

ABC Childcare (Ipswich) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY318888
Inspection date	24/04/2009
Inspector	Moira Oliver
Setting address	537 Foxhall Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 8LR
Telephone number	01473 718296
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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 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

ABC Childcare (Ipswich) Ltd has been open since 1983. It has recently re-registered to become a limited company and is registered to provide full-day care from 09.00 until 18.00 each week day during term time and 08.00 until 18.00 during school holidays. The group have their own premises which are situated on a playing field in East Ipswich. A maximum of 38 children may attend the pre-school at any one time and 24 children may attend the out of school club. The pre-school is open term time only, every week day, from 09.00 until 15.00, consisting of two sessions, with a lunch club between 11.30 and 12.30 to provide wrap around care. There is also provision for older children at the out of school club, which runs from 15.15 until 18.00 during term time and is open from 08.00 until 18.00 during school holidays. The children have access to two fully enclosed outdoor play areas and there is level access to the premises.

There are currently 83 pre-school children on roll, aged between two years and five years, and 36 school aged children aged between five years and 11 years, three of whom are in the early years age group. The setting is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting receives funding for nursery education and support from the local authority. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language. They have strong links with the local primary school which their premises backs onto.

The setting employs 14 staff, 12 of whom hold appropriate early years or playwork qualifications, including the play leader who has Early Years Professional Status. The setting also has a regular volunteer to work with the children.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are supported and make very good progress in their learning and development and once settled are very confident, happy and independent. Children are safe and secure in the stimulating, well-resourced learning environment and enjoy free access to indoor and outdoor play throughout the sessions. Staff work in partnership with parents, who are well informed and have some opportunities to be involved in their child's learning at the setting. Staff have exceptionally high aspirations for quality, which is evident through ongoing improvement and the culture of reflective practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of observation and assessment to identify learning priorities and plan the next steps in the children's developmental progress
- extend opportunities for parents to share what they know about their child and become more involved in identifying the next steps in their learning and

- development
- extend links with other schools to aid a smooth transition for all children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has recently employed a new leader to work with the well-motivated team and support them to reflect on their good practice to improve outcomes for children even further. Staff are passionate about providing high quality learning to all children in a stimulating and inviting indoor and outdoor environment. The learning environment has been carefully created and developed to ensure children can self-select all resources and experience an extensive range of play activities across all areas of learning. Staff are developing confidence as they are supported by the leader to take responsibility for planning. They are valued and their strengths recognised, as the committee provides continued opportunities for them to develop in their understanding and skills through training and working with other professionals. For example, staff have opportunities to work with other settings that the children attend, to provide a consistent approach for the children to ensure they make good progress. The committee and staff very successfully monitor and evaluate their provision on a regular basis, involving parents and children, as well as teaching support from the local authority to ensure they have a full picture. They identify the setting's strengths and the areas for development, ensuring that they are addressed within set timescales.

Policies and procedures are working documents and individual to the setting; they are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect practice. For example, after reflecting on a recent fire drill, the procedures were amended to ensure a smoother, more effective evacuation procedure. Safeguarding children is a key strength; staff and managers are vigilant, they ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children and are able to put procedures into practice when necessary. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by suitable, well qualified staff. Thorough risk assessments are carried out and any comments are fed-back to the leader and the committee, recorded and acted upon to ensure children remain safe both on and off the premises. The premises are secure and very effective procedures ensure children only leave with authorised adult.

The managers and staff are aware of the important role the parents play in the children's development and progress. Parents have opportunities to learn about the Early Years Foundation Stage through news letters, notice boards, posters, daily discussions with the staff and regular consultation meetings, when they meet and discuss their child's progress as they look at their child's Learning Journeys. Parents have opportunities to be involved at the beginning as they record their child's interests in their Learning Journey. However, they are not actively encouraged to continue this process as their child develops through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are very happy with the care and education their children receive and speak highly of the staff, their friendliness and approachability. They feel involved, consulted and well informed and are welcome in the provision at all times. The setting has formed good relationships with two

local primary schools, supporting children to make smooth transitions into school. However, there are limited links with two other schools that a few children attend, which does not provide all children with the same opportunities to settle into their chosen school.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are happy, confident and settle well, building close relationships with the staff, their key person and their peers. They thrive in the stimulating learning environment where they are free to access all the equipment and areas. Children confidently move the resources, choosing to take some outside. For example, children carry the farm to use on the outdoor table so they can introduce sand and water to the play farm animals. Children are inventive and use the resources in a range of ways, for example, stepping stones are turned upside down and used to transport water and large boxes, intended for the making of a train, are used to climb inside and roll down the hill. Children are becoming independent as they identify their own needs as they choose to come to snack when they are hungry or thirsty, and decide on the quantities they need.

Children's language skills are developing as they talk to each other and the staff as they play. Staff encourage the use of descriptive language as they talk about texture and the feel of the mud, sand and paint. Children's communication skills are also promoted through the environment, which is rich in signs, symbols, numbers, words and pictures which take into account children's interests, home backgrounds and cultures. For example, children can see the choices of snack in pictures and visual timetables help children to settle as they get to know the daily routine, providing additional ways to communicate for those children who are learning English as an additional language. Children have access to a range of mathematical resources to encourage them to use and talk about shape, size, measure and weight. Children happily sort the elephants from the camels as they attach them together and count them. Children access the outdoors area where they are free to explore and use all their senses. They discover different smells in the sensory garden where herbs such as basil, rosemary and lavender are planted. The children have great fun as they dig a deep hole in the mud and find a range of vessels to carry water from the tap to fill the hole. They are able to change into boots, which allows them to stand in the hole and feel the mud squelching round their feet. Children help to sweep up the soil and water and enjoy splashing in the spilt water on the concrete. Children are becoming skilled in the use of technology and confidently use the computer and use headphones with the tape and compact disc players as they listen to music and stories. In the out of school club, children use games consoles and ask staff for help to move the compact disc player to the outdoors so they can sing and dance on the large mats.

Children use their imagination as they role play, making playdough food for each other as well as mud pies. They are creative and use a wealth of accessible art and crafts resources to make collage pictures, models from boxes and paint with a variety of brushes, rollers and printing items. Physical play is well promoted and children delight in rolling down the hill in boxes and in the out of school club, use skateboards on the hill to add a little excitement and risk. They use the climbing

frame to climb, balance on stepping stones and line up skittles, practising their skills at throwing balls to knock them down.

There are effective systems in place to observe children's progress and staff make valuable records of children's interests and achievements on a regular basis. Photographs compliment this process and are displayed with the observations in the children's Learning Journeys. Staff are beginning to use these observations to plan appropriate and exciting learning experiences for the children, for example, a beauty salon was set up where children came to have their nails painted in a range of colours to support children in extending their language and getting to know their colours. Observations are beginning to be fed into the planning, however, learning priorities are not always recorded and therefore not always identified for each child. In the out of school club, children make their own books to record their interests and achievements and decide the photographs they want to use. This provides children with the opportunities to reflect and evaluate their own learning.

Children's welfare is promoted well. They learn to keep themselves safe as staff explain the reason for using the door wedge on the playhouse and show them how to carry the brooms safely. They are able to take risks under the supervision of adults, as the older children use the large mats and skateboards, visit the climbing wall at the local high school and go tobogganing at the local ski slope. They learn to keep themselves healthy as they learn about foods through discussions at snack time and take part in growing and harvesting vegetables and fruit from their own garden area. Children access the outdoors everyday and older children are beginning to understand the importance of exercise.

On the whole children behave well. The staff provide positive role models as they treat the children with respect and value their contributions. The staff are calm and relaxed and talk to the children using appropriate strategies to promote positive behaviour and respect for others.

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.	2

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?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
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

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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