



Asquith Nursery - Wolverton Mill (MK)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304889
Inspection date	11 January 2006
Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
Setting Address	The Nursery Unit, Stratford Office Village, Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes, MK12 5NS
Telephone number	01908 311147
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Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 good. 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 - Wolverton Mill is one of many nurseries run by Asquith Nurseries Ltd. It opened in 2005 and operates from several rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated in a quiet residential area, close to Milton Keynes. A maximum of 115 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 86 children aged from 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local residential areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 staff and a cook. There are 10 members of staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. Of the staff, two members are currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices. They wash their hands independently before snacks and meals and after toileting. Children are developing hygiene awareness. For example, when a snack fruit slice is dropped accidentally onto the floor, children alert staff and ask for another piece of fruit. Staff take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection in babies during nappy changes. In addition, young children are encouraged to wipe their own noses with tissues and to put used tissues into the bin.

Children are nourished with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Staff encourage young children to ask for more snacks if they are still hungry. As a result, children ask with confidence. Children are asked to try any new tastes, having 'a mouse nibble' to try. Cook prepares all food and snacks from fresh ingredients on the premises. A balanced and nutritious four weekly menu is provided. This ensures all dietary and religious requirements are met. Children have good awareness of their own needs. They understand that fruit is good for them and that the meals they eat are healthy. For example, one child said that he will not have crisps at home now because he knows they are not good for him.

Children access a good range of small and large equipment to extend their physical skills. They use the outdoor area and the 'indoor garden', which is a spacious room with outdoor equipment for when weather is inclement. This ensures all children have daily opportunities to use their large muscles and improve their balance and co-ordination. Children use pedals on tricycles, ride on the seesaw and push themselves along on sit and ride toys. They rest and sleep according to their needs and individual routines and parents wishes are followed. Children are beginning to use their bodies to negotiate space. They take care when they move around the room and are able to jump, dance and act out stories. Children are beginning to develop scissor control when cutting catalogue pages and pre-drawn shapes. Staff ensure children are aware of scissor safety through role play and demonstration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. It is risk assessed and has well-implemented documentation. Children are able to learn independence through selecting from the suitable range of toys, resources and equipment available. Babies and young children have easy access to a variety of soft furnishings. This helps them to feel confident to move around freely.

Children access and use safe equipment, indoors and outside, which is suitable for its purpose and helps to create an interesting environment for children to learn. Children feel safe and secure in their comfortable surroundings. There is promotion of children's safety by close supervision and effective security systems ensure children's safety from unvetted persons. Senior staff have a basic awareness of child protection issues and procedures. This helps them to take steps to protect the children's welfare. However, not all staff have sufficient basic knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures.

Children learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury when playing on large equipment, cars and tricycles. Staff help children become aware of road safety. For example, they make a zebra crossing and erect signs and road works equipment. Children use and recognise the stop and go sign, which they use with adult's help, when riding trikes and cars around the area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are enjoying and achieving as well as they can. They are competent learners at all ages and stages and have suitable support to develop and progress. Babies, younger and older children are becoming confident. They are acquiring new knowledge and skills, showing good communication and developing social skills. This increases their sense of wellbeing and encourages self-assurance. They are developing independence, making positive relationships with each other and with the adults that care for them. Children are responding to challenge and persisting with activities. They use their initiative and ask questions of adults. Children are beginning to distinguish right from wrong at an early age. They learn and use good manners with adults and their peers during play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Senior staff have basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff make some observations on children. They follow this up with evaluation and some planning of next steps for individual learning. However, this is haphazard and not consistent for all children in the pre-school room. The nursery is in the process of implementing a new child centred approach to learning, using the Foundation Stage and a company planning guidance. Staff are insecure in their understanding of this newer system as imminent training is required to implement it fully. Clear documentation shows children's learning will be more consistent and based on children's own interests. In addition, evaluation will increase in detail to allow clear planning of individual next steps and observations on all children will take place regularly. These will be linked to their assessment and planning.

Children separate easily from their parent or carer into the comfortable family atmosphere. They enter rooms confidently, make friendships, trust adults and express their needs. Children play well in the role-play area. They share toys and resources and take turns. They show pride in their self-care and personal hygiene. For example, they make certain staff know when they have been to the toilet or washed their hands. Children are able to use dressing up clothes from a selection which they put on and take off with little help. A photograph wall displays pictures of the children at home, outdoors and in the nursery. This helps children to connect home and nursery life and gain a sense of self in their own family. Children help to give out plates at snack time but do not always have opportunities to pour drinks or cut up fruit for snacks. After eating, children are encouraged to tidy up, put their waste food in the bin and their cups and plates back on the serving trolley.

Children are developing good communication skills and talk readily to adults and their peers. They use action with talk and objects as symbols during role-play in the popular home corner. Children are beginning to develop their sound and letter recognition through activities such as rhyming, sound games and using their own name card for recognition. Older children are beginning to write letters of their name in order and younger children are developing their pencil control. Alphabet letters on display, labels on familiar objects around the room and some group games encourage children to become familiar with letters. Children enjoy books, handling them with ease. Storytime helps children to become familiar with the meaning of words and pictures and the structure of the stories. Children can practice their writing skills with an accessible supply of resources.

Children are developing their number recognition through counting games, visual number displays, counting objects and by playing matching and sequencing games. They sing number rhymes and songs to develop number order. Children are developing their knowledge of opposites through playing a matching cards game and discussing what they see. They explore shape and recognise the properties of basic shapes, using computer programs to reinforce their learning. Children enjoy simple games, matching patterns and shapes. For example, they use an abacus and puzzles to understand simple sorting and matching tasks. However, children have little opportunity for calculation. Staff talk to children about 'more' or 'what is left' but they did not use opportunities for children to recognise the same number and compare amounts. For example, when helping a child to count objects and match the number in an activity, staff did not show the child that two groups of different objects hold the same number of objects or that the numbers they have chosen match. Staff do not use everyday activities to promote children's understanding of numbers and simple calculation. For example, lining up for snack and meal times or counting the required number of cups and plates for children at snack time.

Children can explore and investigate the world around them. They learn to care for the classroom goldfish through discussion and with an appropriate book nearby for further information. Children use construction materials, such as building blocks, stickle bricks and inter star connectors. They use glue sticks when making collage and during group and individual junk modelling. In this activity they also learn about recycling. Children have easy access to the computer and a range of appropriate programmes. They have electronic tills, telephones and kitchen equipment in the home corner to increase familiarity with operating simple equipment and technology.

Children talk about past and present events, such as birthday parties or shopping trips. They talk about their home life, house and bedrooms, how they get to nursery and the numbers on their front doors. Children become aware of other cultures through learning words and songs in other languages, reading dual language books and cooking food from different countries.

Children explore music through playing instruments and listening to C. D's. They have music and movement sessions and respond to clapped rhythms for both songs and for name syllables. Children explore different textures through playdough, rice, pasta, sand and water. They develop their senses through a range of activities, such as listening games, sensory bags, smells games and tasting different foods in cooking activities. Children enjoy painting with various tools, such as toothbrushes. They colour with crayons and pencils regularly to express their ideas. Children develop their imagination well through role-play. The home corner is very popular. It is well resourced, ranging from a house with kitchen and bedrooms, to a Chinese restaurant for the approaching Chinese New Year.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of our wider society through resources such as books, puzzles, posters, dressing up clothes and a room divider of 'people who help us', using both genders in each familiar role. Children feel a sense of belonging in the family atmosphere which is on-going as children move up through the different rooms. Staff know children well and fully include new children as they settle in and start attending regularly. Children make choices and take decisions in their play through a variety of easily accessible toys and resources. Children receive appropriate support in all areas of their care. Those with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language are fully included in the setting and enjoy their time. They make steady progress at their own pace. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Children develop self-esteem and respect for others. They share and take turns with toys, resources and equipment and wait for others to finish at meal times. Children also help each other to find a missing toy or to help get another child's arms into their coat at outdoor playtime. Children work harmoniously with others, following the good behaviour expected of them. They know and understand the nursery rules from an early age. They follow the good example of the staff who speak politely and positively to the children at all times. Children understand responsible behaviour, showing care and concern for each other. Children are aware of their own needs and the needs of others, helping new children settle in alongside them.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcome and encouraged to share what they know about their child to assess children's stage of development and understanding. Parents receive information for all aspects of the provision. This includes access to their children's records, open evenings, informative notice boards and opportunities to talk to staff about their child's progress. They are involved in their children's learning through attending 'tea parties' during the occasional

afternoon and some parents ask to come in to read stories to the children. This good relationship and the sharing of information ensures staff and parents are aware of children's achievements and ask questions if there are any concerns. This ensures continuity of care for children and adults are meeting children's individual needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to feel at ease within the child friendly environment and play happily in the staff's care. This contributes to them feeling confident to initiate their own play. Children's development through play benefits from the staff's organisation of the toys, resources and equipment, particularly for younger children. Staff's understanding of children's development enhances children's individual care. Company recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are effective in safeguarding children's welfare. Comprehensive policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, designated persons are not yet in place for child protection and behaviour management. Staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all children, giving good levels of individual support, care and concern. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play, with adults joining children's play and being on hand to support when children decide to play alone. Staff maintain ratios for the majority of the day in all rooms. However, staff deployment is not always effective at the start of the day and during lunchtimes in some rooms.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new manager and an effective deputy lead a strong team of staff. The company regularly review the comprehensive policies and procedures. This is to ensure effective care of children's health and to secure their welfare. Management have identified areas for improvement. They are in the process of introducing development, planning and assessment systems to ensure all children make progress towards the early learning goals. They are aware of staff training requirements to improve and develop practice and will ensure all staff are suitably trained in the near future.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.

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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):

- maintain effective staff deployment to care for children at all times and ensure designated persons for child protection and behaviour management are named and known to all other staff
- ensure all staff have sufficient knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures

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):

- ensure senior staff have appropriate training for the Foundation stage and there are sufficient opportunities to promote children's understanding of numbers and simple calculation

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