



Asquith Nursery - Caterham

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281897
Inspection date	15 November 2005
Inspector	Rebecca Elizabeth Khabbazi
Setting Address	Burntwood Lane, Caterham-on-the-Hill, Surrey, CR3 5UL
Telephone number	01883 330122
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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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Asquith Nursery - Caterham is one of a chain of nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd. The nursery opened 1996 and operates from a purpose built single story building on the outskirts of Caterham in Surrey. The premises comprises of five playrooms, kitchen, staff and cloakroom facilities. An enclosed outdoor play area is available. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 85 children from 3 months to 5 years old on roll. Of these, 17

receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks each year. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 20 permanent staff who work with the children. There are 12 members of staff with relevant early years qualifications, and 5 staff are working towards a qualification. There is, in addition, a supply team of over 25 staff who cover for absences, the majority of whom are also working towards qualifications.

The nursery receives support from an early years advisor employed by the Local Authority. It is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children take part in regular physical activity that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Children of all ages play outside every day. They enjoy an excellent variety of experiences in the well-planned outdoor area, where they enthusiastically run freely, ride bikes, practise climbing and balancing on large fixed equipment such as the climbing frame, or scramble over the large tyres in the 'urban junk' area.

Children learn about good personal hygiene when they wash their hands before they eat or after using the toilet. The risk of cross contamination is generally reduced because there is clear guidance for staff about appropriate hygiene procedures. These are mostly followed well, for instance by wearing gloves when they change children's nappies and cleaning the mat with anti-bacterial spray. Children's individual health needs are met as staff make records of any accidents and ensure these are shared with parents. Accurate details of any medicine children need and when it has been given is kept.

Children benefit from nutritious, freshly prepared meals and snacks that are healthy, well-balanced, appealing to children and which meet their individual dietary requirements. They begin to develop healthy eating practices when they enjoy eating fruit at snack time and look forward to their 'tasty lunch'. Children have access to drinks of water throughout the day, with preschool children confidently pouring their own water whenever they are thirsty.

Children under 3 years old generally settle well due to staff's effective use of the Birth to Three Matters framework. Staff are warm and responsive to the children, which helps children develop secure bonds with their carers and fosters their emotional well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment that is maintained to a high standard. They feel a sense of belonging when they show visitors their work

displayed on the walls and know which room is their playroom. Children have access to an excellent range of suitable, safe play materials and resources. These are organised so that they can easily choose things for themselves which helps to create an inviting and stimulating play environment.

Children's risk of accident injury is minimised by effective procedures to identify, monitor and address any potential hazards. Staff are generally vigilant about supervising children throughout the building. Safety and security precautions such as the key pad door entry system and radiator covers, all contribute to children's safety and well-being. Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe when they talk about why they need to wear safety goggles when using tools in the workshop or when they are shown how to handle scissors carefully.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because key staff have received child protection training and are able to support and advise others. This means staff know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery have good relationships with staff, which helps them settle quickly and grow in confidence. Children all take part in a varied, stimulating routine throughout the day, which keeps them busy and interested, and helps them achieve well.

Babies under a year receive lots of cuddles and attention from staff, and benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home. They gaze up in wonder at the lights that twinkle above the ball pool, sit cuddled up to staff to hear a story or a song, and go outside everyday to play on the soft outdoor surface.

Toddlers aged 1 to 2 years enjoy messy play such as painting and gluing, showing excitement when staff start getting the play dough ready or when it is time for outdoor play. They remember familiar songs and show pleasure as they join in with the words and actions. Children aged 2 to 3 years old become more independent, enjoying making choices in their play and beginning to do things for themselves. They happily splash buckets in the water tray, paint freely, enjoy cutting and sticking and other creative experiences, and bang and shake instruments enthusiastically during a music session. Staff in both rooms join in with children's play and support the development of their communication skills through questioning and by listening to what children have to say.

Staff use the Birth to Three Matters framework to plan activities for all of the younger children, which helps them all experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff working with children under 3 years old make regular observations of their progress, but the systems for doing this are inconsistent from room to room. Further training is planned for staff, but at the moment assessments of children's progress are not used to identify next steps for children or to inform activity planning. This means that currently activities do not necessarily build on children's skills and interests.

Nursery education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the expectations for children's learning. They provide a good variety of interesting, meaningful activities and experiences for children in the preschool room, that help them make good progress in all areas of learning. Children show high levels of initiative, curiosity and self-esteem. They come in to the preschool confidently and are eager to join in.

Children are keen to communicate and use language well to start conversations with their friends and talk about their experiences. They practise writing their name on their work and make marks while they play, writing down a telephone message in the 'Three Bears' house. Children look at books independently and listen intently to stories, confidently predicting what will happen next. They show an interest in numbers when they count how many children are at preschool today, and are encouraged to solve problems during everyday routines, such as working out how many more cups are needed at snack time.

Children have excellent opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor area provides a wealth of experiences that encourage children to explore, investigate and find out more about the natural environment. They hunt for bugs in the mini-beast area; watch eggs hatch into ducklings and then grow into ducks; use the bird watching hut to observe birds through binoculars; plant and grow raspberries, and find out how compost is made. Children question why things happen and how they work when they experiment at the water tray, successfully making a pulley system with some string and a bucket, or when they design and make things at the work bench using real tools.

Children use their imagination to play together in the role play area, making tea for the Three Bears before Goldilocks comes to visit. They are inspired by props such as the puppet theatre to put on their own show in the garden, each taking on a character and acting out their part. Children enjoy taking part in a musical workshop, using instruments to beat out the rhythm of a song. They break into song spontaneously during play, for instance giving a cheerful rendition of 'Bob the Builder' as they mend electrical equipment with a screwdriver.

A new system for planning has recently been introduced, which makes very good use of children's interests to plan future activities on a week by week basis. This means children are keen to take part in activities and are motivated to learn. As part of the new planning system, children all have individual weekly learning targets. However, these are not yet clearly linked to regular observations of children's achievements, and it is unclear how children's progress is subsequently reviewed. This means identified targets may not always effectively build on what children already know and can do, therefore progress towards the targets is not currently consistently monitored.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and valued as individuals. Their

self-esteem is fostered when staff offer them praise and recognise their achievements, for instance when they help tidy up or sit quietly at circle time. Children play together well, learning to share, take turns, and take responsibility for their actions. Older children grow in independence, confidently choosing their own resources, pouring drinks and serving their own lunch with big spoons. They learn to develop a positive view of the wider community when they make food for Eid, write in Chinese to celebrate Chinese New Year, or exchange photographs and news with children in other parts of the world. This approach ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children throughout the nursery benefit from effective two-way communication between staff and their parents on a day by day basis. Parents of younger children receive daily written information sheets which helps ensure children settle quickly and experience consistent care. Parents are encouraged to share their skills and experiences, and informal topic discussion groups outside of nursery hours encourage parents to become more involved in the life of the nursery.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents of preschool children are provided with clear information about the Foundation Stage curriculum through notice boards and displays, and they receive weekly newsletters about topics, themes and activities. This keeps them up-to-date with what their child is doing at nursery.

Parents have good relationships with staff throughout the nursery and find them friendly and approachable. There is an 'open door' policy which means parents can ask to see their child's key worker at any time, but there are no formal planned opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress. This means that all parents are not currently involved in regularly reviewing their child's progress and setting targets for the future.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted due to effective recruitment procedures. Staff have a secure understanding of child development which helps them meet children's individual needs. Staff ratios throughout the nursery exceed minimum standards, which ensures children receive a good level of individual attention and are cared for by consistent staff that they know well.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager provides a clear ethos for the nursery and is strongly committed to continual development and improvement. Staff throughout the nursery are supported to develop their skills and knowledge through on-going training. This has helped ensure that staff working with preschool children have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to use it in practice to support children's development.

All required records, policies and procedures which contribute to children's health,

safety and welfare are in place. Policies and procedures work well in practice, as there are effective procedures for keeping staff up-to-date both individually and through team meetings. Space, staff and resources are very well organised throughout the nursery, creating a stimulating and accessible environment where children enjoy themselves and are occupied throughout the day. The range and quality of the experiences offered to children ensures they make good progress. 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 have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- make improvements as indicated in nursery education section below

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):

- continue to develop the new system for assessing and keeping records of children's progress, so that children's individual learning targets are clearly drawn from regular observations, and their progress towards those targets is regularly evaluated and reviewed (also applies to care)

- provide more planned opportunities for all parents to be involved in reviewing their child's progress and agreeing individual learning targets (also applies to care)

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