

ACE Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	221549
Inspection date	02/12/2009
Inspector	Deborah Kerry

Setting address	37 Parkside, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 1JE
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

ACE Nursery School opened in 1966. It is run by a parents co-operative and operates from five rooms in a four storey building in the centre of Cambridge. The nursery serves the local area. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The building is accessed via several steps.

The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children at any one time. There are currently 72 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age group. This provider is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as a second language and several with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. The nursery day is from 8.45am to 4.00pm each day with an early morning session from 8.30am to 8.45am and an after school session from 4.00pm to 5.30pm. Within those times various sessions are available. A holiday play scheme operates for the majority of the school holidays.

The nursery employs nine members of staff who work regularly with the children. Of these all hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development are effectively promoted in the Early Years Foundation Stage(EYFS) as staff have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. All children are fully supported through the close working relationships between staff, parents, and carers. The nursery implements a co-operative system to involve all parents to provide support for the nursery to benefits their children. The provision has fully established, effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate their practice to ensure the outcomes for children remain positive and highly effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop partnership working further to provide opportunities for parents to share their children's achievements from home and add comments to their progress records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the nurseries policies and procedures with regard to safeguarding children. There is a clear written policy to follow which includes procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and local contact details. There are clear, effective procedures for the emergency evacuation in place which is regularly reviewed ensuring children's safety is a high priority. A daily checklist is completed before children arrive to ensure that there are no hazards accessible inside or outside. Children's safety is promoted well by the documentation and policies regarding the daily checks of equipment and annual risk assessments. All resources and equipment are cleaned on a regular basis by staff and parents to ensure children's health and safety is maintained.

The provision has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents and regularly up dated in line with changes to practice and legislation. All policies are available within the nursery ensuring that they are freely accessible to parents. There are regular themed events where parents can come in to support and raise funds for the nursery and look at displays of their child's work. Staff are always available for parents to discuss their child's progress to ensure that they are kept fully involved with their child's early education. However, parents do not always keep staff fully informed on their child's achievements at home so their individual needs can be fully supported by staff. Parents are kept fully informed on all topics, activities and events within the setting that their children participate in through regular newsletters, displays and the notice boards. The nursery implement a co-operative system where all parents sign up to complete a number of hours each month to support the nursery in providing a well managed, maintained and resourced provision. As a result the nursery is highly effective in involving and engaging parents with supporting the provision for children's benefit.

Children benefit from staff who are experienced, appropriately qualified and who have a good understanding of the needs of children. This ensures that each child's individual needs are supported by staff, ensuring they make good progress in their learning. Staff are fully supported in their development and further training to enhance their knowledge and to promote outcomes for children. The nursery regularly reviews and evaluates their practice to ensure that children are fully supported and make excellent progress in their learning and development. All staff have input into the evaluation process, parents and children are given questionnaires to complete. This ensures that their views are also sought for further development and improvements. As a result this feedback is used to enhance resources and the children's experiences within the nursery. The nursery have completed the Self-Evaluation, Quality Framework and have started to complete a further evaluation process provided by the Pre-school Learning Alliance, showing their commitment to monitoring, maintaining and improving their excellent practice.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy a variety of foods at snack time to promote their health. For example, they have fresh fruit for snack. They plant and grow vegetables, which are used to make soup. This enables them to experience different tastes and learn about what foods keep them healthy. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day to ensure they are not thirsty. Staff have a good understanding of the nurseries procedures around health to support children's individual needs and their well-being. A high ratio of staff hold current first aid certificates which ensures children's health and welfare is effectively maintained. Daily access to large play resources in the garden helps to ensure that children's physical development is well supported.

Staff undertake regular observations on children to record their progress, interests and individual needs. This enables staff to tailor activities to their needs to fully support their learning and development. Children have a positive attitude to learning, they are happy, settled and purposefully engaged. All staff have a good knowledge of the EYFS and all work together to plan a range of challenging activities, as a result children are making good progress. Staff offer appropriate support when needed which enhances children's learning and development. Staff are excellent role models for children, they encourage good manners, give clear explanations on expected codes of behaviour which helps to develop children's understanding of how to behave well. Staff provide appropriate support for children with special educational needs and work closely with other professionals to ensure that their needs are supported. Children are developing their understanding of the wider world through a range of topics, themes and activities. Staff ask parents for key words in their home language to support and enable children with English as a second language to participate fully. Children enjoy looking at books and staff read stories to develop their interest in literacy.

Staff work well as a team and provide a calm, relaxed atmosphere where children thrive. Staff meet each week to discuss children's progress and plan for their learning. There is a balance of adult and child-led activities which enables children to learn at their own pace. Children are provided with a variety of resources for mark making and to develop their early writing skills. For example, they colour, draw and paint in their play. There is good interaction and questioning by staff which helps to promote children's language and thinking skills. Children enjoy joining in with singing familiar songs and action rhymes from memory. They experiment with sounds through playing a variety of musical instruments. Children have access to a range of craft materials and media. For example, they make biscuits, they take turns to measure out the ingredients and mix to form a dough then roll out to create 'snakes'. This supports children's knowledge around problem solving, numeracy and how change occurs when ingredients are mixed and cooked. Children develop an excellent understanding of time through the theme on dinosaurs and participate in a range of activities. They look at books and visit the local museum to see skeletons and fossils of dinosaurs to support their learning further.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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