

Abacus Teaching Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY297847
Inspection date	18/09/2008
Inspector	Anthea Errington
Setting address	1 Taberna Close, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE15 0BW
Telephone number	01661 854001
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Abacus Nursery was established in 1996 and is located in Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. The nursery has sole use of a building which is attached to local shops and is close to other local amenities. The nursery provides care for children from the local and surrounding communities and wrap around care for the local nursery school for children who attend St Andrew's Primary School, also located in Heddon-on-the Wall. The nursery is open five days a week all year round excluding bank holidays.

There are currently 61 children on roll aged under eight years. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for children aged from birth to eight. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery comprises of a main playroom and three additional rooms leading off from the main room; these are used for messy play, group times and a sleep room for babies. Toilets for staff and children are adjoining the main room and the reception area leads into the main room. To the rear of the property there is an enclosed outdoor play area. There are no steps to access the building.

There are 17 staff who work directly with the children; all of the staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. Three members of staff are qualified to level 4, seven to level 3, three to level six and one has achieved early years professional status. The manager is supernumerary and a cook is employed to prepare meals and snacks.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming and caring environment and are making outstanding progress with regard to learning and development as the setting has inspiring and robust teaching procedures in place. The staff team are highly motivated and committed to developing the Early Years Foundation framework. The extremely effective key worker system that the nursery operates ensures that the highly skilled staff have an excellent awareness of the children as individuals. The care and education is significantly enhanced as the setting has efficient procedures in place which results in continuous improvement. Parents have extremely positive views about the nursery, and feel that they are working together with the setting to provide the best quality care for their children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further develop procedures to complete risk assessments.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The owners, manager and senior staff are inspirational in their leadership. They all have a superior knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage enabling them to foster excellent practice throughout. The constant drive for improvement and careful nurturing ensures a rich, varied and imaginative setting. The professional maintenance of records, policies and procedures all ensure that children's individual needs are very well met. For example, policies and procedures are updated on a regular basis as are criminal record checks. A robust induction procedure is provided for all new staff to ensure they are knowledgeable and fully supported and that children are safeguarded. This is combined with effective daily risk assessments to further ensure the children's safety and well-being. Excellent use is made of staff appraisals to ensure that personal development is actively promoted. As a result, staff are highly skilled in meeting the learning and welfare needs of the children. The manager and staff have acted extremely positively in response to recommendations raised at the previous inspection and children have access to a wealth of activities and resources to further develop their understanding of the wider world. For example, children have created colourful and informative displays of foreign countries and also have the opportunity to learn the German language. The nursery has formed an excellent partnership with parents. Extremely detailed information is given to parents before their child starts the nursery, combined with several induction sessions which enable both parent and child to become familiar with the nursery routines. Information relating to planning and daily activities, as well as other general information about future events, is available on a dedicated parents' noticeboard and in newsletters. Parents have extremely positive views about the nursery, its staff and their commitment to the children. Parents report that they have absolute confidence in the nursery and feel that their children benefit enormously from their attendance.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Written plans fully reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum as all staff have significant knowledge and are expert in their practice. All children throughout the nursery make exceptional progress in the six areas covered by the early learning goals. Staff are highly skilled in their observation and assessment skills and plan for each child's next steps of learning. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the nursery and experience a range of sensations to stimulate their senses and provide them with excellent learning opportunities. For example, in an outdoor activity they talk about how cold their hands have become and describe how it feels as they play with coloured ice cubes in a tray.

Extremely attractive displays of children's artwork and pictures throughout the nursery promote children's self-esteem and confidence. Staff are extremely affectionate towards the children and are completely focused on them and their play. As a result, all children are happy, secure and confident in the setting. The indoor and outdoor areas and resources are extremely well organised to provide a rich, varied and imaginative environment. Children confidently select from the dynamic activities providing them with the opportunity to develop a number of new

skills. For example, children develop their fine motor skills as they use knives correctly to cut up the vegetables for their snack. The nursery supports children extremely well to manage and understand change in their everyday lives, such as in the use of therapeutic stories describing events such as new babies in the family.

A balance of adult and child-led activities ensures children are active learners. Older children are able to recognise and name numbers. They correctly identify the date and some are able to state yesterday's date. Plans are organised to allow for flexibility and spontaneity, which gives scope for each child to choose what they want to do and introduce their own ideas. For example, the children find a spider in the outdoor area and carefully pass it around. Staff encourage conversation and talk about where he lives and how many legs he has. Children show genuine concern for the spider and state 'they are taking him inside to get him warm'. Children's needs have been fully considered when planning the overall layout of the nursery. For example, babies are able to see out of the low level windows and superb use is made of the outdoor space for children of all ages. Children's safety is fully considered as risk assessments are completed both indoors and outdoors on a daily basis. However, systems to record risk assessments are not always clear.

The health of children is promoted exceedingly well. For example, they are aware of the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating to 'wash the germs away'. All staff have an excellent awareness of hygiene, including food hygiene, which ensures that food is appropriately stored and prepared. Planned activities, such as fruit tasting, encourage the children to try out new tastes and experience various textures.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They learn about sharing and valuing others through the superb example provided by the staff. Children support one another well through their play. For example, they encourage younger ones to assist them as they build 'roadworks' with the large bricks. Staff are always there to gently support, praise and encourage children in their activities, thereby developing their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Outstanding
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Outstanding
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Outstanding

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Outstanding
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Outstanding
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Outstanding
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Outstanding
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Outstanding
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Outstanding

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.