

Ash House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 306341
Inspection date 11/01/2010
Inspector Jean Evelyn Thomas

Setting address 29 Withens Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH44 1BB

Telephone number 0151 639 0202
Email admin@ashhouse2.plus.com
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Ash House Day Nursery opened in 1989 and operates from a converted building in the residential area of Wallasey on the Wirral peninsular. The provision is based on two floor levels. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 73 children aged from birth to under five years old on roll. The nursery offers care to children aged over five years old to 11 years old. Currently older children do not attend. The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 18 members of staff, of whom, 16 hold early years qualifications to at least level 3, of these, five hold relevant foundation degrees. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe and inclusive environment, where staff know them extremely well and respect their individuality. Children are involved in a broad range of activities and experiences, both inside and out, which supports their progress towards the early learning goals. The management's commitment towards continual improvement and staff training programmes are key strengths that improve outcomes for children and their families. Effective systems are in place to work in partnership with parents, carers and connected professionals.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems to ensure children's progress is tracked through the six areas of learning and gather more information when children start to clearly identify starting points in partnership with parents and carers to establish a baseline for their learning and development
- further develop contacts with other settings who are delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to the nursery children to promote continuity and progression.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded through comprehensive policies and procedures, recruitment and employment procedures and ongoing appraisal systems. The designated safeguarding officer attends safeguarding training on a regular basis to ensure knowledge and procedures are up to date to protect children from harm. Safety and security is given a high priority throughout the setting. For example, entry is restricted and staff complete monthly risk assessments on the all areas. Risk assessments are completed for specific outings to identify potential hazards.

The management team demonstrates a strong commitment and good capacity towards continual improvement to provide quality care and education for children. Staff are enthusiastic and work as an effective team. They have opportunity to continually develop their personal skills and many are undertaking studies to achieve higher level qualifications. Improvements made since the last inspection improve outcomes for children and their families. For example, re-designing the outdoor play area to create a safe, enabling environment which increases opportunities for children across the age ranges. The management team are employing a 'whole setting' approach to their self- evaluation, involving staff and parents in the process. The recommendations from the last inspection have been met. Risk assessments are in place which include the security of the premises. The planning and organisation of activities have been revised in line with the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and consequently meet the recommendations from the last inspection.

Most staff have worked in the setting for a number of years which provides consistency and continuity for children and families. The key person system in place strengthens links with families and support for children's well-being. Staff warmly interact with children during play and respond to their individual needs. Each day is well structured to offer a mix of child and adult-led activities, thereby maintaining a relaxed atmosphere and providing children with a variety of learning experiences. All ages of children benefit from easy access to a wide range of resources, set out in learning areas to stimulate their interest and promote the development of skills. Staff in each room take responsibility for a budget to purchase resources which they identify as being required for activities. Older children are regularly involved in the decision making for the spending of their budget. For example, they decided during the cold weather to make special cakes for the birds. The children and staff went to the shops to buy the ingredients, made the cakes, then hung them in the trees and watched the birds enjoy their feed.

The management team and staff work well in partnership with parents and carers to ensure children's individual needs are met. Parents speak highly of the setting. They are kept well informed about the organisation of the nursery and events, through the detailed prospectus, the computer website, policies and procedures, newsletters and displays. Throughout the nursery, there are displays about the EYFS to inform parents about the educational programme the children are following. Parents are encouraged to provide information about their child when

starting at the nursery, so that the child's key person knows their individual interests and welfare needs. However, limited information is gathered about what the children already know and can do to inform the initial learning and development planning. Staff exchange information daily with parents about children's care and regularly share children's learning and development records. Parents have access to these records at all times. Staff promote equality and diversity within the setting and work with other professionals and parents to support children with English as an additional language and with special educational needs to ensure that their needs are recognised and supported at an early stage by everyone involved. Key staff complete training and attend meetings with parents and support professionals to plan for children's additional care and learning requirements. The management team have developed systems to support the children's transition between the setting and school. They have initiated contact with other providers delivering the EYFS to the nursery children. However, this has not resulted in the exchanging of information to further enhance children's learning and development.

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

Children of all ages are engaged in play situations, enjoying the support of adults who interact to enhance their play and promote learning. Babies and young children are actively curious and use their senses to discover colours, textures and sounds as they investigate a wide range of resources set out, including sand, play dough, paints and snow brought in from the outdoor play area. Toddlers experiment with glitter using spoons, paintbrushes, feathers and containers. In all areas of the nursery resources are organised to promote children's active, independent learning. From an early age children confidently move around their area making choices and showing preferences in their play. Consequently, children's levels of concentration are developing. Computers and technological resources are available for children to develop skills for the future.

Staff plan to meet individual children's learning needs by recording their observations of children's development and working out each child's next steps in learning. Staff use the EYFS framework expectations to identify the children's next steps. However, tracking systems are not established to ensure planning is balanced across the six areas of learning to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is based on children's interests and spontaneous situations, such as the current snow and icy weather conditions. Staff are very aware that one activity can embrace a number of areas of learning. In an adult-led activity the pre-school children made paper snowballs. These are used in a game. The children who wished to play listened to the staff's clear explanation of the rules and participated with enthusiasm with little staff input. The children have a set amount of time to see how many snowballs they can throw into a hoop placed on the floor. The children operate the timer taking responsibility and allowing them to make decisions. They count the number of snowballs which have landed in the hoop and record their score on the chart next to their name. Children show their good social skills and enjoy playing the game with their friends.

Letter sounds, word patterns and mathematical concepts are regularly reinforced in daily activities, such as highlighting children's names or counting as they build blocks in play. Language and communication skills are strongly promoted throughout all aspects of nursery life. Many children are confident communicators and clearly express their thoughts and ideas. Babies are vocal and make their needs and wishes known to staff. The babies interest is sustained during the lively story telling session and some vocally express their delight as the story progresses. All ages of children are given many opportunities to make their mark and develop their early writing skills. This is an area of learning that is regularly taken outdoors to enhance children's learning experiences. For example, mark making resources are taken on the regular visits to the park and community café to stimulate children's interest to experiment with writing for themselves in different situations.

Children benefit from regular outings to shops, the library, parks to learn about the world around them and develop a sense of belonging within the community. The children recall with pleasure the recent visit to the fire station. Staff use a range of resources and plan activities to support children's understanding about the diversity of society. The children are involved in recycling items to help develop their understanding of sustaining the earth's resources. Staff present themselves as positive role models for the children's behaviour. The children's behaviour is good. From an early age, they learn to take turns and share equipment. They are encouraged to help tidy away equipment and help with tasks, such as sweeping up the glitter, learning to take responsibility for their environment. Children know what is expected through familiar routines and explanations and receive regular praise and encouragement for effort and achievement, which helps boost their self-esteem.

A healthy lifestyle is actively promoted throughout the setting. Good hygiene practices are actively promoted and incorporated into the daily routines to encourage children to care for themselves. Meals and snacks consist of well balanced, nutritious options that are cooked from fresh ingredients on the premises. Independence skills are promoted as children help themselves to a drink of water and older children serve their own meals.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

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

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