



Asquith Nursery - Milford

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY288114
Inspection date	05 December 2005
Inspector	Valerie Thomas
Setting Address	Milford Road, Walton-on-the-Hill, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST17 0LA
Telephone number	01785 665663
E-mail	
Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Asquith Nursery Milford opened in 1991 and is part of national chain of nurseries. It operates from six rooms within a two storey listed building which was previously a school. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area with a safety surface fitted. It is situated in the small village of Walton-on-the-Hill in Staffordshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. A maximum of 68 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

There are currently 86 children aged from 0 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 20 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special needs.

Twenty one staff work with the children. Thirteen of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early Years qualifications. Four staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned routines. They know that they need to wash their hands after going to the toilet as 'it will make you poorly if you don't'. Good procedures such as staff wearing protective clothing for nappy changing and for serving food sustain appropriate levels of hygiene. This helps reduce the risk of cross contamination. Hygiene of most areas within the nursery is satisfactory although, there are a few areas which need attention. Clear procedures for sick and infectious children help prevent the spread of infection and keeps children healthy.

Children benefit from a healthy and nutritional diet. Drinks of milk and water are offered regularly throughout the day. Children are given healthy choices for their snacks and enjoy eating bananas. Importance is placed on ensuring meals are home cooked rather than providing processed food and continual encouragement from staff at meal times help children develop a positive attitude to healthy eating. Staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's dietary needs. They are attentive to the young babies' needs implementing their individual routines.

Children enjoy many opportunities for physical exercise. Children join in well with action songs, for example, 'Wind the bobbin up' rolling their arms and have lots of fun jumping up and down to the music of 'Jo Jingles'. The well-planned activities help children to develop their physical skills and encourage a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where most risks to children are limited through appropriate safety and security procedures. Staff monitor access to the group at all times and risk assessments are completed regularly. However, the carpet strip in the baby room has not been identified as a safety issue although, it does pose a risk to children as they crawl. Fire evacuation procedures are fully understood by staff and are practised with the children. Children know they need to go down the stairs, go outside and stand by the gate. This helps children remain safe.

Children use a varied range of safe resources which are accessible to children in most rooms. Staff explain safe practices to children such as not climbing on the seat as they may fall and blowing their food so that they do not burn their mouth. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues and many staff have received training in child protection. However, procedures for reporting concerns are not fully understood by appropriate staff and the designated person has not received training in child protection. This does not ensure that children are fully protected children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident in the setting's welcoming and caring environment. Young babies receive lots of cuddles and enjoy the positive interaction they receive from the staff. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home and staff are attentive to their needs. High importance is placed on providing varied sensory play for all children. Young babies show good interest as they explore the treasure basket looking at their reflection in the tin lid and banging the instruments against the wall to hear the noise. Photographs around the nursery show how children have taken part in body painting with lots of smiles and enjoyment shown.

Older children have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. Most children play happily together and with adults, using resources such as colouring, jigsaws and dressing up with the hats. Children's language and communication skills are promoted well by staff through ongoing conversation and regular singing sessions. They have lots of fun making the bunnies jump up and down on the parachute and shaking the bells to the beat of 'Jingle Bells'. Consequently, children are learning to develop their speech and are able to express their needs confidently. There is a satisfactory range of resources throughout the nursery which, are organised well in most rooms. However, in the 12-18 month room there are few resources that children can access independently and during some sessions when there is little choice of activities, children lose interest. Routines implemented for the older children after lunch means that they have little adult support in their play and therefore children lose interest and learning is limited.

There are systems in place for recording children's progress although they are currently being changed by the organisation. Currently staff are making observations of activities that children take part in although these are not completed often for some and do not identify where their learning can be extended. Progress records for all children show that there have been several months when they have not been completed which does not show clearly how children are progressing.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most staff have sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a suitable understanding of how young children learn and progress. Current planning is basic although does link to the six

areas of learning. However, it does not link clearly to the stepping stones, lacks sufficient detail to allow all staff to deliver the programme and does not differentiate for the differing abilities of children. Training on a new planning system has been attended by staff and there are plans to implement this in the near future. Staff use appropriate methods to maintain children's interest, sitting with children, asking questions and extending their play during most activities. Staff help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world well. Challenges for children are satisfactory although, in areas of mathematics and literacy they are insufficient. Assessment and evaluation of children's achievements during activities is not rigorous enough and information gathered is not used to help staff plan for the next steps in children's learning. Behaviour is managed well by staff and clear boundaries are set. The room is well-organised and offers a stimulating environment with a good range of accessible resources to promote children's learning.

Most children are interested in activities and staff are aware most of the time of which children need additional encouragement to maintain their interest. Children show good concentration as they paint their Santa picture and join in with the 'Jo Jingles' session. Most children behave well responding positively to the boundaries set. They know that the visual cards used at circle time mean 'good looking, good listening and good sitting' and children enjoy the praise they receive when they achieve this. Children's language skills are good. They speak clearly and confidently, expressing their needs and join in with familiar songs well. Children show an interest in books, handle them well and enjoy looking at the pictures. Older children are not often encouraged to extend their literacy skills by recognising their name or attempting to write their name on their pictures and there are limited opportunities for children to use writing as a way of communicating.

Children understand and use numbers well. They count up to ten confidently as they count the children and use their fingers to match to the number of children present. However, they do not often develop problem solving skills, such as finding out how many more girls there are than boys when they compare two groups of children. In addition, they are not encouraged to recognise numbers displayed in the environment. Children demonstrate that they understand shape well. They know which table is square and which is round as they help to set out the toys for play. Children develop an initial sense of time and place, and gain good knowledge of the environment as they are taken on trips to the local forestry to collect their Christmas tree and recall the concert they have recently taken part in. They develop their exploration and investigation skills as they learn about change when making biscuits and learn how the water added to the clay makes it more malleable as they are able to squeeze it. They enjoy building with construction sets and have many opportunities to make three dimensional objects with recyclable materials.

Good use of the indoor and outdoor area helps children to develop all of their physical skills well. They use one-handed tools competently as they draw their pictures and are learning how to hold the paint brush as they paint their pictures. Children are confident as they use the climbing equipment outside, climbing up and sliding down and balancing along the tree stumps. They are able to express themselves freely through painting and enjoy exploring many different textures such as, clay, dough and 'gloop'. Children use their imagination well as they play in the home-corner, mixing a chocolate cake and going to the shops with their trolley. They

have regular access to musical instruments which helps to develop their understanding of rhythm and sounds.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. All children are valued and respected as individuals and their confidence and self-esteem is developed well by staff with use of praise and encouragement during their play throughout the session. There is a satisfactory range of resources to promote positive images of different cultures, gender and disability. Children have been for walks to the local village and have visited a nearby forestry to dig up their Christmas trees for the nursery. This helps them to develop their knowledge of the wider world and raise their awareness of diversity. The setting's policies promote inclusion for all children and good support is provided for children with special needs.

Most children behave well and respond positively to boundaries set by staff. They take turns and share, help each other to tidy away and are learning to use their manners. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Children settle well because the staff work closely with parents to ensure their child's needs are met. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through discussion and written policies are shared with them. The complaints procedure is displayed in the nursery for parents to view and the system for recording complaints is satisfactory. Children's individual needs and routines are discussed and recorded with parents. This helps children to settle quickly and enables staff to fully meet the child's needs. Younger children have a daily diary or daily information sheets which are used to keep parents informed of their child's well-being while discussion is used for parents of older children. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Written information on the educational programme is attractive and detailed and topic letters are sent home informing parents of the activities their child will cover and how they can help at home. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning. This helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are effective recruitment procedures which ensure staff are appropriately vetted and there is a suitable level of qualified staff who work with the children. All required documentation is in place and all records are stored confidentially. There is a training programme implemented for staff and many training courses have been attended. This helps to broaden children's experiences.

Induction training for new staff is not fully effective as they do not fully understand

their roles and the procedures to be implemented which, affects the consistency of care provided for children. The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. Appraisal systems are in place and regular staff meetings are held. The monitoring system of the educational programme is not fully effective. Whilst it has identified that planning needs attention, it has not identified that the assessment procedures have not been fully implemented and that there are gaps in children's learning opportunities. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 7: Health and Standard 12: Partnership with Parents and Carers. The complaint related to an injury a child had sustained whilst in the nursery, the procedures followed and the level of care provided to the child on the day of the injury. Ofsted asked the provider to investigate the concerns raised in October 2004 and to provide a number of policies and procedures as well as copies of records taken when the accident occurred. Registers for the day of the accident were reviewed and interviews conducted with members of staff. All details were reviewed by Ofsted and it was noted that the accident procedure had not been followed on one particular occasion. As a result of our enquiries the provider re-enforced policies and procedures with all members of staff and reviewed the operational plan. We are satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns raised. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- ensure the designated person for child protection is trained and that procedures are carried out appropriately
- ensure the planning and organisation of activities, resources and routines meet children's needs and maintains their interest at all times
- ensure the systems for recording progress are more rigorous, consistently implemented and show clearly where children's learning needs to be extended (also applies to nursery education)
- improve organisation to ensure induction procedures are effective so that staff fully understand all procedures in order that a consistent level of care is provided.

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):

- improve planning so that it includes sufficient detail to enable all staff to implement the educational programme, links clearly to the stepping stones and is differentiated for the differing abilities of children
- improve challenges for the more able children to recognise numbers and develop problem solving skills
- plan more effectively to develop children's literacy skills so that they regularly use writing as a way of communicating and for the more able children to label their own pictures and recognise their name
- ensure the monitoring procedures are more effective to identify where improvements are needed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk