

ABC Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY353064
Inspection date	07 May 2008
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	A B C Day Nursery, 143 Exeter Road, EXMOUTH, Devon, EX8 3DX
Telephone number	01395 222 808
E-mail	
Registered person	SPL Education 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?

ABC Day Nursery is a privately owned nursery. It opened in June 2001 and re-registered under its current management in April 2007. The nursery operates from seven rooms on the ground floor of a large converted house in Exmouth. There are staff facilities and offices on the first floor, and a kitchen and small office on the ground floor. Children share access to a secure outdoor area, and there is an additional garden for babies. The nursery is registered to care for up to 56 children aged under five years. There are currently 103 children on roll, including 35 children receiving nursery funding. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 throughout the year, except for bank holidays and Christmas. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed and supported. The nursery employs 25 staff, 10 of whom have early years qualifications or are working towards them. In addition, two senior managers have Early Years Professional Status.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from eating very healthy meals and snacks. Menus are carefully planned, so that children enjoy plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables during the day. For example, they eat bananas and croissants for breakfast, pasta or rice dishes with vegetables for lunch and sandwiches for tea. Snacks include fresh fruit and savoury biscuits. Special dietary needs are recorded and fully met. Children have constant access to fresh drinking water in all rooms, so they are able to maintain good fluid levels. Children play outdoors in almost all weathers. They enjoy being in the fresh air and engaging in physical activities, using wheeled toys, climbing and balancing or playing active games. They sometimes walk to local amenities, such as the library, beach or park.

Children are mainly very well protected from infection. They are cared for in spotlessly clean premises and staff are meticulous in following the nursery's clear routines for maintaining high standards of hygiene. Toilets are checked and cleaned three times a day and nappy changing practices are mainly excellent, with the consistent use of gloves, aprons and disinfectant sprays. However, toddlers' nappies are changed in a room where children play, sometimes creating unpleasant odours. Children learn good hygiene routines, washing their hands regularly and discussing the reasons for doing so. They use liquid soap and paper towels, to reduce the risk of cross-infection. There are very effective systems for ensuring that children always have clean bedding and flannels. Children's care is good, when they are unwell or injured. There are 12 staff members with current first aid qualifications, and records of accidents and medication are comprehensive, and shared appropriately with parents. Staff deal gently and sympathetically with children who have minor injuries.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is accorded a very high priority within the nursery. All areas used by children are regularly risk assessed and hazards are addressed. For example, new radiator covers have been fitted in the baby room and safety glass has been installed where appropriate. Accident records are scrutinised, so that patterns can be noted and dangers eliminated. Staff have a good understanding of all safety issues and constantly monitor children's movement around the building and their use of equipment. They help children to become aware of hazards, as they discuss, for example, how to carry scissors safely or why it is safer to walk indoors, rather than run. The nursery makes very good use of gates, socket covers and door restrictors, to enhance children's safety.

Children choose from a very good range of toys and resources, which are maintained in pristine condition, due to very effective systems for checking and cleaning all play materials and equipment. Children are safe on outings, as all journeys and venues are thoroughly risk assessed. Their safety in emergencies is generally well planned, although evacuation procedures are not always practised sufficiently often for all staff and older children to learn the routine. Children are very well protected from harm, as staff have a clear understanding of all safeguarding issues and procedures. There are appropriate systems for dealing with any concerns and all staff regularly attend training or discuss issues and procedures at staff meetings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages enjoy a very good variety of activities, which effectively promote their development. Babies are offered a very wide range of sensory experiences, exploring treasure baskets full of interesting items, such as those made of metal or natural resources, or looking for plastic creatures hidden in coloured jelly. Staff talk and play with them, sharing picture books or helping them to develop their sense of belonging, as they talk about family photographs. Babies are encouraged to develop their communication skills, as staff respond warmly to the sounds they make or clap and cheer when they demonstrate new skills. Babies are settled and content in the nursery, and they move confidently between activities, trying new challenges, such as building towers of bricks or using role play resources.

Children aged from 18 months to almost three years move freely between two rooms and access an excellent variety of resources and activities. They enjoy the comfortable environment of one room, with its coloured cushions, textured floor coverings, heuristic play resources and quiet music, as well as enjoying a wide range of sensory play opportunities in the other room. Children explore sand and water or trays of lentils and paint. They investigate dressing up clothes, wearing swimwear and sun glasses, hats and party dresses, as staff encourage them to imagine places where they would wear such outfits. Children build with large textured blocks, play with balloons and make pretend meals in the play kitchen. They are very effectively challenged and supported in their learning.

Children who are almost three years of age join the older children, but some activities are planned specifically for them, using the Birth to three matters framework. For example, they share stories with a member of staff or engage in imaginative role play, while older children take part in activities which are not suitable for very young children. Overall, they enjoy a good variety of appropriate activities, including plenty of free play and sensory tasks. Children's development in all three groups is carefully monitored and their achievements are recorded in attractive 'celebration books', using the Birth to three matters framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan many appropriate activities, which extend or support children's learning effectively. Assessment information is used to plan for the next steps in children's learning and staff are skilful in their use of questions and discussion, to promote language development and problem-solving skills. Sessions are generally well organised, with a balance of structured activities and free play opportunities. However, some whole group activities, such as story-time, do not effectively challenge the most able children, nor meet the needs of the youngest children in the group.

Children talk confidently and enjoy sharing their news, as staff encourage them to listen carefully to each other and wait for their turn. They discuss letter sounds and recognise and write their names, during daily routines. Numbers and counting form part of each child's daily experience in the nursery, as they discuss the number of the week, explore large numerals and consider the next number in a sequence. Children use two and three dimensional shapes and sort objects, according to their size. They become involved in solving problems, such as how to decorate a wooden dolls' house with coloured and textured papers, cut to the right size and shape.

Children learn about the natural world, as they care for the pet rabbit and grow flowers in the outdoor area or sort and compare toy insects. They use their senses to explore sand, paint or dough. They develop their imaginations through role play, which is well supported by staff. Children paint, draw, cut and stick, developing their creativity and freely expressing their own ideas. They extend their physical skills, using scissors, rollers and a range of small tools, with good control. In the outdoor area, they practise throwing and catching and improve their balance and coordination, when using stilts, wheeled toys or climbing equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the nursery's calm and positive environment. Their self-esteem is very well promoted, as staff constantly praise and encourage them, celebrating the achievements of children of all ages. Consequently, children behave well and enjoy attending. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered, as they become aware of each other's needs, and share resources successfully. Children learn about different cultures, by celebrating a range of festivals and using a variety of resources, such as books and dressing-up clothes, which reflect diversity. Children make good use of the local environment, regularly visiting the beach, park and library or receiving visits from a musician, an oral hygienist or a police officer. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very successfully integrated into the nursery. Staff work effectively with other professionals and implement good systems for identifying and monitoring those with additional needs. The nursery demonstrates a very good commitment to inclusion and is currently planning to adapt parts of the premises to improve disabled access.

Children's care is very consistent, due to the nursery's effective systems for communicating with parents. The youngest children have daily home record books, for sharing information between staff and parents about all aspects of the child's care and activities. Carers of those aged from 18 months to almost three years learn of their child's activities from daily white board messages. Staff are always available to talk with parents and regular newsletters are issued for each age-group. Children's progress records are attractive and detailed, and parents are encouraged to look at them regularly. Planning is displayed in all rooms. For funded children, the nursery's partnership with parents and carers is good. A notice board outside the pre-school room provides details of the curriculum, including current topics and letters and numbers of the week. Records clearly track children's progress and are always available to carers. Parent evenings are held, although these are not currently very regular. Consequently, some parents are not fully informed about their child's latest achievements and lack the information they need to support progress in achieving the next steps identified in their child's learning plan.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The nursery is well organised and benefits from a strong senior management team, which successfully disseminates good practice across the group of nurseries. This team has quickly identified the strengths and weaknesses within the nursery and implemented a very effective improvement programme, which is already enhancing the experiences of children who attend. There is an excellent commitment to staff training and to monitoring the quality of care and nursery education provided. There are two senior staff with Early Years Professional status and they take a lead in evaluating and improving the quality of funded provision. Staff work as an effective team and ratios are carefully monitored, so that all children receive plenty of individual attention.

Children are cared for in very safe and attractive surroundings, where space is generally used well, to provide a very good variety of play experiences. There are ample resources, all of good quality and mainly very well organised, so that children can choose freely. Almost all aspects of health and hygiene are good. Children's care is supported by all the required documentation. Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly and all records are shared appropriately with parents. The nursery meets the needs of the range of 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 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):

- further improve nappy changing arrangements for toddlers, so that the air is always fresh in rooms where children play
- improve children's safety by practising evacuation procedures sufficiently often for all staff and older children to learn the routine.

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 the organisation of sessions, so that children's individual learning needs are always met, especially in large group activities
- continue to improve systems for regularly sharing progress records and targets with parents, so that they can fully support their child's development.

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