

Ashover Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY243132
Inspection date	09 November 2007
Inspector	Georgina Walker
Setting Address	Narrowleys Lane, Ashover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S45 0AU
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Registered person	Ashover Nursery School
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?

Ashover Nursery opened in September 2001. It operates from the nursery and out of school club room adjacent to Ashover Primary School, in the village of Ashover, Derbyshire. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play and the children also use the whole range of school gardens, adventure play areas and sports field for relevant activities. The setting serves the local and surrounding areas.

The nursery opens five days a week during school term only. The full day care sessions are from 08:30 until 15:30, when children can attend the after school care facility until 18:00.

The setting is registered to care for 26 children and there are currently 35 children from three years three months to four years eight months on roll. All children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs two full-time and six part-time staff who work with the children. Over half of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications or a degree. The setting receives support from the local authority and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The nursery is owned by AGES, Ashover Governors Extended Services, a limited company made up of a board of governors who delegate day to day responsibility to the staff. AGES also manage the after school care, under a separate registration.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is generally promoted. Staff ensure the prevention of accidents is reduced as they are vigilant and aware of stages of children's development and how to minimise risks in the setting. However, records have incomplete detail to meet children's needs if a further injury occurs and significant injuries a child arrives with are not recorded and signed by parents. This does not consistently safeguard children. The accident records are, however, maintained in an effective system with confidentiality a priority. All accidents are monitored to ensure a pattern is not forming. Staff on site hold appropriate first aid certificates under an ongoing training programme and maintain first aid boxes with suitable contents. In the event of children becoming ill staff instigate the well-documented procedures and parents are contacted to ensure any distress is limited. The seeking of permission for administering medication and treatment in the event of an emergency is sought for all children on admission. Medication is rarely given as children stay at home if they are ill to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene as they become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children's noses are wiped appropriately to prevent the risk of cross-infection and many independently obtain and use their own tissue and dispose of it safely in the bin. They are accompanied to the toilet by staff if necessary and reminders are given by staff as the children follow appropriate daily routines, such as washing their hands before snacks and after toileting or messy play. Staff ensure privacy is created if any children have a toileting accident.

Children benefit from the significantly varied and nutritious snacks and excellent range of school meals provided, which further assists in promoting their healthy lifestyle. The dinner menu is displayed, which assists in sharing information with parents. Children are starting to understand why certain foods are good for them through discussion and programmed activities. Staff ensure the café style snack time is a social time and provide encouragement to eat healthily. They have discussions, especially when the food relates to the topics or seasons, and a range of well-presented visual aids shows the children the menu each day. Snack times are enjoyed when new tastes are offered and children choose from the range of food, such as fruit and vegetable sticks, with breadsticks and cucumber being particular favourites. They serve themselves competently with milk or water and co-ordination skills are developed further as they spread cheese or butter on crackers. Individual dietary requirements are shared with the staff by parents to ensure children remain healthy and dietary or religious needs are met. Some children who stay for extended sessions have meals provided by parents, who generally respond to staff requests to ensure the contents of the lunch box includes healthy options. Boxes are stored appropriately. The majority of children enjoy the healthy school meals served in the school hall and carefully carry their tray to the tables to eat their meals with the nursery staff.

Children become accomplished in many skills as they enjoy an extensive range of physical activities and have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They are supported effectively to develop their physical skills through imaginatively planned and spontaneous activities. They move with confidence and an awareness of personal safety throughout the premises. There are daily opportunities for children to play outdoors, even if it is raining a little and they take

delight in chasing resources blowing about in the strong wind. Climbing frames, slides and wheeled toys used enthusiastically by the children show how extremely competent they are on each type of resource from the regular usage. They organise themselves in a range of activities, including role play in the house, and one child pushes his friend along on a bike asking 'is this fun?' Lots of giggles are heard as the response. The wide range of wheeled toys available ensure children develop high levels of pedalling skills, confidence and excellent understanding of when to stop and not ride in areas where quieter activities take place. They delight in movement sessions in the school hall, showing substantial understanding of the need to find a space and not hurt others as they do their exercises. Their listening skills are very well developed and they respond to instructions of how to move their body with versatile mobility. Children's finer manipulative skills and control is actively encouraged through interesting craft activities, threading and regular use of small tools. Pencils, paint brushes and a wide variety of construction toys, help children develop their skills competently. Their scissor skills are excellent as many cut out their own craft work for displays or take the finished work home. Occasionally the children are taken off the premises for a walk to locations in the village or use the extensive range of school facilities, such as the adventure play area or wildlife and pond garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Comprehensive policies, procedures and risk assessment documents exist and the staff have a sound awareness of how to promote children's safety throughout the premises. However, one potential hazard, a settee in the role play area, has not been removed although it has been temporarily covered. New role play resources have recently been ordered. Emergency evacuations and subsequent recording and evaluations are undertaken as part of the school procedures to ensure children's safety. Children are secure in the environment. Very good security and collection procedures are maintained. Parents contribute to the registration process, recording times of arrival and collection. Staff mark and check registers effectively and there is an additional visitors book to show who is also on the premises at any given time, to assist in safeguarding the children. Children's safety is promoted effectively on walks to further their learning experiences. Written permission is sought for each activity and the outings policy meticulously followed.

The environment in which the children are cared for is warm and welcoming. The nursery share the purpose built room with the after school care facility and both take the opportunity to decorate it with children's craft work, posters and an extensive range of useful information for parents and staff to refer to. Planning and information about the early learning goals and 'Birth to three matters' framework are displayed. The children have access to a stimulating and extensive range of resources which are changed to promote age-appropriate levels of challenge. Most resources are safe and presented at suitable levels to encourage independence and development and ensure children are supported to progress rapidly in appropriate surroundings. Children make choices regarding what they would like to play with from the interesting range presented and they play and learn with worthwhile activities. They ask for resources such as a till, and notepaper and pencils, to extend their outdoor role play as they turn the house into a café. Children help to tidy up before group singing time, prompted by the sound of music playing, knowing they should finish before the end of the tune, demonstrating an understanding of routine and how to care for resources.

Children are cared for by staff who have a sound knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and demonstrate a considerable understanding of how to give priority to children's welfare. Staff attend ongoing training to ensure they are fully informed of changes to practice and

where to contact the relevant social care staff to make a referral. The parents are well informed of the nursery's responsibility to protect children and all the documents are made available to parents. Changes to local authority procedures with regard to the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board' procedures are noted in the comprehensive policies. These are not fully updated and the new flow chart of reporting processes has yet to be displayed as the procedures have recently been received.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly in the nursery and have a friendly relationship with the staff, who encourage the children to separate from their parents and access the exceedingly well-presented activities. The key-worker system works successfully to ensure each child knows who to relate to as they settle in after their third birthday. The children are confident and keen to join in the interesting range of different activities presented each session. Great concentration is shown and an eagerness to spend extended periods in something which stimulates, such as hand printing or threading shapes at the number table. Children's developmental progress is promoted exceptionally well. They flourish as staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework for younger children, before assessing their progress under the stepping stones to the Foundation Stage. Staff consistently interact and monitor the children's progress as they know each child well as a starting point is provided by the parents on a comprehensive document.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are highly effective at making sure that outcomes for children are excellent and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Achievements are exceptional in relation to their starting points and capabilities. By the time they go next door into school they are ready, well prepared and confident to accept the transition. Comprehensive detail is recorded on weekly planning documents consistently demonstrating staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones, early learning goals and how they will present activities. These are now discussed before each session to ensure all staff know the learning intention. Plans provide a well-balanced, broad programme and there is evidence of differentiation. A variety of methods are used to help children learn effectively. Focus activities include excellent ideas and are linked skilfully to the themes. These are not effectively evaluated to ensure children benefit from the learning experience. Observations are not evaluative to fully assist with planning for developing children's individual needs and intellectual capabilities. However, children's learning is skilfully extended as the nursery have successfully developed the practice of having a key-worker for each child. This enables staff to progress specific learning and challenge children to think about what they know as staff consistently ask open-ended questions, which children think about and respond to. Developmental progress is documented and the staff share written and photographic evidence with parents regarding their child. Children's progress is verbally shared daily with parents. Written information in the folders is available at any time and always at the end of each term. Copies of the end of term summary are sent to parents. Staff manage the children proficiently, with precise reminders why they must not shout out at group times or others will not hear, therefore, they must put their hand up to speak. Children understand snack and lunchtime takes place at certain times and are willing to help tidy up. Topics are enthusiastically enjoyed by the children. The staff present very interesting and stimulating activities daily and children are eager to share information when talking between themselves in the role play areas or at the snack table. Activities are developed over a period of time, this ensures children's learning is effectively promoted as they are challenged to think by staff to recall relevant words

and activities. With high ratios maintained the staff spend considerable amounts of time with the children, directly developing learning to ensure children flourish and become independent in the setting.

Children are well behaved and motivated to try new experiences. They eagerly ask questions about how things work and listen to the responses from staff. They are animated when suggesting their own ideas, such as 'let us pretend to be at the café', which is actually the play-house outdoors. Children organise each other to play together with the role play resources and enthusiastically play shop indoors with considerable knowledge of making lists and using the till. They demonstrate good negotiating skills as they take turns with the computer or wait for a turn to throw and catch bean bags outdoors. The children share information about their life outside and have confident personalities. They include adults in their play and conversations, such as talking about their family or when relating their firework night experiences or visits to Chatsworth.

Some children can write their own names confidently with recognisable letters. Their name cards are immediately available for them to copy off at the craft and mark-making table and they use them as a registering system at the snack table. Most children are aware of the initial letter of their name and use letter sounds spontaneously or in response to staff questions. However, the use of initial letters in their surname gives an incomplete understanding of how to write their name and develop their own identity. Children have access to an extensive range of books and spontaneously 'read' stories to their friends, using the adult sized chair as they copy the role of the staff. The highly committed staff group ensure children's communication, language and literacy development is given top priority.

Children are developing good recall as they listen attentively to instructions and respond confidently to staff as they discuss numbers. Children have an extensive understanding of mathematics and spontaneously use their knowledge effectively when recognising numerals or count during register time. They are very aware of shapes and eagerly inform adults they have a rectangle box in the shop and square bean-bags. Children develop problem solving skills, for example, linked to computer programme tasks or when baking.

Children's access to a range of technology and battery operated resources is substantial. There are three computers in regular use, with a wide ranging selection of programmes, and the children have developed excellent skills both with mouse and comprehension to listen and follow instructions to successfully complete the tasks. Children's awareness of the natural world is vast as they use the resources in the school grounds. They are aware the recently introduced bin for scrap paper will have the contents taken to the recycling site in the village, by some children and staff, when it is full. Topics which introduce them to the needs of others and diversities in society are included and children have daily access to resources which promote positive images of diversity. Consequently, children are learning through carefully planned activities about the world around them.

Children's physical development of fine manipulative skills is promoted effectively through the use of an extensive range of resources. They use scissors competently to cut out their own pictures for displays or after colouring in P shaped pictures, such as a pumpkin and pail, which they carefully cut out. Children build with construction toys and seek adults to share that they have 'made a walking stick for an old man' and demonstrate how to use it by hobbling around the room. Outdoors large muscle skills are successfully developed, for example, when they pedal wheeled toys with confidence and stop skilfully. Children's awareness of how their body changes during exercise is an aspect of learning included in topics and referred to by staff on

an ongoing basis after energetic games in the hall or when it is cold and windy outdoors. As a result children's learning in this area is well-balanced.

Children are motivated to develop their creative experiences as they have access to a considerable range of craft, role play and musical activities. With both a home corner and role play area, such as the shop or travel agents, the children actively engage in animated imaginary games. The smiles and laughter which reverberates around the playroom and outdoor area indicates how much they are enjoying themselves. Children are eager to discuss their work of free choice crafts, paintings or drawings. Hair colour is discussed as they paint pictures of themselves or their family. They dance spontaneously to the 'tidy up time' music and sing loudly to their favourite tidy up song. During group time their musical experiences are significantly enhanced as a member of staff plays a guitar. Children sway to the rhythm they create themselves with the inspiring range of musical instruments they choose from the box, after all those which make very loud noises are removed. The children accurately inform staff which instruments make the loudest noises. The children thoroughly enjoy the creative aspects of their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are treated fairly as the setting has an open-minded approach to inclusion and meeting individual needs effectively. Staff encourage all children to access age-appropriate activities and develop life skills exceptionally well. Individual needs are discussed with parents and comprehensive record sheets for each child contain most detail which enables appropriate care to be given. Any additional languages used by the children are not requested to ensure needs are consistently met, however the nursery policy states this would be discussed. Understanding and acceptance of the wider community and the development of positive attitudes is effectively increased. Religious and faith preferences are discussed with parents and their wishes followed appropriately. Children play with a range of non-stereotypical resources and any negative issues are addressed successfully. The children have access to a versatile range of toys and resources showing positive images of diversity, culture, gender and disability.

The nursery has limited experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, staff have an understanding of potential need and adapt activities to ensure inclusion and have a positive attitude to caring for all children. To ensure all children are included in activities, presentation and the development of learning is adapted to assist individual children. All children's needs are successfully met through discussion with parents and the setting has an awareness to work with parents and outside agencies, if necessary, to effectively meet needs.

There are very effective procedures in place to manage a wide range of children's behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave appropriately as they respond to boundaries set. They are aware of why they must share and take turns or help younger children to use resources. Consistent management and routines help children feel secure knowing what they can and cannot do and ensures they have a thorough understanding of why they must behave to keep themselves safe. Proactive use of praise and encouragement helps to build development of children's self-esteem. A new set of labels regarding the rules has been produced to ensure the terminology is positive, such as 'do be kind'.

Positive relationships with parents and a desire to work in partnership with them to meet children's individual needs ensures the staff are able to meet emotional and physical needs

effectively. Children are very settled and happy. Parents are updated on their children's well-being and development through discussion regarding snacks, toileting, play activities and are shown photographs. The setting ensures parents are fully aware of policies and procedures and how children will be cared for during discussion at initial visits. Some written information is given to parents to retain, however not all detail is current or contains some inconsistent information about the complaints and child protection processes. The certificate of registration and poster giving information of where to contact the regulator are displayed to meet requirements. Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Extensive information is provided regarding the early learning goals and plans. The development documents are available at any time but most parents only see the report at the end of term and the file as their child moves up to school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are in the care of qualified or experienced staff who are fully supportive to ensure they are happy and settled in the nursery. A vibrant atmosphere is evident throughout the premises. Care and well-being are always a priority and children are supported in reaching their full potential. The ratios are maintained to a high level and children benefit from the key-worker system and shared care as they are self-motivated to make decisions, such as whether to go out to play or not. Commendable organisation of the playroom and outdoor play area and suitably planned, developmentally appropriate activities ensure children's time in the nursery is worthwhile and provide high levels of challenge for all children. Consequently, children are confident in the setting and are eager to engage in the range of exciting and stimulating activities.

Policies and procedures which are required for the effective and safe management of the provision are maintained. However, some records and risk assessment practices do not promote the welfare of the children at all times. Some written policies do not include all current information which is to be shared with parents to assist in promoting the care and learning of the children. The registration system which monitors all persons on site and assists in safeguarding the children is comprehensively detailed. The board of governors leave the day to day management to the highly motivated staff.

The leadership and management for early education is good. A clear vision has been developed of how the setting operates to meet the needs of the children effectively. Staff strive for further improvement and recent changes of leadership has brought a new dimension to the nursery. Self-evaluation and reflective practice, through regular meetings, planning, the development of evaluations and discussions about children's profile records have been instigated. The curriculum and teaching methods take account of the children's individual needs and the diverse ways in which children learn. Qualification requirements are met. The high-quality training programme is carefully planned to meet the individual and collective needs of staff. This ensures that staff are able to deliver a highly successfully early education programme for all children. This ensures the children are consistently being stimulated to learn and enjoy themselves. Regular support for the staff team during site visits from staff from the local authority assists in the promotion of children's learning and well-being. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the setting agreed to ensure that medicines are not usually administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor. Inappropriate items have been

removed from the first aid box and an improved system of what type and when medicines will be administered has been successfully instigated. Parents can be assured their children's medical needs are met appropriately.

At the previous education inspection the setting was set four actions, two relating to activities and two to the sharing of information with parents. All were addressed at the time and staff have recently attended in-house training with Foundation Stage and Reception class teachers from the school to address changes from September 2007 to the communication, language and literacy aspects. They consistently use the 'hear and say sounds in the order in which they occur' the new focus to children's learning and parents are aware of the 'new phonics' aspect to learning. Staff knowledge is expertly integrated into planned and spontaneous activities, both indoors and out, and children eagerly repeat sounds and words as they play. Extensive planned activities increase older children's opportunities to use their increasing mathematical knowledge to problem solve in practical activities and recently more resources were ordered to develop this further. Baking activities and routines relating to snack times, as well sharing wheeled toys outdoors all demonstrate children's extensive knowledge of how to solve problems, such as how many can safely ride on the bike and how many will have to wait until later.

Parents were to have regular access and good opportunities to feed information into their children's assessment files. Staff were to increase the information directly made available to the parents on the areas of learning and the activities that their children are engaged in. Regular newsletters reminding parents to read the documents and more detailed discussion at initial visits were instigated. The report is sent home at the end of each term, giving space for parents to make comment for return. The ongoing nursery development plan indicates a desire to have more formal 'open evening' type sessions to share information between the individual key-worker and the parent. Information in the front porch regarding themes and topics includes a reminder to look at the detailed plans. Activities, resources to be used and the cross reference to the areas of learning are displayed in the playroom. All has lead to improved educational opportunities for children and comprehensive information for parents, with continuing ideas to improve.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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):

- ensure children are consistently cared for in a safe environment
- ensure all policies and procedures made available to parents contain references to current information and legislation and accident and records of significant injuries a child may arrive with are fully recorded and signed by parents to assist in safeguarding the child
- ensure children develop a positive awareness of their own identity (also applies to education).

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 the evaluation of activities and the recording of purposeful information regarding what children learnt to assist with planning for their future progress and develop the methods of formally sharing information with parents.

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