

# Abingdon Little Angels

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY361920
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Gillian Little
<b>Setting Address</b>	Cricket Field Morland Road, Marcham, Abingdon, OX13 6PY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Helen Scott-Corcoran
<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 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?

Abingdon Little Angels registered in 2007 and is run by a private individual. It operates from a Portakabin set in the grounds of Anson Field, in Marcham, near Abingdon in Oxfordshire. A maximum of 22 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open every weekday from 08.00 to 17.30 except Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. There is a fully enclosed outside play area for the children to use.

Children can attend for morning sessions, afternoon sessions or all day. There are currently 20 children aged from 11 months to under six years on roll. Of these, three children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff, of whom three hold appropriate early years qualifications. In addition, five staff are currently working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's risk of infection is minimal as staff ensure that the premises and equipment are clean. Older children learn to wash their hands thoroughly as staff supervise them well ensuring that they use the soap and that paper hand towels are easily accessible. Staff recognise and value children's individual needs, ensuring that younger children have privacy during nappy changing.

Children enjoy and benefit from physical activity as they have daily opportunities to play outdoors and to use physical equipment inside the nursery. For example, they have daily access to the local play park with there is a good range of large equipment. Children thoroughly enjoy climbing, sliding, swinging and rocking on the various equipment and staff facilitate imaginative games well, such as pretending to be chased by a monster, which provides children with physical challenge as they have to think and move quickly. Children understand the effect of physical activity on their bodies and that it makes them thirsty. Younger children are able to sleep and rest according to their own routines and they settle easily to sleep in the baby room which provides a very calm, relaxing environment. Staff supervise children well giving them cuddles and reassurance as necessary.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children receive good quality care in the event of an illness or accident. Staff deal with accidents calmly and efficiently ensuring that children receive effective first aid and after-care. Children's health records are easily accessible to staff, and policies are clear and shared with parents.

Children receive a healthy diet as the nursery provides breakfast and tea including food, such as healthy cereals, fruit, toast, cheese and crackers, sandwiches and scones. Parents provide packed lunches which staff store safely in the fridge and parents receive guidance from the nursery about healthy eating. Children have free access to their drinking cups and independently help themselves when they are thirsty. Staff refill cups as necessary and encourage children to have drinks after physical activity. Mealtimes are relaxed and social occasions when staff sit with children to supervise them and encourage social discussions.

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

The provision is good.

Children are able to play comfortably in a welcoming environment which has a homely and cosy atmosphere. For example, the main playroom is colourful with lots of attractive and accessible resources, and the baby room is very peaceful with good sleeping facilities and soothing music. Children have access to a good range of suitable and safe toys and equipment which staff clean and check regularly.

Children's risk of injury is minimal as staff assess risks well and take effective precautions to prevent accidents. For example, staff carry out visual checks daily and supervise children well. Staff are vigilant without being overprotective and this allows children to take risks within their own abilities, giving them a sense of independence and freedom. Effective fire prevention and evacuation procedures are in place as staff regularly practise fire drills with the children to help them understand about safe evacuation, and they ensure that equipment is checked annually.

Children stay safe outside as the outdoor play area is fully enclosed and free from hazards. When away from the premises, staff follow effective procedures, such as encouraging children

to hold a length of rope to form a sensible line as they walk across the playing field and visually checking the play park before allowing children in.

Children's risk of harm from others is minimised as staff are familiar with possible symptoms of abuse and have a good understanding of their role in child protection. For example, they are fully aware to record concerns and report these to the appropriate authority if necessary. The child protection policy is adequate but lacks detail which limits the information available for staff to refer to if they have concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children show a keen interest in what they do and develop a wide range of skills as there is a stimulating range of activities available. For example, children thoroughly enjoy exploring the interesting environment where staff effectively use every available space to provide a wealth of activities. Children independently explore resources finding out how they work or the sounds that they make, and enjoy showing them to staff who respond with interest. Children crowd around the computer peering at the screen to see what will happen next and they chatter to each other as they do so. They confidently use a small slide, climbing and sliding under close supervision of staff. They spontaneously sing, and play musical instruments in the home corner facilitated well by staff to effectively link children's enjoyment of the activity to the current farm topic by singing 'Old Macdonald had a farm' to which children respond with enthusiasm. Children enjoy snuggling up to staff on the bean bags to listen to a story and other children eagerly join them. They become engrossed in their play but also have opportunities for quiet times when they can just watch other children before going onto the next activity. Older children who attend the setting out of school hours enter the nursery happily, chat to staff about their day at school and settle in easily, getting themselves a drink and finding their siblings.

Children are happy and settled, and are able to develop warm relationships with staff and other children. Staff are very aware of when children are tired or unsettled and give them lots of extra attention and cuddles. Some children are able to bond closely with staff members depending on their individual needs, although the key person approach where staff are responsible for the feeding, nappy changing and general care of individual children, is not yet fully implemented.

Staff support children's play and learning well. They are very kind, caring and attentive. They are well organised and spent most of their time playing with children, engaging in stimulating discussions and offering physical comfort as appropriate. Staff are very responsive to children's individual interests and use this as the basis of their activities.

Staff structure their planning based on the Birth to three framework or the Foundation Stage curriculum depending on the ages of the children, and use this effectively to ensure that all learning areas are available to children on a daily basis. Assessment records for younger children show their progress within the Birth to three framework and staff use photos and written captions to illustrate their assessments.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude to their learning showing a keen interest in the activities on offer. They play well together and enjoy caring for younger children. Staff value children's home experiences highly and are skilled at building on

the children's interest to provide further learning opportunities. For example, a compact disc brought from home by one of the children initiates an activity on the computer which staff support well. As a result of this children engage in the activity for a sustained period while learning how to use the programme. Children enjoy painting activities and staff encourage them to attempt to write their own names so that they can label their own work. Children communicate well and talk confidently about their home lives. They understand that they have to take turns while they are speaking and they respond well to instructions from staff. They engage keenly in discussions, chatting to each other and to staff as they play. Children have good opportunities to learn about the world around them including their local community. They have weekly visits to the local community cafe to give them opportunities to engage with other adults and they are able to do this confidently knowing that they are safe as part of their nursery group. Children are able to express their own ideas, spontaneously singing and dancing to songs as part of their play. They enjoy playing 'Snakes and Ladders' with a member of staff, talking about colours, identifying the numbers and developing the ability to count on from a given number. Staff support children well but do not always recognise opportunities to develop children's mathematical language and concepts within everyday activities.

Staff make clear assessments about children's progress and share these findings with parents. Focused and detailed observations of children during specific activities clearly indicate how they are making progress towards the early learning goals. Staff use their assessments to plan the next steps in learning and, although written plans are quite basic, staff are efficient in carrying out activities and building on children's knowledge and interests.

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

The provision is good.

Children have opportunities to become aware of wider society as staff help them to learn about cultural differences by finding out about different countries. A variety of resources including dolls, books, visual aids, games and jigsaws reflect positive images of a range of different backgrounds. Children have equal access to all activities on offer and staff recognise and support their individual needs well.

Older children have good opportunities to become independent as they help themselves to drinks, take themselves to the toilet and have free choice of the activities on offer. Children develop positive social skills under the close supervision of staff and they learn to share, take turns and be kind to each other. They begin to learn about responsible behaviour as staff use effective methods, such as explaining reasons to children and remaining calm and positive. Children receive lots of praise and recognition for their small achievements which helps to develop their self-esteem. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is therefore fostered.

There are currently no children in the nursery with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but appropriate procedures are in place to welcome such children. For example, a suitable policy is in place and staff are undertaking training to develop their knowledge and understanding in this area.

Children benefit from good continuity between the home and the nursery as staff develop positive relationships with parents who they welcome warmly into the setting. Parents express their satisfaction with the nursery and receive good information about the organisation of the setting and about their children's progress. For example, monthly newsletters, daily diaries for babies, monthly 'reports' for older children and daily discussions all ensure that parents are kept fully informed. There is good evidence that parents are aware of the nursery's complaints

procedure although this is not formalised in writing. For children receiving funding for nursery education the partnership with parents and carers is good. In addition to the above, parent evenings are available to discuss children's progress which is well evidenced in their development profiles and these are available at any time.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are able to make good progress as staff have a strong sense of purpose, keeping children safe, meeting their individual needs, providing a good range of stimulating activities and a very homely, welcoming environment. Staff have appropriate qualifications and several staff are currently working towards further qualifications. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. The adult to child ratio is maintained at all times and staff deployment effectively supports children's care, learning and play. Staff are very aware of their roles and work well together providing good levels of supervision and ensuring that routine tasks, such as nappy changing and cleaning tables, does not disrupt the children's play.

Documentation, policies and procedures are mostly in place and work well in practice. However, there is a lack of detail for some policies, notably for complaints and child protection.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. All staff have received, or will be undertaking, Foundation Stage training as part of their qualifications. Staff are motivated, work well together and receive good direction from the manager. There is a strong focus on children's individual development to help them make progress towards the early learning goals. There are many good qualities within the education programme and few weaknesses. 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.

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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):

- develop the child protection policy to ensure that it is sufficiently detailed and reflects current guidance
- ensure that the complaints procedure is clearly set out in writing.

### **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):

- ensure that staff make good use of everyday opportunities to help children develop mathematical language and concepts.

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)