

Abington Park Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343949
Inspection date	30 June 2008
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
Setting Address	473 Wellingborough Road, Northampton, NN3 3HN
Telephone number	01604 712098
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Registered person	Magic Nurseries A 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?

Abington Park Day Nursery is one of seven nurseries run by Magic Nurseries A Ltd. It was registered in 2006 and operates from converted premises in a residential area of Northampton. A maximum of 75 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two months to under eight years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the local and neighbouring communities. It currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because there are good daily hygiene procedures which help prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff wear appropriate protective clothing when changing nappies and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. Children are gaining a good understanding of the relevance of personal hygiene practices because they discuss these with staff and these concepts are incorporated into daily play, for example, children playing with a doctors' set discuss the importance of making sure that any wounds are clean and germs are washed away.

Children's health in an emergency situation is well promoted because seven members of staff hold appropriate first aid qualifications and there is a system for the renewal of qualifications and the implementation of training for other staff members. All records and policies are in place to further support children's health. For example, there are thorough procedures for the safe administration of medication and guidance regarding the exclusion of children who are unwell.

Children's individual requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and there are stringent procedures in place to ensure that children are only offered the correct food and drink. Their growth and development are promoted because they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises and the setting uses only organic ingredients. Menus are displayed for parents to see and these demonstrate that children are offered a balanced range of all food types. Older children's independence is promoted as they are supported in serving their own meals. Their social skills are encouraged as meal times are seen as social events, with children sitting in small groups and discussing a range of topics as they eat.

Children's health and development are promoted because they enjoy a wide variety of physical activities. They develop control of their bodies and improve physical skills such as control, balance and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities such as ballet sessions or play in the garden, where they run, climb, slide, crawl through tunnels, roll hoops, throw balls and use ride-on toys. Their participation in a range of smaller activities ensures that they are able to develop hand-eye co-ordination and finer physical skills. For example, children choose beads and concentrate as they carefully thread these onto string.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. There are photographs and colourful displays of their work and resources are appealingly arranged and easily accessible, helping children to feel valued and comfortable. Their safety is prioritised as comprehensive yet practical risk assessments have been completed on all areas and activities. Staff also carry out daily visual checks to identify potential hazards. This ensures that children are able to play and move around safely and independently.

The daily implementation of practical policies and procedures ensures that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote children's safety at all times. For example, there are clear procedures regarding emergency evacuation and these are practised regularly to enable children to become familiar with the routines and to identify any issues or areas for improvement.

Children are kept safe on outings as there are clear procedures, for example, risk assessments are carried out and staff complete comprehensive check sheets so that all are aware of the children and staff leaving the setting and their destination.

Children are gaining a good understanding of safety issues and how to keep themselves safe. They are given clear explanations by staff to enable them to understand this area. For example, older children explain how to check whether food is hot before touching any serving implements. Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources that are appropriate for their size and developmental stages. These are well organised and easily accessible in low storage containers and shelving so that children are able to make choices about their play. Children's welfare is well promoted because staff have attended training and have a good understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children. They have ensured that they have up-to-date information regarding current procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and secure, separating well from their parents and carers and eagerly exploring the resources and activities. They feel valued and welcome because staff are very caring and demonstrate that they genuinely enjoy the children's company. For example, they readily join in with children's play and discussions, taking time to get to know each child and their individual interests. This promotes a positive, caring environment where children can play and learn confidently.

Babies and new children settle well and build secure relationships with staff. This is underpinned by good settling-in procedures, which enable parents to share information with staff about their child's usual routines, likes and dislikes. This information is then used on a daily basis to ensure that children are consistently offered appropriate care. Staff have a good understanding of child development and use this to make sure that children are supported in taking the next developmental step. For example, they ensure that children are confident and secure by offering familiar toys and activities, gradually introducing more difficult and challenging ones.

Children's autonomy and independence are promoted because staff are skilled in encouraging them to explore and determine their own play but offering appropriate encouragement when needed. For example, a small group of young children thoroughly enjoy exploring the texture of custard, pouring and scooping this and discovering the hidden sea creatures. A staff member then extends this play by adding dry powder to create a new texture for the children to explore. However, the deployment of staff is not always appropriate to ensure that children are consistently supported in positive play experiences.

Children's individual development is promoted and they are offered appropriate activities because staff know them well and make good use of daily observations and assessments to inform activity planning. This area is further supported because weekly planning is flexible and is continuously adjusted to include additional activities to promote children's current individual needs and interests. Children's daily play and activities are enhanced through the good planning and use of the outdoor play areas. This means that they are offered a varied and extended range of opportunities in an outdoor environment. For example, children paint the walls with water, construct with large construction sets, sit at the table to write, grow tomatoes, explore the log piles, dig in the garden and sit in the shade to play a matching game.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use appropriate teaching methods, ensuring that children are offered opportunities which enable them to make good progress in all areas of learning. This progress is well balanced because staff carry out regular assessments, using these practically to track children's development and plan the next steps. Assessments are also used to inform the weekly activity planning to ensure that individual needs are met.

The thoughtful planning of the environment ensures that children are offered daily opportunities to develop the behaviours and attitudes that enable them to achieve in their learning. They are motivated to learn through exciting and interesting activities and are gaining good understanding of right and wrong, promoting a positive environment in which to play and concentrate. Children confidently use language to explain their thoughts and organise their play. They enjoy opportunities to extend their vocabulary, for example, a staff member introduces and explains the word 'prescription' and children go on to use this word, pretending to write prescriptions during role play. Children are gaining a good understanding that writing can be used for a range of purposes, writing their names on their work, making 'driving licences' and writing letters and addresses as part of imaginary play.

Children are developing a good understanding that numbers carry meaning, confidently and correctly counting the number of objects and recognising written numerals. An example of this is the dominoes they have made, where they correctly matched the numbers to the pictures of items. Children confidently name both basic and complex shapes. For example, children working on a computer programme name a square, circle, rectangle, semi-circle and octagon. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring. Examples of this include exploring different types of beans, growing tomatoes and flowers, digging in the garden, checking the wood piles for insects and experimenting with ice. However, their development in this area is not fully promoted as they are not always encouraged to explore and experiment to extend their problem-solving skills. Children are gaining an awareness of their own culture and that of others, for example, through covering topics such as 'Around the World', where they access relevant reference and fictional books, maps, puzzles, dressing up clothes and flags from around the world.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills. For example, when playing in the garden, children balance on the slide and ride-on toys, jump from one coloured stepping stone to another and fill a wheelbarrow with earth and concentrate on balancing this as they move it around the garden. Children enjoy numerous opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form through activities such as painting, sand and water play, collage-making, gardening and constructing with a range of media. Their imagination is encouraged through the provision of a creative variety of resources and role play scenarios. For example, children make rockets and dens in the garden, use the 'International Discovery Area' and explore the jungle role play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected and their individuality is highly valued, enabling them to develop a positive self-image. This is further enhanced because staff offer children appropriate praise and encouragement, thus promoting their confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their understanding of other cultures and

ways of life is promoted through the provision of a range of resources and their participation in themed activities. For example, during the setting's 'International Day' children dress up in traditional costumes and share information about their cultures and traditions. Children are gaining a good awareness of their community through the use of local facilities such as parks, walks and the library.

Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff work sensitively with children and parents and liaise closely with other professionals to ensure that consistent and appropriate care is offered. Children have individual plans which set realistic targets and are reviewed on a regular basis, helping to ensure the balanced promotion of their development.

Children's behaviour is good and they are gaining a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are polite and show care and concern for each other and for staff. Staff act as good role models and consistently offer children meaningful explanations so that they can begin to understand the implications of their behaviour and make decisions about this. The positive approach to behaviour management means that children are able to play confidently and concentrate on their chosen activities.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given information about the setting's policies and procedures, ensuring that they are aware of daily practice and routines. Practical displays detailing specific policies and procedures are changed monthly to help highlight individual policies and related practice. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through informal discussions with staff, monthly newsletters, daily diaries for younger children, social events and parents' evenings. Parents are offered information about current topics and ideas for continuing these at home, enabling them to understand and be involved in their child's learning. Parents views are valued and are actively sought through the use of regular questionnaires.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the thoughtful organisation of space within the setting. Separate base rooms for children of different ages ensure that they are able to move freely and safely and are offered appropriate care and a range of activities. Designated areas for different types of play enable children to concentrate on their chosen activity. For example, children concentrating on their drawing are not interrupted by others playing in the role play area. The practical planning and organisation of time ensures that children are offered a balanced range of opportunities. For example, children are able to choose their own activities, to participate in structured activities and to play outside.

Children's daily care and experiences of the setting are enhanced by the attention they receive from qualified, well-supervised staff and from the attention paid to detail in the organisation of the setting. Their ongoing welfare and safety are promoted because there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. This is further supported by a comprehensive staff induction process and regular supervision. The daily monitoring of the setting ensures that policies and procedures are understood by all and are consistently applied. All paperwork and records are in place and well-organised, helping to ensure that children's needs are clearly documented and staff can work appropriately to promote their ongoing safety and development.

Leadership and management is good. Children's overall development and welfare are promoted by the clear understanding that the manager has of her roles and responsibilities and of current regulations and requirements. She works in partnership with senior managers and staff to evaluate the setting's practice and implement action plans which lead to improvements in outcomes for children. For example, a recent review of the outdoor play areas has led to improvements in the planning and use of these areas, thus providing an extended range of activities and opportunities for children. The manager and senior staff act as good role models for staff and children, attending additional training and demonstrating a positive approach to their daily work. Staff are well supervised and receive support in all areas of their work and for all training needs. This creates a positive atmosphere within the setting, in which children can play, learn and develop.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- consider the deployment of staff to ensure that children are consistently supported and their play experiences are positive.

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 opportunities for children to explore and experiment to extend their problem-solving skills.

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