

# Aspatria Community Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY339883
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 April 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Carys Millican
<b>Setting Address</b>	Richmond Hill School, Queen Street, Aspatria, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 3BQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	016973 23567
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Aspatria Community Initiatives Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Aspatria Community Childcare is managed by Aspatria Community Initiatives Ltd. It opened in 2006 and is located within Richmond Hill Primary School in Aspatria, approximately eight miles from Wigton in west Cumbria. A maximum of 44 children aged from birth to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 39 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 13 receive funding for early education. The setting serves the immediate and extended rural communities. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the healthy lifestyles promoted well by experienced staff. Children learn about healthy eating through a balance of nutritious snacks, discussions with staff and planned activities. Children competently set the table by handing out the beakers and bowls of fresh fruit and vegetable snacks. A social occasion is created where children's growing independence is fully encouraged. Children competently access fresh drinking water from the water cooler and pour their own drinks from the milk jug. Children learn about good hygiene practices. Staff follow appropriate hygiene practices when preparing snacks and handling food. Tables are wiped using an anti-bacterial spray. Staff explain to children what it is they are using to clean tables and children understand why and say so. Children's dietary needs are met as the staff follow children's individual needs, routines and parental wishes closely. Babies sit comfortably in highchairs, their growing independence encouraged as they attempt to feed themselves. Babies benefit from the comfort of being held when bottle feeding. Parents provide children's lunchtime meals. These are stored appropriately in the kitchen until required. Staff use a probe to check food is correctly heated through before children eat it.

Children benefit from good hygiene routines that help them learn about personal care and the importance of keeping a clean environment. They listen for the tidy up song to play and eagerly help the staff put away the toys. Children wash their hands after messy activities, playing outside, before meals and after toileting. Sinks, soap and paper towels are in easy reach for children to access themselves. Children are protected from the potential risk of infection. Nappy changing procedures are meticulously followed. Protective clothing is worn by staff and changing mats are wiped down before and after each individual nappy change. Children's welfare and protection is fully considered by staff following the sick child policy, which ensures that children remain at home if they are unwell. Children benefit from staff having a sound knowledge of first aid and understanding the correct administrative procedures to be followed regarding accidents and medication. Written consent to seek emergency treatment or advice is obtained from parents.

Children benefit from a range of physical activities which contributes to their good health and all round development. Plans show how physical play in the fresh air is encouraged outdoors twice a day. Children confidently change into their shoes and attempt to put on their own coats. They enjoy playing outside. Children enjoy a range of sensory experiences. They use wooden spoons to hit different sized pans hanging on the fence and they dig in the soil and they look for hidden stones. Children explore the sensory bottles and use their imagination to build with a selection of plastic drain pipes and blocks of wood. Children develop a sense of space as they run around the play area rolling hoops and kicking balls. Children enthusiastically pedal their sit and ride toys around the tarmac surfacing, practising their gross motor skills. All children access the outdoor play area during the day. Babies and toddlers go outside with the older children and play with the resources. Outings and visits in the locality are beneficial in raising children's awareness of the community in which they live. Children rest according to their needs. Babies sleep in cots in the adjoining room and their care records are maintained. Older children look at books and listen to stories in their quiet carpeted area.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. The nursery room is spacious and well maintained, however, younger children's access to hanging visual displays and textured experiences is limited. Children confidently move around their surroundings and help themselves to the range of safe, suitable and age-appropriate resources that is accessible to them. Children access text labels in the language rich environment. The school nursery room is spacious and sufficient in size for the number of children registered for. It contains a range of alternative resources, however these are not linked to the planning for the pre-school children. Children feel a sense of belonging. Their art and craft work is creatively displayed throughout the nursery and older children have their own picture label matched against their drinking cup. Children's health and safety are maintained by staff checking equipment before use and regularly cleaning toys and resources. Babies are monitored closely when sleeping and bedding is changed after each use. Documents record safety checks and any hazards identified.

Children are kept safe indoors and outside by the use of appropriate safety equipment. Closed circuit television allows staff to control the outer entrances therefore un-vetted persons cannot access the school grounds. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Safety keypads are used on outer doors and safety gates prevent younger children's access to restricted areas. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised by staff using detailed risk assessments and completing daily tick-list checks in areas children access. Socket covers are placed in all electrical points and any trailing wires are positioned out of sight. The play areas are fully enclosed and staff supervise the children's outdoor play at all times. However, indoors at times during the day children's safety is compromised. Although minimum staff to child ratios are maintained, staff at times do not directly work with the children as they undertake domestic routines such as making snacks. Children are generally protected by the health and safety practices and procedures that staff follow to help prevent accidents. Staff check play equipment for loose or broken parts and areas are checked before children access them. Children learn about how to keep themselves safe. They benefit from visits from 'people who help us', such as the police and fire fighters. These experiences are beneficial in raising children's awareness of personal safety. Fire fighting equipment is in place and all fire doors are unobstructed. The fire evacuation procedure is practised by children and staff regularly. Children are kept safe on outings as adult to child ratios are maintained, permission is obtained from parents and documentation is in place.

Children are protected by staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection policies and procedures. Children's safety and well-being are enhanced by the staff's commitment to undertaking additional training to update their knowledge of child protection issues. The child protection statement is in place and clearly explains the procedures to follow in the event of a child protection concern. The policy has been updated with changes in recent legislation and the details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board are recorded, however, the contact details for the police are missing. Children's general safety and welfare are met by the documentation maintained by the nursery. Children's individual record forms contain a wealth of information including details of named persons allowed to collect them. The hours of attendance of visitors, staff and children are meticulously recorded.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are interested and engaged in their play. They are happy and contented as they settle easily into the warm, welcoming atmosphere created by experienced practitioners. Children are enthusiastic and self-assured in their play as they help themselves to the activities and resources provided. These activities and resources support their development and learning and are closely linked to the planning on display. All children enjoy playing with the water. Older children help themselves to the dinosaurs and place them in the water, they then get jugs of different sizes, engaging in conversation about which one is biggest. Younger children splash their hands in the water, giggling as they get their sleeves wet. Children enjoy the sticking activities using a range of natural materials. They make collage pictures with textured materials. Children make sound relationships with adults and other children. They decide for themselves what they play with from the labelled storage containers, attractively displayed. Babies access a wide range of floor toys including musical sound making activity toys. Children play number games and competently match pictures. Children who require help to socialise with others are supported by staff members who are close at hand to help and advise.

Children enjoy the small group activities and their attention is fully maintained. They recognise the different coloured beanbag shapes used by staff to help children to identify shape and colour, and recognise the beginning of letter sounds. Children complete play tray jigsaws easily and look at books, sat on their key worker's knee. Children enjoy singing and listening to stories. They listen to instruction and understand the routine as they help to tidy up before snack time. Children develop confidence and self-esteem through the interaction, care, love and attention they share with all staff. The key worker system is established, allowing younger children to form attachments with their carers. Staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which is seen used in practice during activities and identified in the planning. The planning for younger children is linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the first set of stepping stones found in the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Children are observed by staff during their play. These observations form part of the ongoing observations of their learning and development used to identify children's progress and later used as starting points for the Foundation Stage. Written progress files are in the early stages of developing. Daily diaries are completed for younger children identifying their daily routine and care needs. Staff have a good understanding of child development and this is seen in practice.

Children benefit from a relaxed atmosphere and homely environment. Close and caring relationships with staff increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children are valued and treated with concern and respect by staff, who have a kind and caring manner. Children are supported by staff who engage children in conversation and help extend their play experiences through simple questioning. Children relate their own experiences in their routine activities, such as circle time. They relate well to each other and socialise well as they build up relationships with other children. Staff are on hand to support and challenge them, skilfully extending their learning. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong as they learn to take turns and share when using the toys and equipment.

Children enjoy a wide range of indoor activities. Routines are established to allow flexibility, to accommodate the needs of all children and to allow them sufficient time to explore through their senses. These routines enhance children's learning. The activities are adapted to suit the individual needs of the children. Children eagerly join in the activities provided and their concentration levels are maintained. Children enjoy playing outdoors. They use their senses as they bang the different sized pans hung on the fence and build and construct with tree pieces

and tubes. Quieter activities allow young children to sit on the comfy cushioned play mats and listen to stories or read to themselves. Babies explore their environment looking at the low level pictures or themselves in the mirrors.

## **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals. Their learning needs are understood by the staff who have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss the planning in the nursery and these plans are displayed clearly on the window. Activities are adapted in practice for children's differing ages and abilities and evaluated after implementing. Information about children is obtained from parents on admission and initial starting points are gathered from observations and assessment used to inform an individual progress report. These are in the early stages of developing as some folders do not have any information written into them. Staff observe children daily during activities and during free play. These observations monitor children's achievements, however, they are not fully used by staff to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Children can count confidently and can name a number of different colours. However, children's mathematical skills, such as calculating, comparing and problem solving, are not reinforced by staff in everyday experiences and routines.

Children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try out new experiences. Children enjoy using the computer and move the mouse following the instructions. The use of alternative information and communication technology resources that encourage children's understanding of how things work is limited. Children enjoy the creative activities, gluing and sticking pictures using a variety of textures. Children independently access mark making materials and use one-handed tools confidently. They access a number of wooden activity toys that help develop hand-eye coordination. They enjoy using malleable materials such as modelling clay and dough. Children complete table top jigsaws and build with bricks. Staff use questions successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. Children chat confidently with each other using a wide range of language and sentence construction. Their thinking skills are suitably promoted when listening to a story and recalling past events.

Children behave well and show an understanding of right and wrong as they interact together in their play. Staff support children during activities and children's spontaneous free play. Children enjoy small group activities which help them learn how to share and take turns. The staff skilfully encourage the children's understanding of respecting each other's needs. Children interact well with each other and listen to one another during quieter activities. The role play area is not established within the planning for this topic therefore children miss opportunities to engage in imaginative play. Children recognise colours as they sort out the small counting teddy bears. Children's development of large and small motor skills is sufficiently promoted through the physical activities provided. They can find their personal space when asked to sit at the table at snack time and can negotiate their own space when playing with equipment inside and outdoors.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time spent at the nursery and all children are fully included in the life of the setting. They play harmoniously together and are considerate towards each other. Children show concern for each other and their understanding of equality is promoted through the many activities that encourage equal play. They learn to share and take turns when playing games

and in small group activities. Children are familiar with the routine. They eagerly tidy up before snack time and sit patiently on the floor as they wait to wash their hands. They enjoy the social occasion where they develop relationships with other children and staff. Staff are on hand to help, praise and support the children during the day. Children's individual care needs are known and met by staff in discussion with their parents. Staff work with parents to help children with specific needs and offer one to one support. Children begin to become aware of the wider society as they explore their own and others' cultures and traditions, such as Hanukkah and Christmas. However, positive visual images and resources that promote difference and diversity are limited.

Children behave extremely well. They respond to staff's positive strategies in handling behaviour. Staff listen to children, praise achievements and provide individual support when required. Children become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Incidents of unwanted or challenging behaviour are recorded and discussed with parents. Younger children confidently ask to go to the toilet and older children independently help themselves when playing outdoors. Children make suitable choices and decisions about their play. They access a range of activities that promotes the inclusion of all attending. Their confidence and self-assurance are encouraged. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the satisfactory partnership with parents and carers. Children settle well into the nursery, supported by the induction arrangements in place. Younger children's individual care needs are discussed with parents and daily records of these needs are recorded by staff. Children's initial developmental starting points and achievements are obtained from parents and used to inform settling-in observations. Ongoing assessment in the nursery informs the progress reports which are in the early stages of development. Parents and children are made very welcome and see a difference in their children from when they first started. Parents are extremely happy with the care and education their children receive. They praise the friendliness and pleasantness of the staff caring for their children. A wealth of information is available for parents in the reception area. This includes a prospectus containing information about the setting and the care and activities provided, and a folder containing detailed policies and procedures. Children's activities are shared verbally with parents on collection and opportunities to discuss their child's progress are welcomed by staff. Children's steady progress is welcomed by parents, however, opportunities to extend and reinforce children's learning potential at home are not established. The complaints procedure is displayed. Parents and staff are aware of the procedures for complaints and a log is established.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The registered person has not followed the regulatory requirements and procedures to inform Ofsted of individuals associated with, or changes to, the registered body, which requires such persons to submit to a robust vetting procedure. Not all the directors or committee members are known to Ofsted, and therefore they have not undergone suitability checks including an enhanced criminal records check. Therefore, the registered person has not complied with all the conditions of registration.

Children are cared for by adults who have a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. Staff hold early years qualifications and are experienced practitioners. They work well together as a team and are clear on their roles and responsibilities. Although the minimum ratios are met the care staff do not always work directly with the children as they are taken out of the room for snack duties and when changing children. During these times,

children's safety and well-being are compromised. The staff recruitment policy is in place and additional staff are being sought to alleviate this problem. Staff records show the registered person has a robust recruitment and vetting procedure in place to ensure that children are protected and cared for by staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff checks are completed and the induction procedure ensures the nursery policies and procedures are applied. Staff appraisals are completed. Individual staff training needs are recognised and continual training and development is fully encouraged. Staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Input from the development worker and advisory teacher has been beneficial in helping staff improve the setting. Staff meetings take place to make sure continuity is maintained and information and planning are developed in the interest of the children. Staff use positive behaviour management strategies which are consistently applied in practice. The premises are generally well organised and indoor space is suitably laid out to maximise play opportunities. The rooms used are organised to allow choice, independence and decision making and to encourage children to explore the environment. Children are provided with natural materials to enable investigation and exploration. Documentation is in place that ensures the efficient and safe management of the provision and contributes to the health, safety and well-being of children.

Leadership and management of the nursery education provided for children is satisfactory. An all-inclusive environment is encouraged and all children are included and treated with equal concern. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals from their learning experiences planned for and through the stimulating activities provided. The staff line manager and nursery manager both have a commitment to the development and improvement of the setting. This is seen in practice, through discussion with staff and within the documentation provided. Action plans are in place to improve the setting and regular evaluation of the care and education takes place. Planning is maintained and although observations and assessment are in the early stages of development, when completed they are clear, giving positive comments on progress achieved. The line manager motivates the nursery manager and staff well. They work exceptionally well as a team to promote children's development and the care and routines of the nursery. Staff act as good role models by actively taking part. They deploy themselves well during activities and motivate children by reinforcing learning. Daily routines are followed which are flexible to the children's needs. Children's personal information is collected and recorded. Their individual needs are known and children are supported in their learning. Parents are provided with information about the provision. The key worker system is established. Staff inform parents about their child's day on collection.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve knowledge and understanding of the regulatory requirements in relation to staff checks and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of significant events, such as changes to the registered person or person in charge.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### 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):

- encourage mathematical experiences in everyday routines, such as calculating and comparing
- encourage children's understanding of information communication technology and how things work
- develop the systems for observing and assessing children progress, achievement and interest in order to identify the next steps in their learning and development to inform future planning.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)