves falling from the trees in Autumn. Visitors and parents come into the group to develop children's awareness of other cultures as they find out about Eid. Children do not see words or hear the language of others in the group to provide positive images and further develop their awareness and respect for all. Children are enthusiastic singers and enjoy the range of familiar songs and rhymes. They have fun playing the musical instruments they have chosen though staff do not take opportunities to further develop skills in this area.

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children benefit from the good input and support of staff. Most generally ask open ended questions that encourage children to think. Staff listen to children and respond to their interests and ideas which extends their learning. All staff contribute to planning and everyone undertakes observations on children. Key workers use the information gathered to monitor children's progress and achievements and to identify the next steps in their learning. Record keeping is generally good. Staff do not reflect on their practice to inform appraisals and to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit because parents and carers play an active role within the preschool. They form a committee to manage and share in the overall running of the group. Parents receive useful information about the pre-school and its curriculum through regular newsletters and the notice board. They are encouraged to help during sessions by sharing their knowledge and expertise to support children's learning, such as talking to them about festivals they celebrate at home or sharing information about their job roles. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and achievements as staff make themselves available for both informal and formal feedback. Staff spend time talking to parents daily and they see children's profiles regularly.

Children are confident and feel self-assured because staff are welcoming with friendly smiles and value everyone as individuals and offer good support of children; for example, children

attend shorter sessions if this is felt to be in their best interest. Such measures add to children's sense of belonging within the group. Staff respect children's wishes such as when they do not want to have their picture taken by the photographer. Children with additional needs receive good levels of support and the setting works closely in partnership with parents and other agencies as necessary to ensure this. Children develop a good sense of belonging as they have named coat pegs and a space labelled with their names is allocated on the walls within the playroom for them to display any work they wish.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have access to resources that reflect positive images of diversity and they have opportunities throughout the year to find out about and celebrate different festivals. Children become familiar with their local community and school as they regularly go to share activities such as the harvest festival and nativity play. Children form close friendships and show respect and care for their friends as they play together taking turns and sharing resources.

Behaviour management is very good. All staff have a calm, gentle manner with children and adopt a consistent approach with everyone; they have high expectations of behaviour and intervene to guide children as necessary. Children respond to the input they receive. Staff are very positive about children and use lots of meaningful praise which fosters children's self-esteem and helps them feel good about themselves.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy their time in the well organised environment as staff work together closely as a team. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are deployed well to support the children's care and learning. Staff are kind and caring and display positive attitudes. They work closely with the parents committee to provide a positive learning experience for children attending and to ensure the effective management of the provision at all levels. Both respect and value the input of the other. All required records are in place and are well organised. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin good practice and contribute to the health, safety and welfare of children. Consequently children are safe, secure and confident within the environment.

Leadership and management are good. Children experience a variety of activities, both indoors and outside, as staff plan and organise the sessions well, using the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance. Staff are experienced and qualification levels are well met. They are committed to updating their knowledge and skill through ongoing training with the local authority. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that adults working with children are suitable to do so. All staff have an annual appraisal to identify areas for professional development. Staff do not reflect on and observe their own practice to ensure the continuing personal development and quality interactions with children. Following input from local authority advisors staff have been considering their use of planning and have introduced a revised system for recording and monitoring the next steps in children's learning. The preschool supervisor regularly monitors the children's achievement records to ensure they are completed appropriately. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the preschool were required to improve child protection procedures and ensure staff attendance was accurately recorded. They have made good progress and the child

protection policy includes a statement of procedures if there is an allegation about staff. Staff record the time they are on the premises daily. These measures ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. The education inspection identified no significant weaknesses.

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):

- provide opportunities for children to have a choice of what to eat at snack time to develop their awareness of healthy options

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):

- improve inclusive provision through the use of the languages of all children within the group to show they are valued and respected and to increase the awareness of all children
- improve children's access to factual and information books
- develop reflective practice and staff observation to inform appraisals and develop personal skills and quality interactions with the 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