

Chatterbox Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122660
Inspection date	07 December 2007
Inspector	Teresa Elkington
Setting Address	The Ashcombe School, Ashcombe Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1LY
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Registered person	The Governing Body of The Ashcombe School
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chatterbox Nursery is run by the governing body of Ashcombe Secondary School. It was registered 1990 and operates from a self contained building within the grounds of Ashcombe Secondary School in Dorking, Surrey. The nursery comprises of a entrance/coat room, separate toilet area, class room and sleep room with a small kitchen area, managers office/staff room and an enclosed outside garden/play area.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 15 children and provides care for children from the age of 12 weeks to five years of age, and serves children of parents who work in the school with additional places being used by local businesses. The nursery operates during term times only from 8.30 to 17.30 Monday to Wednesday and 8.30 to 16.30 Thursday and Friday. There are currently 23 children aged from nine months to four years of age on roll. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one staff member working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good cleaning regimes throughout the nursery ensure that children play and are cared for in a well maintained environment. All staff effectively follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, alongside the clear health and safety procedures adopted by the nursery. Children develop a good awareness and understanding of the importance of hygiene practices, which protects them from the spread of infection. They are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times whilst younger children are supported by staff to ensure that all children develop their understanding of the importance of personal hygiene routines. The effective nappy changing procedures adopted by staff ensure that the health and well being of very young children is maintained.

All members of staff hold a current first aid certificate, which enables them to carry out first aid to ensure the children's well being in the event of an accident. Accidents and the administration of medication is clearly recorded with parents signing any entries as an acknowledgement that they have been informed. Children who are infectious do not attend thus preventing the spread of cross infection.

Children enjoy daily activities in the well laid outside play area where they can enjoy a wide range of physical activities. Outdoor play includes wheeled toys, selection of ball games and climbing frame. Children also enjoy exploring their immediate surrounding as they go on walks and play in the school playing fields, which provides opportunities for children to run and play in large open spaces.

Healthy eating is promoted throughout the nursery as children are offered a good choice of nutritious meals and snacks. Children enjoy freshly cooked meals which are prepared for them on site. Snacks are prepared for children by staff in the room. However, children do not have any involvement in the preparation of their snacks or in laying the table in readiness for meal times, which does not fully promote children's involvement in their daily routines. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that individual dietary needs are met. Feeding routines for younger children are established with parents, to ensure that healthy eating is promoted at an early age. Babies are offered drinks at regular intervals while older children are encouraged to help themselves to water throughout the day. Babies and young children's emotional well being is fostered as children enjoy fond relationships with calm staff who interpret their needs effectively. Babies sleep according to their individual needs and young children sleep after lunch.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, bright and well organised indoor environment. A good range of play equipment and resources are made available which provides children with many opportunities to learn through play. They are able to access equipment independently as it is stored at a low level in boxes which are clearly labelled with words and pictures to describe the contents. Staff are vigilant and ensure that equipment is clean and checked for safety on a regular basis, this minimises the risks to children.

Risks of accidental injury is minimised because staff have clear procedures in place as they complete risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Staff carry out visual checks to monitor sleeping children. However, no system is in place for the recording of when checks have been made to ensure that they are monitored at regular intervals. A record of visitors is effectively maintained. Regular fire drills and effective policies and procedures ensure that children's safety is promoted in the event of a fire. Clear procedures are in place to support the arrival and collection of children to ensure their safety. Staff are well deployed both inside and out to monitor children's play, behaviour and safety to ensure their well being. Children are developing a good understanding of the importance of keeping themselves safe, as they readily respond to tidy up times to ensure that play areas are cleared of toys to allow them to move onto their next activity safely.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the child protection policy and procedures which ensure that children are safeguarded. The staff's knowledge is regularly updated through attendance at appropriate training courses. The policy documentation is up to date and includes current changes and reflects local safeguarding children's procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are stimulated as they explore different sounds and textures. They are supported and praised well by staff as they explore treasure baskets and toys with sounds, which helps to encourage children's curiosity and motivation to explore. There are low level resources for babies to explore, which helps stimulate their senses as they reach out to touch and feel the different textures available to them. Babies access material and card books helping them to develop language and communication and staff respond to babies' non-verbal communication and encourage language. There is close interaction between babies and staff. They hold babies closely on their laps for bottle feeding and stroke their faces as they soothe them. Babies are observed to approach staff confidently, receiving plenty of physical affection and cuddles, resulting in warm and happy relationships between them and the staff caring for them.

Older children enjoy very close and warm relationships with the staff within the fun and vibrant atmosphere that is created for them, which ensures that children feel relaxed and secure in their learning environment. Children enjoy a range of activities which help them to use their imagination and explore their senses. They enjoy playing with the sand and engage in conversation with their peers and staff, as they fill vessels and watch the sand flowing through funnels. Children enjoy manipulating play dough and use cutters to make shapes and make cakes which they pretend to bake in the toy oven which promotes their imagination and develops their small muscle skills.

There are some opportunities for children to develop their independence, for example, as they select their toys from the range available to them and put on their coats, having a try at doing them up before asking staff for support. They can access their own toys from the labelled accessible boxes. However, children do not have many opportunities to develop their independence in some of their daily routines. All children relish in participating in singing songs and rhymes and playing musical instruments. They join in enthusiastically keeping in time to the beat of the songs that they sing. Staff provide good support to younger children to allow them to enjoy and development their sense of rhythm.

Staff have a secure understanding of Birth to three and use this as a basis for planning and assessing children's developmental progress. Children's developmental progress is monitored well and activities are planned to support children's individual learning needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good provision is in place for children to be treated equally and fairly, where children learn about the wider world and learn to respect the needs of others. They show very good social skills with high levels of courtesy and respect for each other. Children celebrate festivals and have ample resources available to them to increase their awareness of the diversity of the world. There is good provision to support children's individual needs. A designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is in place who has a very good understanding of Code of Practice and how to support children and parents, through the use of individual education programmes. The premises offer an inclusive environment for children and adults due to the well thought through layout and amenities.

Children behave extremely well. They are regularly praised by staff who focus on their positive behaviour and achievements. Staff handle disputes calmly and swiftly and use effective diversion techniques to enable children to continue in their play with little disruption. Older children willingly help younger children through the routines of the setting, which promotes harmonious relationships and develops a sense of belonging for all.

Children benefit from a two-way sharing of information between their parents and staff to enhance their learning and to ensure that their care needs are recognised, fully met and next steps of learning planned for. All required documentation is requested from parents and consents obtained ensuring that children's individual needs are highlighted and met. There are comprehensive parents' notice boards in the entrance hall giving information on planning, activities, policies and procedures. Regular newsletters ensure that parents are kept fully informed as to nursery life. All these aspects promote parents as active partners in their children's care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A clear recruitment, induction and appraisal programme is in place, which results in a staffing team who have a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Unvetted persons are never left in charge of children which ensures that children are protected at all times. The setting ensures that the correct ratio of qualified staff are on duty and there is a good level of commitment to personal development shown by all staff and the management team who invest in their staff and strive for high quality. All staff have completed first aid training and there is a strong commitment to updating this regularly.

Daily routine offers very good opportunities for uninterrupted play and child-initiated learning. Babies follow their own feeding and sleep routines and staff organise this well to ensure that individual routines are consistently followed. The good staff deployment contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution, however, children do not always have positive opportunities to become involved in their daily routines.

All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and regularly reviewed. All children's records are stored confidentially and securely. Policies and procedures work well in practice, which ensures the efficient and safe management of the nursery. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to ensure that mops and brooms are kept securely and not accessible to the children. Positive action has been taken as all mops and brooms are now securely stored in a locked cupboard to ensure that they are inaccessible to the children.

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

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.

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 a record is maintained of the regular checks made of sleeping babies
- improve opportunities for children to become more involved in their daily routines

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