



The Little Academy

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306769
Inspection date	08 February 2006
Inspector	Pauline Nazarkardeh
Setting Address	Tillotson Road, Off Headstone Lane, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 6PS
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Registered person	The Little Accademy Ltd
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?

The Little Academy nursery opened in 2005 and has sole use of premises situated in the grounds of Hatch End School. The nursery is situated close to the Uxbridge Road in the London Borough of Harrow. The setting serves families from the local community and a wide catchment area.

Public transport links and local amenities are within walking distance. Children have access to four separate base rooms, as well as hand washing and toilet facilities.

There is a secure outdoor area situated at the rear of the nursery.

The setting operates 51 weeks of the year closing for one week at Christmas time. Opening hours are from 07.30 - 18.30 five days a week.

There are currently 40 children aged 0 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 4 receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs 12 members of staff. Currently 8 of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. Although some of the children attending are very young, they are beginning to learn about the importance of hygiene through the care routines in place. This includes the regular cleaning of tables before and after meal times. Children who use the toilets independently know they need to wash their hands afterwards. Children get swift and appropriate help if they have an accident due to staff's knowledge of first aid.

There is an appropriate policy in place to prevent cross infection, however the practice of monitoring a child who may be infectious could result in cross infection. Practice needs to reflect policy, in that parents should be contacted immediately should any children show signs of having a contagious illness in order to take the child to the doctor for confirmation. While waiting for the parent to arrive all necessary steps should be taken to prevent cross infection to other children.

Meal times are sociable and children are able to eat at their own pace without feeling rushed. There are very good routines in place for babies which are based on their home routine. Times for drinks and meals are dictated by the babies' routines and not that of the nursery. There is also good communication with parents regarding changes to children's diets.

Children enjoy opportunities to engage in outdoor physical activities. They strengthen their gross motor skills as they pedal bikes. Opportunities to extend this development are hampered by the lack of organisation and effective planning of the outdoor area. As a result, outdoor activities are not always interesting and challenging particularly for the more able children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel welcome in this very child-friendly environment. Staff greet children on arrival and they provide a good range of interesting and stimulating activities. There is a selection of clean and well maintained equipment to meet the children's individual needs, such as child-sized furniture.

Children are well protected from strangers with thorough monitoring of access to the nursery. The systems in place to ensure this, include the effective use of a visitors book and the entry system. Children are well supervised and are always in sight or hearing of the staff team. Children's safety is improved through staff ensuring they access toys and equipment that are safe, in good condition and are regularly checked.

Children are learning the importance of keeping themselves and others safe. Children are encouraged to put toys away after playing with them so that they do not trip over them and hurt themselves.

The protection of children is recognised by the setting as being paramount. Children's safety and wellbeing is further safeguarded due to the knowledge staff have of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy at the setting, they play either by themselves or alongside their peers. This is especially significant as this is a new nursery and many of the children have only recently joined the setting. Staff involvement in children's learning is enhanced by good staff interaction, such as using open ended questions during imaginative play.

Children are familiar with the routines which are in place to meet the needs of the children. However, the organisation of sleep time needs to be considered in order to provide suitable activities for children who do not sleep during this time. Children feel secure and they are confident to approach staff for support and are able to express their needs or concerns. They are beginning to make decisions about what they would like to do next and the environment and resources are organised to ensure this. Children's art work is well displayed, this contributes to their sense of belonging and a feeling of self worth.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children have opportunities to experience a range of interesting topics. They independently select their own resources; this contributes to them being confident learners. They communicate well and share their ideas and experiences, for example during role play children talk about their favourite music. This is encouraged by the staff, who ask questions to extend the conversation.

Many children recognise their own names and those of other children. Children's emergent writing is displayed in the nursery and there are many opportunities for children to develop their writing skills, for example, writing shopping lists. Children enjoy books and some have their favourite story. They listen to stories as part of a group, during their play and while having individual attention in the book area.

Children express themselves creatively and they are highly skilled in their role play. They act out past events in their lives and allocate roles to each other. The role play area provides a wide range of resources, this helps children to express their ideas and feelings imaginatively, for example, dressing up clothes, pretend food, scales and cash registers.

Children's mathematical knowledge is good, within practical activities they can problem solve and identify mistakes, for example, they calculate which is heavier or lighter when looking at toys. During a pouring activity children can estimate how much more is needed to make the container full.

Staff show awareness of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and children are occupied and interested in what's on offer. Planning and assessments are in place, however, systems need to be developed in order to identify children's individual learning priorities and use these to inform future plans.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and independent. They are able to make informed choices, such as selecting resources for themselves. They receive good individual care because their needs and circumstances are well known to the staff. Children are encouraged and well supported to participate in all activities through the warm and positive language used by staff. Children have an awareness of the wider community, this is supported by the positive attitude of staff and the range of resources available. This contributes to children developing a positive image of others and experiencing a welcoming environment.

Children with special needs are welcome. The ethos of the setting emphasises the importance of providing an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential. As a result, when children attend they are more likely to participate in most activities as they are adapted to meet their needs.

Children are happy and co-operative with the staff. They receive lots of praise and recognition which reinforces their good behaviour. Children have a growing awareness of themselves and staff value their thoughts, feelings and contributions. This enables children to relay their fears or express their needs to staff without any hesitation. Children's behaviour is consistently managed and they are offered explanations in order to help them understand their actions.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Parents speak highly of the setting and are very satisfied with the way their children

are cared for. Relationships between the staff and parent's are friendly. Staff regularly give verbal feedback to the parents of any concerns or achievements they have noted. Children's sense of security and belonging is fostered well through the working partnership between staff and parents. This results in children forming a close and trusting relationship with the staff team. Children benefit from the regular exchange of information between staff and their parents.

Overall children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Children benefit from a commitment to improvement and a clear management structure. The manager takes responsibility for the planning and delivery of the programme for children over 3-years of age. She is aware of the setting's strengths and some weaknesses, and has begun a programme of improvements, for example, the outside play area.

The setting has some well organised systems, and policies and procedures are in place, however, some need to be updated taking into account new regulations. Partnership with parents and carers is well established in relation to the care of children. However, parents do not receive adequate information relating to the areas of learning or about the use of the Foundation Stage Curriculum in planning for children's development.

The staff team are relatively new and are committed and enthusiastic in their work. They regularly attend seminars and training courses, and are keen to keep their qualification up-to-date.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration Ofsted has received one complaint in January 2006. These concerns relate to the following National Standards: Standard 6 - Safety and Standard 7 - Health. The concerns were raised regarding the safety and health of a child. Ofsted visited the premises to discuss the concerns and check documentation. A recommendation was raised in relation to staff practice for the prevention of cross infection. Ofsted found that the provider was meeting the National Standards. 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.

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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):

- ensure that staff follow policy and act promptly when a child becomes ill or infectious while at the nursery
- ensure that working policies and procedures are updated taking into consideration all regulations

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):

- provide regular outdoor play opportunities that are interesting and challenging particularly for the more able children.
- continue to develop the planning in order to identify children's individual learning priorities and use these to inform future plans.
- organise sleep time so that it does not effect the play opportunities for children who do not sleep
- develop systems to involve parents in their children's learning by providing them with guidance on the Foundation Stage Curriculum and information about the current and future planned activities

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