

Apple Tree Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 650048
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Inspector Lynn Amelia Hartigan

Setting address 304 Cressing Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3PG

Telephone number 01376 321858
Email joanne@appletreenursery.co.uk
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

Apple Tree Day Nursery opened in 1997. The nursery operates from a converted bungalow and demountable classrooms, in Braintree, Essex. Access to the premises are via a low step. A secure enclosed outdoor area is available for outdoor play activities. A maximum of 51 children may attend the setting at any one time aged from three months to five years. The nursery is open five days a week from 07.45 until 18.00 and an after school club provides care from 15.00 until 18.00 all year round.

There are currently 76 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are twelve members of staff, including the manager. Of these, ten members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The setting is beginning to effectively ensure children progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, and provision for their emotional well-being is good. Children are settled, happy and confident as the staff team ensure their individual needs and requirements are supported within a happy, fun and inclusive environment. Some good opportunities for communication and partnership with parents enhances the children's time at the setting. Staff members are committed with regard to inclusion and endeavour to support each child's individual needs. Good and effective systems for self-evaluation are yet to be implemented to ensure continuous improvement of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop opportunities for babies and younger children to explore and experiment with natural materials
- review the organisation and planning of the indoor and outdoor learning environment to provide children with opportunities to initiate their own play and follow their own interests and provide further opportunities for children to self-select toys and activities that motivate and interest them
- develop the use of observation and assessment to identify children's next steps in learning. Ensure there is sufficient challenge for the more able children
- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to involve all staff in identifying the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her deputies are dedicated to developing the nursery and provide a high standard of childcare and education. The provision of some good policies and procedures which underpins the settings practices are offered to the parents to ensure they are informed with regard to the nursery's procedures. However, these are not readily accessible and parents have to request to see them. Staff are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and are making some good attempts to involve parents in their children's learning. Parents are encouraged and supported to contribute to their child's development as staff are on hand daily to give verbal feedback, in addition, parents can view their children's developmental files. However, strategies to encourage parental involvement to support their children's learning at home and at the initial assessment process could be developed further.

Good procedures are in place for recruitment, induction, appraisals and training. The commitment of staff to attend training ensures that children are cared for by an appropriately qualified staff team. An informative safeguarding policy is understood by staff members and ensures the children's well-being is not compromised. Risk assessments are regularly completed to ensure the environment and activities both indoors and outdoors remain safe for children. Some evaluation of the provision enables the staff to identify areas for improvement, however, there are no written detailed self-evaluation or action plans in place. Consideration is given to the views of the children, parents and staff to ensure a good service is provided.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are able to play and learn in a child-friendly and welcoming environment. Some staff have a good understanding of child development and how children learn. Children are provided with a satisfactory range of play and learning opportunities as staff use their knowledge to support the children's interests. Children are able to independently access some resources as a variety are easily accessible in trays and boxes at the children's level. This enables them to make choices and direct their own learning and play. However, this could be developed further to positively encourage independence and self-selection. For example, role play areas, dressing up and book corners are not presented in an appealing and inviting way. In addition some rooms lack cosy areas where children can relax or play quietly. Children however are respectful of the toys and happily pack away after themselves.

Staff are committed to provide a fun, happy environment for the children and are attentive, respectful and listen to the children. As a result, children appear confident and are developing good self-esteem, they are happy and enthusiastic to learn. A satisfactory process is in place to ensure assessment and observation, however, planning for the children's next steps of learning is in the early stages of development. Staff are beginning to understand the importance of planning around the children's interests and ideas but some activities are not always sufficiently

challenging and as a result more able children's learning is not always extended. Some strategies are in place to involve parents with and support their children's learning. For example, completion of registration forms establishes their child's interests, likes and dislikes. Parents are also encouraged to write comments on apples and attach these to a tree in their child's room with regard to their children's activities and interests. Parents are provided with a prospectus and newsletters informing them of the activities and terms themes. Some good information is available to parents on notice boards throughout the nursery and parents speak positively with regard to all aspects of their children's care.

Children play in a child friendly environment where some photos, posters and children's art work are displayed around the rooms creating a sense of belonging. Children are greeted by smiling staff and happily come into the setting and engage in an activity. There is a happy calm atmosphere throughout the sessions. Some opportunities are available to the children outdoors as they enjoy playing with the ride-on toys, climbing apparatus or in the large sandpit. Children squeal with delight and happily help erect a large tent, helping with the guy ropes and excitedly laugh aloud when the wind blows the tent. They sit happily and enjoy their favourite stories outdoors in their new tent. Children also enjoy making rain catchers and regularly monitor how much rain they catch. Action plans are in place to develop the garden further to improve the children's time outdoors. Developing activities and opportunities outdoors that cover all six areas of learning are yet to be included within the daily written plans.

Young babies are cared for well in a bright cosy room. Hand and foot prints are displayed around the room as even the youngest babies have the opportunity to experience messy tactile activities. These include jelly and gloop play. Soothing music is played whilst they sleep and appropriate equipment is in place to meet their individual needs. Young toddlers enjoy jumping in a pile of leaves, listening to the scrunchy sounds they make and watching them float away in the wind. However, many of the toys provided are for a purpose and babies do not have many opportunities to explore and discover using natural materials or treasure baskets.

Children's health and welfare is promoted well. They are now able to access drinking water throughout the day and enjoy a selection of tasty nutritious snacks. Children are encouraged to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink. They sit together to share snacks such as, a variety of fresh fruit or crackers and are educated as to what are good and bad foods to eat. Older children are able to choose when they eat and select their name to indicate they have eaten. Helping promote independence and word recognition. Children are able to learn about and celebrate some different cultures and traditional days as these are incorporated within the planning. This enables the children to have an understanding of the world around them and embrace differences. Children enjoy learning about different countries and tasting different foods such as croissant and French bread when discussing France. They have regular opportunities to learn about the wider world as they play with toys and resources that are representative of diversity. All staff are dedicated and are consistently polite and respectful toward the children. As a result, children's behaviour is good.

The setting also offer an after school and holiday club. Children are collected from several local schools either by foot or car. They are able to complete their homework supported by staff members, have tea and participate in fun activities such as games consoles, board games and a wide variety of creative activities.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary 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

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint that required the provider to take action. This related to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. We carried out a visit with regard to the complaint and set actions for the provider to update the complaints and safeguarding policies in line with current legislation. We asked the provider to ensure all staff are aware of and implement the safeguarding children policy. The provider has revised the policies and briefed all staff on the implementation. The provider remained suitable for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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.