



The Apple Trust Neighbourhood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY312526
Inspection date	07 February 2006
Inspector	Chris Scully
Setting Address	Ellis Ashton Street, Huyton, Merseyside, L36 6BH
Telephone number	0151 489 4120
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Registered person	The Apple Trust
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Apple Trust Neighbourhood Nursery is 1 of 2 nurseries run by The Apple Trust. It opened in 2005 and operates from purpose built building in Huyton. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery operates Monday to Friday 08.00 till 18.00 all year round. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children from 0 to 4-years-old on roll. Children attend from the local community. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 19 staff, including the 3 co-managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are 2 staff working towards an additional qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a healthy and hygienic environment. Staff are vigilant about children's health and employ thorough procedures and routines to ensure all areas are clean and hygienic. Children understand the need to wash their hands before meals and after messy activities. Younger children greet hand washing with delight as they rush to the sink to wash their hands before snacking and inform everyone 'all clean now'. Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn to keep themselves healthy. They are consistent in their approach to teaching babies and young children good hygiene practices. For example, how to blow their nose, and the staff provide age appropriate explanations on what they are doing and why.

Effective systems are in place for reducing the risk of cross infection and supporting children who become unwell at the setting. This is supported by the detailed sick children policy which ensures any necessary arrangements are made. However, this does not include exclusion timescales for infectious illnesses. Children's accidents are dealt with appropriately due to a number of staff holding relevant first-aid certificates. Consents are in place to ensure children's health and medical needs are handled in line with the parents wishes.

Babies have good opportunities to test, explore and develop their physical control through a range of interesting activities indoors. They move confidently around their environment, to investigate resources. Appropriate furniture is available to help them develop their larger skills. For example, this enables them to pull themselves up on furniture to practise their balance. Older children have limited opportunities to enjoy daily outdoor play to develop their large physical development, as this area is not yet completed. However, children are taken where possible to the local park to use resources and get fresh air.

Children enjoy generally healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Main meals are currently provided by the local school. All meals and snacks are prepared in line with parental wishes. For example, some children bring packed lunches instead of having a hot meal at lunchtime. Staff are knowledgeable about children's individual dietary needs and meet these well in practice. The children are familiar with what their friends eat and drink and confidently tell staff that one child does not have milk because 'they don't like it'. Children have access to drinks at snack times. However, children do not have independent access to drinking water. Babies dietary needs are met well. Younger babies receive good levels of support and are held by their carer whilst having a bottle. Staff use information sourced from the parents effectively to promote continuity of care with regards to babies nutritional, health and sleep requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, welcoming, clean environment, which means they can play and explore their surroundings in safety and comfort. Rooms are organised with specific work areas that encourage children to explore their surroundings. Older children have access to the messy room and play room which contain good quality age appropriate resources. However, at times, only one of these rooms is open. This limits children's choice of activities. Children's independence is fostered as they self-select their resources from accessible, child height furniture. Appropriate systems are in place to maintain the resources and equipment to ensure children's safety and well-being.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised in the well-organised setting, which has good safety and security measures, including key pads on external doors. CCTV and finger guards on all internal doors. Effective risk assessments are carried out by the nominated health and safety officer, which enhances children's safety both indoors and outside. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in every room and are geared to the specific needs of the children in that room. For example, the baby room procedure includes placing babies in the fire evacuation cot to move them to safety. Good systems are in place for taking and collecting children from school, which include the two staff and taking mobile phones with them. However, staff do not have written permission from parents for collecting children in their cars from school. Children learn how to keep themselves safe indoors and outside through reminders from staff. Children walking to and from school learn the 'green cross code' and understand the need to walk in pairs.

Children are protected from harm. Staff have a secure understanding of child protection issues and know what action to be taken should they have concerns about a child. This is supported by the detailed child protection policy. However, this does not contain information about the action to take if an allegation is made against a member of staff. A wealth of information is displayed around the setting, such as, the booklet 'what to do if you are worried about a child'. This means staff are well informed and aware of their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. They enter their rooms eagerly and are quickly off to play with their friends. Children are developing well through planned activities and opportunities, which promote their learning, development and enjoyment. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three' matters framework to plan a good variety of interesting and stimulating activities for children.

Babies enjoy a range of sensory experiences, which include exploring natural materials, such as, shells, stones and pines cones. One baby particularly enjoyed playing with the musical instruments and smiled in glee, as they used drumsticks and maracas to create various sounds. Babies have a secure bond with their carers and

receive high levels of interaction and support from them. This means babies feel safe, secure and confident to explore their surroundings. Staff encourage babies to try new experiences, such as, finger painting and playing with blancmange.

Older children enjoy a positive relationship with staff, who build warm caring relationships with them. Staff spend considerable amounts of time talking, listening and playing with the children, which enhances their learning opportunities. Children are keen to engage staff in activities. For example, water play, where they create shapes using pasta and talk about the changes in texture. Children have made firm friends, and they will often call to them to take part in activities, including a game of catch. They enjoy the opportunities to listen to stories as a group and are eager to take part. An example of this would be acting out the story 'can you dance by me'. Children wait eagerly for the part where they can shout 'Wheeee', and do so with gusto. Staff encourage children's language development, introducing new words, such as, splish, splash and whoops during pasta play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children have equal access to the activities and opportunities offered. All children are included in the activities provided, their individual needs and circumstances are known and provided for by the staff. Children develop an understanding of their own environment and community as they walk to school and build positive relationships with outside agencies. Resources are available depicting images of the wider world. However, these are not freely accessible in all rooms. Children are encouraged to take turns with toys and equipment, which means they are developing an understanding of others. Staff actively contribute and support the children's perception of inclusion and diversity.

Effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs. The Senco ensures staff are kept up to date with current good practice. Staff are committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies to support children. Children are well behaved, this is a direct result of effective staff interaction and involvement with children in their activities. Children and babies receive lots of praise and encouragement from all staff for their efforts and achievement. This successfully fosters their confidence and self-esteem. Staff are good role models; they show consideration and respect to children, each other and parents. A consistently applied behaviour management policy promotes good behaviour, enabling children to understand what is expected of them.

Children benefit from a good partnership with parents and carers. Staff use information sourced from parents effectively to meet the individual needs of children and provide continuity of care. Well written daily diary sheets keep parents informed of their child's care and progress. Parents have access to good information about the setting, policies and what it has to offer, through the creation of a web site, notice boards, regular newsletters and daily exchanges with staff. The strong partnership with parents helps to promote children's learning, development and well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the committed leadership and management of the nursery. Staff work well together and have a secure understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. They ensure children are provided with a safe, stimulating environment, thus promoting their learning, development and enjoyment. This is effectively supported by the high ratio of qualified, experienced staff and robust induction systems. Staff have good opportunities to access training to further enhance their skills and knowledge.

Individual rooms are well organised. Staff have created various work areas, such as, role play to engage children's interest. However, the grouping of some children is not conducive to their development, due to the combination of ages and ability. Older children's choice of activities is at times hampered, as they are not able to access activities simultaneously in both rooms. For example, when they only have messy room activities made available to them.

All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, well-being and safety is in place, is well-maintained and is regularly reviewed. Effective systems are in place for recording children's attendance. Children's safety and well-being is promoted as policies and procedures are applied consistently by staff. Useful information from parents is used well in ensuring children are cared for in line with their parents wishes. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

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 the 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

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.

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):

- revise the groupings of older children, and improve upon their accessibility to all areas and activities
- revise the child protection policy to include information on the action to take if an allegation is made against staff.

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