

Ashleigh Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309217
Inspection date	22 January 2008
Inspector	Alison Margaret Walker
Setting Address	Marsh Lane, Longton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 5ZJ
Telephone number	01772 617 532
E-mail	
Registered person	Icedean Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ashleigh Private Nursery School opened in 1990. It operates from three rooms within the church hall adjacent to Longton Methodist church on the outskirts of Preston. The setting is open five days a week from 07.45 to 17.30 hours, Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. The setting is registered to provide care for up to 72 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 123 children aged from 12 months to under five years on roll, 64 receive funding for nursery education.

Children attend for a variety of sessions and are drawn from the local area. The setting supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 20 staff, all of these hold an appropriate childcare qualification.

The nursery receives support from the local authority advisory teacher. The setting is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and has the Quality Counts award and Investors in People awards.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All staff are fully aware of individual dietary requirements and preferences, which are discussed in full with parents, such as allergies. The setting employs a cook and children receive healthy well balanced meals, snacks and drinks. The children enjoy their meals and have very good appetites. Good arrangements are in place for first aid; all of the staff hold a current first aid certificate and there are fully stocked first aid kits available. Written policies are in place regarding sickness, accidents and administration of medicines; these are fully implemented and shared with all parents. The premises and equipment are very clean throughout. Hygienic nappy changing facilities are provided in the toilet areas. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies. However, there is also nappy changing in the playrooms for the younger children posing an issue for the children's privacy and a risk of cross infection.

The children have good opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they access the enclosed play area on a daily basis. They also enjoy local walks, dancing and children over three years go swimming once a week. Many children are able to swim before they start school. They enjoy physical play outside very much and more-able children are competent in running forwards, backwards and sideways, hopping and jumping. Children handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials, such as pencils, scissors, hole punches and paint brushes safely and with increasing control. There are good opportunities for children to rest and sleep, for example, older children enjoy relaxing in the cosy sensory area on bean bags.

Older children are beginning to recognise the importance of keeping healthy and they are able to freely access healthy snacks, such as oranges, apple and melon. They say they like fruit because it is good for them. Children wash their hands independently after painting and gluing, after using the toilet and before eating. A child explains that they must wash their hands to get them clean and get rid of germs before having their snack. Children are reminded by staff to put their hands over their mouths when they cough and more-able children blow their noses independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is warm and welcoming with good evidence of children's play and activity. Parents, children and visitors are warmly welcomed on arrival. Children's work and photographs of children at play and involved in a good range of activities are on display. Additionally, the setting's registration certificate, public liability insurance and planning are available to view in the hallway. Children benefit from a good range of safety measures. For example, socket covers, safety gates and a secure outdoor play area are used. Rigorous risk assessments are done to ensure premises, toys, equipment and outside area is safe for children and adults. Children are kept safe on outings and wear luminous jackets with the nursery's name. The children are supervised at all times, are unable to leave the premises unattended and are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted. The system for managing access to the premises is good; unauthorised persons are unable to gain entry and there is an accurate record of visitors.

There is a rich and varied range of toys, furniture and equipment available, which meet the needs of all children attending. For example, comfortable seating is available in the baby room so staff can comfort, cuddle and feed babies. Toys and resources are in good condition; they

are regularly checked and cleaned. Staff use toys, equipment and materials effectively to ensure children are provided with an interesting range of activities that promote children's learning in all areas. For example, child-size tables and chairs where they sit and socialise with their peers. The outdoor area is safe and well resourced. This is due to be improved further by and addition of an outdoor classroom, sand hut and lighting. This will give children opportunities to play out in all weathers and different times of the day.

Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The staff have attended child protection training and the setting has a policy in place which is shared with parents. Child protection is covered during staff inductions and, as a result, the staff know the possible signs of abuse and the reporting procedure and have access to local child protection details.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff working with younger children have a sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Planning and assessment systems are in place for this age group and reflect the framework. The staff recognise the children as individuals and meet their differing needs well. For example, the staff implement individual routines for young babies' sleep and mealtimes. Children feel affirmed and acknowledged by the staff. They hold their arms up for a cuddle and point to their dummy when they want a sleep. Activities are well organised giving all children a wealth of new experiences. There are a broad range of activities available which encourage children to explore, investigate and take risks in a secure environment. For example, they explore the texture of pebbles and pine cones in the heuristic play basket. Children's imagination develops well from an early age, they pretend to talk on the telephone and sweep up with a dustpan and brush. They have positive self images and admire their reflection in the mirror and pretend to brush their hair. Children show pride in themselves and their development. For example, they are proud to come to nursery in pants and use the potty.

The children are fully involved in their activities and sustain interest in them for long periods of time, for example, a small group of younger children enjoy playing musical instruments whilst listening to music. The children are happy and settled and have positive relationships with others, for example, the children are friendly towards visitors and are keen to involve them in their play. Children's emotional needs are well met as they receive plenty of individual attention and cuddles, for example, babies being bottle fed and being read a story.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage and are highly skilled in putting this into practice. They show a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a rich and varied range of activities and experiences to cover all aspects of children's learning. Planning is flexible, clear and covers all areas of the curriculum. Assessments are rigorous and clearly identify the next steps in children's learning to inform future planning. All the staff have an excellent understanding of the planning and implement it in an accomplished manner, but they are flexible, allowing for spontaneous activities which are child-led. Planning includes a good range of activities both indoor and out to give the children challenges helping them progress towards the early learning goals.

All children show care and concern for themselves; for example, they wash their hands, use the toilet independently and access tissues to wipe their noses. Mealtimes give the children opportunities to further develop their independence. For example, children can access the

snack talk independently help themselves to fruit and pour their own drink. The children show a keen interest in information and communication technology and operate simple programs on the computer independently. Children are developing their mathematical skills well. They use numbers in play, such as counting bricks. They recognise numbers of personal importance, pointing to the number four and saying that is how old they are. When playing in the water they talk about objects floating and sinking. They fill up a bucket with water and say it is heavy, then they pour the water out and comment that the bucket is now empty. They seek out others to share experiences and form firm relationships with adults and peers.

Children interact with each other, negotiating plans, activities and take turns in conversation. A small group of children work together to make a zoo with bricks and toy animals. They chat to each other remarking that they need to build the wall higher to stop the animals escaping. The children can recall past experiences, for example, children talk about going to the airport and having their hair cut. Children have a keen interest in books; they hold them the correct way up and turn the pages. More-able children begin to recognise some familiar words, such as their names and the names of others. They confidently use writing as a means of recording and many can write their own name, for example, on their artwork. Older children write for a purpose, such as making notes when on the telephone. Children use rollers, cutters, scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and glue spreaders confidently and skilfully. Children listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs and music. They particularly enjoy regular visits from the music co-ordinator who plays the key board. The children choose the songs they would like to sing. They are very confident singers and know the words to the songs very well. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The staff manage the children's behaviour positively and consistently and according to the child's level of understanding and maturity. For example, they know all the children well, they are calm and clear regarding routines and boundaries. The setting's behaviour policy is in place and shared with parents. As a result, the children are very well behaved; they are able to take turns, share, use manners and are cooperative at tidy up time. The children have a positive approach to learning and they show independence in selecting and carrying out activities, for example, they put on aprons to paint, help themselves to paper and put their work in their tray. The children can independently manage their own personal hygiene, such as washing hands and wiping their noses. The children develop a positive attitude to others and have a good understanding about the wider world and community through celebrating festivals and having access to a good range of resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The setting supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have good opportunities to share what they know about their child through an effective settling-in procedure, regular discussions with staff and parents' evenings. However, there are some missed opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning. Additionally parents' notice boards prominently display relevant information, such as information about the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The parents receive clear information about the educational provision, for example, through regular newsletters and discussions with staff. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the environment is good, all the staff know their roles and responsibilities well and effectively implement routines to give children a wealth of rich experiences. Children benefit from very well deployed staff who consistently interact with them and give children highly effective support and encouragement, which helps them feel secure and confident. All of the staff are experienced practitioners, they are dynamic, mature and work well together as a team. They clearly enjoy their work, they are enthusiastic, highly motivated and show a high commitment to all the children in their care. They are supported fully by the manager, who has a very hands on approach, ensuring that she knows all children, parents, carers and staff well. This enhances all aspects of the organisation of the nursery to ensure the children receive good quality care and education. All the required documentation is in place, is easily accessible and stored securely, such as emergency contact details. A robust system is in place to record the staff's, visitors' and children's daily attendance. This is accurate and up to date.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The staff team show an exceptional commitment to improving care and education; they have regular opportunities for staff development, such as attending training and staff meetings. They are fully supported by the manager who influences good practice by being highly motivated and having a very hands on approach. She has a wealth of childcare knowledge and experience, as a consequence she is a very positive role model for the staff. All the staff are fully involved in planning the curriculum and assessment records are regularly updated, monitored and evaluated. This helps the staff to identify strengths, areas for improvement and to influence future planning. For example, they have implemented a key worker system, improved the writing area and increased activities to encourage independence. The nursery is very well attended, having high standards which the staff and management feel both children and parents deserve. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were raised relating to confidentiality, documentation, story time, children's skills and independence. These have all been addressed ensuring that all documentation is accurate and is stored confidentially. Children's independence and self help skills are positively encouraged throughout the day and all children's interests are acknowledged at story time. These actions have a positive impact on the children's overall safety, education and wellbeing.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take 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 records may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- improve nappy changing arrangements.

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):

- provide further opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning.

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