



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 223187

DfES Number: 580883

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/07/2004
Inspector Name Gillian Bryce

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Ashby Castle Day Nursery
Setting Address 28 North Street
 Ashby-de-la-Zouch
 Leicestershire
 LE65 1HS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Gail Hodgson

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Ashby Castle Day Nursery opened in 1996. The nursery is one of two privately owned establishments and is located in the centre of Ashby-De-La-Zouch. It operates from a purpose built single storey building with an annex to the rear. There are seven rooms and associated facilities with a fully enclosed area for outside play. The nursery serves the local town and the surrounding villages.

There are currently 145 children from 6 weeks to 5 years on roll. This includes 24 funded 3-year-olds and 29 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend a variety of full or half day sessions. The setting currently supports 3 children with special educational needs and is able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00.

There are 20 full-time and 8 part-time staff working with the children, with 18 staff who have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 and 6 staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the speech and language service, as well as a teacher/mentor and Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

How good is the Day Care?

Ashby Castle Day Nursery provides good quality care for children. The nursery has the Investor in People award and holds a Quality Counts award. The well trained and experienced staff group create a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment. This offers scope for a very wide range of indoor and outdoor activities including active play, rest and relaxation. Children use the space and resources with confidence. The excellent range of equipment, toys and play materials promote their overall learning and development. Comprehensive policies and procedures are established and all documentation is clearly presented and maintained to the highest standard.

Arrangements for health and safety are very positive with impeccable hygiene routines. Staff give priority to maintaining children's safety inside and on outings and are fully aware of child protection procedures and implementation. Arrangements for sick children, first aid and administering medication meet requirements with a minor omission. Procedures are in place to regularly carry out risk assessments, the cleaning and checking of equipment and fire evacuations. Menus are provided and children enjoy the varied, freshly cooked meals and healthy snacks and try foods with different tastes to increase their experiences.

All staff are fully involved in planning an effective curriculum, providing a range of exciting, interesting and challenging activities appropriate for children of all ages and capabilities. Opportunities to promote children's independence and choice are encouraged and consistent routines and behavioural boundaries ensure children are happy, secure and valued.

The nursery works well in partnership with parents and carers encouraging involvement and active participation. Information about the children is provided in a variety of ways. Staff are available to speak with on a daily basis and all children have a daily diary sheet.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to complete actions regarding documentation. The staff development equal opportunities policy is now revised and includes details regarding ethnicity. Any incidents to or by the children are recorded separately and parents are informed on the day, thus ensuring parents are further reassured.

What is being done well?

- Excellent planning and organisation ensures the provision is a warm, welcoming and caring environment for children and parents.
- Staff have a good awareness of children's individual needs and provide a wide variety of play opportunities to support their overall development, with quiet times for rest and relaxation.
- All children take part in a wide range of well planned activities. They are happy and confident relating well to others, able to make decisions, explore and investigate the rich resources. Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills which promotes their self-esteem.
- Behaviour management is appropriate and consistently applied with much encouragement and praise. Children know what is expected of them and benefit by being helpful, taking turns and understand that kindness and good manners are valued and respected.
- The equal opportunities ethos covers all aspects of the nursery and is understood and implemented by all staff. The wide ranging resources are diverse and adapted to meet individual needs and capability ensuring all children benefit and learn about themselves and the wider world. Children

with special educational needs are fully included and supported.

- The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are provided with a comprehensive prospectus, enrolment pack and handbook containing all policies and procedures and are encouraged to be involved in a variety of ways. The key worker system, newsletters, daily progress sheets and opportunities to meet on a regular basis with staff ensure parents and carers are regularly consulted about the needs of their children and informed of their progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures to obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Ashby Castle Day Nursery provides good quality nursery education. Provision in all areas is well planned and children make very good progress towards all the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good and all staff have an excellent awareness of the early learning goals and how these may be achieved. Staff interact very well with the children and the atmosphere is calm and relaxed, children enjoy their activities and learning experiences.

Staff use very good questioning to extend learning and challenges for the children. A point for consideration involves extending children's name recognition. Children are encouraged to participate in new activities and children with special educational needs are well supported to have all the opportunities available for learning.

Children's learning is assessed against the stepping stones and early learning goals. Observations are made and assessments completed which enable staff to clearly see what children have achieved and what they need to learn next. Good records are kept of children's progress and parents are made aware of these on a regular basis.

The leadership and management of the group is very good. Staff are aware of the aims of the group and regular meetings are held to support staff development and planning. The nursery has acquired the 'Quality Counts' award and the proprietor and senior staff are able to monitor the provision to ensure children's learning is effectively promoted.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive a good variety of information about the setting and the progress of their child. Staff are available to talk with daily and Open Evenings and parent Education Evenings are held. The area Special Needs Co-ordinator has presented at one of the evenings to encourage parental awareness of what this entails for children. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by the use of a reading scheme and by participation in events.

What is being done well?

- Staff have a very good awareness of the individual needs of the children and have good relationships with them. This provides an atmosphere which encourages children to be independent and to enjoy learning.
- Personal, social and emotional development is very well promoted. Children are able to initiate relationships and communicate fluently. They are well behaved and able to share and take turns.

- The programme for mathematical development is very well promoted. Children are counting in everyday situations and older children are spontaneously using addition and subtraction. Children are skilled at shape recognition and are using language associated with position.
- The proprietor and staff are committed to providing a high quality service for all children. Staff work very well as a team and have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and how effective planning promotes children's learning.
- The group provides parents with good information about the progress of their child and staff are available for discussion with parents daily. Parents are positively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by the use of a reading scheme and direct participation in activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the arrangements for name recognition could be extended to include surnames where appropriate.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff have introduced effective measures to provide less directed activities so that the children can more effectively initiate their own learning and become independent learners, which was identified as a key issue at the last inspection.

Children choose activities from a range of pictorial options and put these on a 'Free Choice' board, staff then provide the required resources. At circle time options are discussed with the children which enables them to make independent choices.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident to initiate their own activities and have opportunities to make choices. They can work in groups or independently and are able to take turns and share. Children understand that there must be rules for some activities to work, for example, team games. Behaviour is well promoted and children are able to sit quietly and listen to stories and each other. Good relationships are in place between staff and children which allow children the security to attempt new activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress towards recognising words. All children are able to recognise their written names and older children are beginning to recognise words in books. Older children are skilled at writing their names and forming letters. They are beginning to extend this to forming words to illustrate displays and younger children are beginning to mark make. Children are skilled at using language to talk and describe ideas and are able to sit quietly and listen to stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Younger children are beginning to count reliably to ten whilst older children are very confident with numbers up to twenty and are progressing beyond. All children show some skill with numeral recognition and are able to either copy numbers or write from memory. Some children are spontaneously adding and subtracting simple numbers to form a correct total, for example, removing objects from a group. Children have very good shape recognition and are beginning to use language for position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are being introduced to scientific concepts both in the nursery and by trips to places of interest such as the Space Centre. They are able to create with a purpose in mind and are developing the skills necessary for using a computer, they can also operate programmes. Children are aware of their place within the family and the community and can differentiate between the past, present and future. Festivals are celebrated and children are gaining an awareness of other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Health and bodily awareness is effectively promoted and hygiene is a part of the children's daily routine, for example, singing songs about hand washing. Children are able to move in a variety of ways both forwards and backwards and are developing skills in ball throwing and hitting in games such as cricket. They can move safely and confidently and have an awareness of space. A variety of tools can be manipulated by the children such as scissors and screwdrivers.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are able to sing songs from memory and can match movements to these, they have also had the opportunity to play musical instruments. They are very good at colour recognition and paintings observed showed good copying and interpretive skills. Opportunities have been provided for the children to work in three dimensions and they have experienced a variety of textures and materials. Imagination is well promoted and children enjoy stories and creating their own scenarios.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- extending word recognition for older children by adding surnames to name cards.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.