

ABC Rainbow Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402033
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Anne Daly
Setting Address	40 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7JQ
Telephone number	01268 778078
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Registered person	ABC Rainbow Day Nurseries Limited
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?

ABC Rainbow Day Nursery is one of two privately owned nurseries run by ABC Rainbow Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1984 and operates from four rooms within a two storey converted house in the centre of Rayleigh. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens on five days a week all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays and one week over Christmas. Session times are Mondays to Fridays from 07:00 until 19:00. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 114 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 43 children receive funding for nursery education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and can also support children who have English as a second language.

The nursery employs 18 staff, including the cook. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards qualifications. The nursery is well supported as the registered provider holds Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). The setting receives

further support from the local authority, from the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and from the Essex Day Nursery Association (EDNA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive through staff following effective procedures and practices meeting their physical, nutritional and health needs. Children are gaining a good understanding of personal hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care by going to the toilet and dressing themselves for outdoor play. Children are aware of good hygiene procedures through daily routines, for example, knowing to wash their hands with liquid soap and to dry them with paper towels after using the toilet. However, children are potentially not being fully protected from cross-infection after messy play activities in the toddlers room through existing procedures, such as the use of communal towels to dry their hands after water and messy play. Babies and toddlers have their hands wiped before being given food to help them to begin to understand the importance of the need to wash to remove germs from their hands. Staff wear disposables gloves and aprons during nappy changing to fully protect very young children and babies from cross-infection. Children benefit from staff maintaining a clean environment by following well-maintained routines, for example, cleaning surfaces with antibacterial liquids and regularly washing toys and equipment.

Children are allowed to rest or sleep peacefully according to their individual needs. Babies and younger children are able to sleep undisturbed in cots or on small beds. The majority of children have individual bedding, although the welfare of some children in the tweenies room may be compromised through sleeping in cots where, although sheets are always changed for individual children, blankets are not always changed.

Children are well safeguarded if they require their medications during their stay at the nursery by staff following effective procedures to support individual medical needs, for example, only administering medication following pre-authorisation by parents or carers. Some staff hold current first aid qualifications to ensure that they take appropriate action in the event of a child requiring medical support. Possible risk of cross-infection for children is being greatly reduced through information being displayed for parents or carers regarding children's health, including exclusion times for infectious diseases.

Older children can help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the day. Younger children and babies are offered regular drinks by staff having a good understanding of their individual needs. Meal times are relaxed sociable occasions when children gain confidence in eating in small groups and are developing positive attitudes towards food and well-balanced meals. Children under two have a cooked lunch, while older children enjoy a cold lunch, for example, very varied selections of sandwiches, salad and fruit. The nursery has five-weekly rotating hot meal menus to ensure that children enjoy a very varied range of 'home' cooked food, freshly prepared on the premises, each tea time. Children grow some of the nursery's vegetables and fruits and are able to talk about 'good' and 'bad' foods. They learn about healthy foods through topic work and regular discussions to contribute to their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Very young babies are thriving through both their nutritional and emotional needs being well met by staff. When babies have their bottles, staff sit on comfortable chairs to cuddle them and to enable them to observe the changes in their behaviour when becoming tired and

requiring a sleep. Babies and toddlers are being given opportunities to use fingers, forks and spoons to enjoy their food and to become independent in feeding themselves.

Children are thriving through taking part in a worthwhile range of activities to promote and develop their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. They are able to explore and to develop very good physical control in the stimulating and exciting outdoor environment. The garden is utilised in all but the worst weathers to enable children to benefit from fresh air. In the winter months, they are given ample time to play with a range of garden equipment. They have different types of wheeled toys to practise their skills of peddling, scooting or pushing when moving backwards or forwards around obstacles on the hard surfaced area. Children can confidently move in a variety of ways through practising jumping and hopping. They have many opportunities to use their senses in other areas of the garden. They are able to see things from different perspectives, for example, from the top of the climbing frame or sitting on the bridge smelling the differences between plants. Babies are taken for walks around the garden in their buggies to benefit from fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and creative environment. Risks to all children are being minimised by staff appropriately using safety gates and guards on some door hinges to ensure that children do not accidentally trap their fingers. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children, minimising risks by the use of restraints on all large opening windows on both levels of the building allowing plenty of ventilation while safeguarding children from possible dangers. Children's safety is being further enhanced by staff monitoring the main entrance door and carefully screening all visitors, including asking them to sign in and out of a visitors book.

Children move confidently around both the inside and outside of the nursery, while developing their independence and learning to keep themselves safe. There are good, well-practised routines and procedures for the movement of children around the premises, especially when going upstairs or downstairs. Children's awareness of personal safety and accidents is well promoted through staff reminding them of the need to hold onto the red banister when going up and down stairs. Their safety is being further enhanced by knowing that only adults must open the gate at the top of the stairs.

Children understand that they must not run indoors and to line up sensibly when going into the garden through staff's sensitive provision of clear, consistent and gentle reminders. Children participate in regular fire drills to ensure that they have a raised awareness of fire safety and of how to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency or incident.

Children aged under three years are able to safely investigate and explore their surroundings through staff ensuring that such children use appropriate and safe equipment. Babies sleep in a cot, but before they transfer from one room to another, they sleep on a small bed to help them successfully manage transfers between rooms.

Children are able to make independent choices by self-selecting from a very, varied worthwhile range of clean and well-maintained toys and equipment to support their enjoyable activities. Staff ensure that such toys and equipment are appropriate for the range of children attending to ensure that their welfare is being fully safeguarded. For example, staff consider babies' safety by offering toys with no very small pieces/parts.

Children are being safeguarded by staff aware of their child protection responsibilities, with a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and able to implement policies and procedures in the absence of the designated staff member. The named designated member of staff responsible for safeguarding children ensures that any concerns are dealt with promptly and sensitively. The nursery shares the child protection statement with parents or carers to ensure that they know what actions will be taken to support their children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a very busy time at the nursery, amicably playing and learning alongside their peers, through the provision of a good range of stimulating and worthwhile activities to help their developmental progress. Staff use both 'Birth to three matters' and Foundation Stage frameworks to ensure that all children are provided with age- and stage-appropriate play opportunities in their rooms or the garden.

Children are very sensitively settled into the nursery according to their individual needs, with plenty of cuddles and reassurance from a caring staff team. They have very good opportunities to non-verbally express themselves through staff providing many worthwhile activities to encourage thoughts, ideas and feelings from a varied range of expressive forms, such as art, dance and song. Babies and tweenies thoroughly enjoy listening to and experiencing a wide range of background music throughout the day. Toddlers are encouraged to respond imaginatively during role play through staff's playful interaction helping them to recall familiar home experiences, such as making 'pretend' telephone calls. Two year old toddlers are learning to distinguish right from wrong, while forming positive relationships with their peers. Staff adhere to the nursery's consistent boundaries and appropriately support children to develop their social skills, for example, by encouraging them to share toys.

Babies and tweenies have excellent opportunities to listen to what their key workers are saying to them to encourage their language development. Staff talk to children about what they are doing throughout the day to enable them to link words with actions, for example, when changing nappies. Children engage in imaginative opportunities to explore movement and materials using all their senses, such as when feeling many different materials within their 'treasure' boxes. They are able to explore and to play in an environment in which they can extend their ideas, for example, when feeling the textured bristles of different brushes.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the stepping stones and the early learning goals. The majority of children receiving early years education have attended since a young age, so staff have a good knowledge of their starting points and capabilities from their developmental records. The views of parents and carers regarding their children's educational needs are regularly sought. Information about children's achievements gained from parents and carers is used in relation to termly targets. The new staff team have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage, of children's developmental progress and of how children learn. They use a range of teaching strategies and methods, for example, children are given time to explore their ideas and imaginations in a 'Chinese restaurant' during celebrations for the Chinese New Year. The pre-school room leader uses the pre-planned activities to ensure the delivery of an exciting curriculum focusing on the stepping stones. The long, medium and short term planning covers all six areas of learning, with short term planning including the main learning intentions. Activity plans cover all of the six areas of learning and

the focused activities take into account children's differing attainment levels to ensure that each child is able to make further progress. Focused activities have clear learning intentions and staff record children's new achievements to enable their key workers to identify their next steps, to track children's individual progress and to plan for future activities.

Children with learning disabilities are fully involved in all activities through staff supporting them to ensure that they gain the most from different experiences. Staff pay particular attention to children lacking concentration, for example, by ensuring one to one attention to encourage them to become involved and to persevere with tasks, such as completing puzzles. Staff manage children's behaviour by providing a well-organised learning environment in which children are developing their understanding of right and wrong, for example, knowing how many of them can play at certain activities at any one time.

Children separate happily from their parents or carers and display confidence to link up with staff for support and assistance. They show a strong sense of belonging when learning to play together. They are learning about relationships and have opportunities to solve problems together. For example, after looking at pictures of the Great Wall of China, they use construction toys to build a wall and use small play people to walk along the wall. Children display high levels of involvement after self-selecting activities and are learning many skills and attitudes during planned role play activities. For example, they are gaining an awareness of Chinese culture when using chopsticks to pick up fresh fruits and vegetables. Children are polite and helpful through staff promoting their social skills by being good role models, for example, when using 'please' and 'thank you'.

Children look at books on their own or with staff in small or large groups. They confidently join in with stories by anticipating what may happen next. They explore and experiment with sounds and more able children are hearing and saying the initial sounds in words, knowing which letters represent some sounds. For example, the letter of the week helps them to identify items and people's names beginning with the letter 'k'. Children can recognise their names when self-registering. They are engaged in many activities providing opportunities to mark-make, for example, writing for a purpose in a 'Chinese restaurant' or their names in diaries. Staff sometimes ask children to 'label' their work with a mark or help more able children to correctly form letters.

Children enjoy mathematical learning because staff ensure that it is purposeful by enabling children to initiate activities using mathematical concepts, for example, counting the different coloured chopsticks. Children thoroughly enjoy number rhymes and are beginning to understand the vocabulary of subtracting when singing songs about how many will be left. Children see numbers being used when playing games on the computer and on everyday pieces of equipment, for example, cash machines and telephones. They show sustained interest when building, for example, looking for big or little bricks to ensure that a wall will be secure.

Children show curiosity and an interest in why things happen and how things work. They ask questions about where they live and the natural world, for example, when finding worms when digging a large hole for a fruit tree. Children are very involved in the planning, planting and growing of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers in the garden. Planned activities help to develop and support children's understanding of the wider world, including staff inviting people from the community, such as the fire safety officer, into the nursery to meet the children and to talk about their roles. However, staff do not plan activities that involve children visiting the local neighbourhood to provide a further source of learning to stimulate their interest in the adjoining area outside their nursery environment.

Children are enjoying a wide range of physical activities to help them to develop their confidence and skills when using both large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They are developing skills to promote their confidence and independence, for example, when successfully filling containers with dry sand. This is giving them plenty of confidence to take care for themselves by pouring their own drinks. Their finer manipulative skills are being effectively developed through the provision of an extensive range of equipment, such as puzzles, scissors and threading beads.

Children's imaginations and free expression are being extensively promoted through a wide range of activities, such as playing musical instruments, singing, painting and craft activities. They particularly enjoy playing with paint and using a selection of 'painting' tools, for example, using lollipop sticks to write the names of animals and numbers in Chinese script.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery with confidence and feel a good sense of belonging. Their artwork displayed around the nursery promotes their self-esteem. They look at photographs of themselves participating in activities to enable them to feel that they are part of the nursery. They are able to settle quickly into the nursery environment through the provision of good procedures to support their move from their home environment. Children and their parents or carers visit before starting at the nursery to familiarise themselves with staff and the environment. Children are encouraged by staff to bring their comforters from home as they have a very good understanding of how comforters will help children to achieve a successful move from home to nursery.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are able to confidently speak and relate to staff, visitors and other children. Children benefit from having access to an excellent range of play resources and equipment to effectively promote positive images of diversity, such as books, small world play and craft activities. They also participate in activities promoting their awareness of different festivals and cultures, for example, those of China. Excellent artefacts and displays provide children with good opportunities to help them to understand why certain people do things differently from others. All children are encouraged to talk about these differences and are being introduced to a second language through some staff talking to them in French during lunch times. Each child is valued and respected as an individual by the nursery staff having a good knowledge of all their individual personalities.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are greatly valued, respected and fully integrated into the setting. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) has a very good understanding of her role and liaises well with staff, parents or carers and other agencies to ensure that the nursery effectively meets the children's individual needs. Staff take specific action to help children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make the best possible progress, for example, by providing additional adult support, adapting activities and using specialist equipment where appropriate.

Children's behaviour is very good when playing happily together. They are developing very good and secure relationships with staff and their peers. Staff effectively support younger children to share, to take turns and to have high expectations. They set clear, consistent boundaries, which help all children to learn to negotiate with others and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pre-school aged children know that they have to sweep up the sand

if they have spilt it onto the floor, while toddler aged children know that they have to help to put away toys before meal times. Praise is freely given to children to ensure that they develop their confidence and self-esteem through understanding when they have done well.

All parents and carers receive monthly newsletters to help them to keep up to date with any changes in the care being provided and their children's monthly learning topics. Key workers work closely with parents and carers, for example, encouraging them to provide their children's starting points. In addition, key workers record how children spend a typical day, what times they are fed and their favourite activities. This information helps children to make a smooth transition from home to nursery environments. Parents or carers of children under two receive daily written information about their child's day at the nursery to enable them to monitor continuity and progress. Parents and carers are informed of the nursery's policies and procedures and they can access the policies and procedures folder at any time.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. They receive clear information about the educational provision through a prospectus, a welcome pack and newsletters. Weekly plans in all six areas of learning are displayed in the cloakroom area to keep parents and carers fully informed of the different activities and teaching methods to enable them to confidently support their children's learning at home. Children take home resources, such as reading books, to extend and enhance their learning outside the nursery. Parents and carers receive termly reports detailing children's next steps of learning, which also request feedback from them. They talk regularly to staff, although sometimes their children's achievements at home are not being formally recorded to help staff to plan individual targets.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the Nursery ensures that all children are being very well cared for. Children are being fully safeguarded through staff undergoing thorough vetting procedures to ensure that they are highly qualified to successfully meet their individual needs.

Children are being cared for in age- and stage-appropriate groups. Each group has ample space within their base room to play and to explore, plus timetabled access to the enclosed outside play area. The minimum required adult-to-child ratios are met at all times within each room. There are relief staff employed at lunch times and at the end of the day to ensure that full-time staff can take breaks during the day. The relief staff also effectively cover staff absences through holidays and sickness. Regular staff appraisals and observations ensure that the Manager is aware of the skills and particular interests of individual staff members. The Manager ensures that, if necessary, their skills are being developed through particular training. Children also benefit from staff being interested and motivated in their professional development by attending regular training to keep up to date with current childcare issues and to gain skills and knowledge to enhance their individual roles and responsibilities.

The required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management of the nursery and to promote children's welfare and safety. The continually reviewed operational plan includes a range of contact details, policies and procedures to enable the setting to safely operate on a daily basis and to promote the children's safety, care and learning.

The leadership and management is good. The registered provider has a clear vision of nursery education, with a strong focus on personal development and achievement for all children. The

registered provider and manager are highly professional and motivated and have a clear commitment to providing children with positive early years' play experiences and learning in many areas. The new pre-school staff team are all actively involved in the delivery of the curriculum, but are only sometimes involved in the planning. The pre-school room leader shares her planning with staff members. She is aware of the strengths in the staff team and is beginning to influence the quality of teaching. She observes staff's interactions with the children to help her to develop their teaching skills. The manager ensures that the curriculum and teaching methods take account of children's individual needs, including the diverse ways in which they learn. Staff ensure that all children are being well supported to achieve their potential, including working with their parents or carers to encourage their children's good progress.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the registered provider was asked to continue to develop staff's awareness of the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework to provide support and guidance for staff working with children from birth to three years. Since the last inspection, staff have attended training to help them to plan and provide a worthwhile range of activities to support children's care and learning in their earliest years.

At the last nursery education inspection, there were no key issues to report, although the registered provider was asked to improve planning to show how the outside play area could be included more in the curriculum as an 'outdoor classroom' to further support children's development and learning. Since the last nursery education inspection, the registered provider has undertaken a full review of how the garden is to be utilised for the benefit of children. The garden has been divided into three areas and extra equipment has been purchased to ensure that staff do not have to take indoor equipment outdoors. Children are now benefiting greatly from making good use of the outdoor space to enable them to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.

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

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 consistency of good hygiene practices in order to prevent the spread of infection (this refers to the sharing of blankets in the tweenies room and the communal hand washing in the toddler room).

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):

- use the local neighbourhood as a source of learning to stimulate children's interest in the adjoining area.

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