



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 404692

DfES Number: 542229

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	16/03/2004
Inspector Name	Susan Catherine McGarry

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name	Absolute Angels Montessori Nursery (Coggeshall)
Setting Address	Christ Church, Wesley Hall Stoneham Street COGGESHALL CO6 1UH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Absolute Angels Ltd 4785220
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Absolute Angels Ltd
Address	Christ Church Wesley Hall Stoneham Street Coggeshall Essex CO6 1UH

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

Absolute Angels Montessori Nursery opened in 1999. It operates from two rooms in a converted church in Coggeshall. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 72 children on roll. This includes 34 funded 3 year olds and 17 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 each day or from 09:00 until 14:45 on four days each week. The holiday club sessions are from 10:00 until 15:00.

Eleven full and part-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The setting reflects the Montessori ethos and methods.

How good is the Day Care?

Absolute Angels Montessori Nursery provides good care for children.

The nursery Principal and staff team work closely together. The setting is very well organised and full use is made of all the space available. This enables children to move freely and safely. Children can access for themselves, excellent levels of resources including Montessori equipment, from low level shelving situated within each room. All the staff hold a first aid qualification and either a Montessori or other relevant childcare qualification. There is an appraisal system, which identifies further training needs. Staff regularly update their skills and knowledge. Records, policies and procedures are accessible within the operational plan however there are some that require updating. These are stored securely and confidentiality is observed.

Daily checks are made throughout the setting; this ensures children's safety. Children and staff attendances are recorded but adults who visit on a regular basis are not. The policy for child protection requires updating. Individual children's needs are highly valued and acknowledged and their dietary requirements are catered for through the healthy snacks offered. The setting's current practice regarding children's health and when taken on outings is not fully reflected in their policies.

There is a very good range of activities and experiences provided which are based on the Montessori areas of learning and accommodate the Foundation Stage. Children are provided with opportunities throughout the day where they can select and make decisions about their play. They have regular access to the outside play areas. There are excellent levels of interaction between staff and children. Their behaviour is highly valued and praised.

The parents are provided with good quality information about the nursery and have daily contact with the staff and their child's key worker. Children's progress and development is recorded and shared with parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

All the actions identified at the last inspection have been addressed.

There is an operational plan in place with details of policies including a no smoking policy, staffing and the curriculum offered.

Children can access drinking water in both rooms.

Documentation provided by the fire service, including inspection notices and reports are stored on the premises.

What is being done well?

- There are excellent levels of interaction taking place between the staff and children. Their behaviour is well managed and valued through constant praise and encouragement.
- There are high quality resources which are readily accessible to the children, based on the Montessori approach. Each room stores and presents these resources to the children in an appropriate way. There are bright and attractive displays using the children's work.
- The staff team are thoughtfully and efficiently deployed throughout the setting. Additional visitors to the setting include a residential artist for a week at a time, music and drama session each week and story sessions. French is also provided.
- There is very close contact established and maintained with parents. They are invited to social occasions such as coffee mornings and in a more formal context to meet with staff to discuss their children's progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the method of recording adults coming into the setting each week
- the written procedure for outings
- the policies for children's health and child protection.

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
14	Review and update procedures for completing registers, taking children on outings and the policies for standards 7 and 13.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Absolute Angels Montessori Nursery is of high quality. It enables children to make very good progress in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. The accommodation and resources are being used extremely well to support the learning taking place. Excellent relationships exist between children and staff resulting in high levels of self-esteem and independence. Children's learning is promoted through planned experiences, using a thorough knowledge of individual children's development and by providing activities that are challenging but achievable. There is an effective combination of the Montessori curriculum and the Foundation Stage implemented. Plans are completed by the staff each term using topics. Early learning goal targets are identified within weekly plans and individual children's objectives to link with the Montessori areas of learning.

Children's progress towards the early learning goals is recorded by key workers, but is not being fully utilised, through a monitoring and evaluation process, to link into the stepping stones or the short term plans for the next step of learning to be clearly identified.

Leadership and management is very good. The staff work closely together and meet weekly to plan and discuss. The principal supports the staff and provides good leadership with vision, appraisals, in-house training and other training opportunities. The setting has close links with local schools and with support agencies. The staff reflect on the provision of nursery education and care, the outside play areas have recently been upgraded and there is an intention to initiate the Montessori accreditation process.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well informed with good quality written information. Staff discuss children's progress and development through daily contact and more formal channels. Parents share information and are involved in their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children can access and self-select from an excellent range of Montessori equipment. This enables them to have personal freedom to explore, develop and work independently. They have established high levels of self-esteem and independence within their environment.
- Children are able to achieve exceptionally high levels of communication, language and literacy skills. They have the opportunity to use their language skills when engaging in music and dance sessions each week which encourages their listening skills, develops their ability to respond to instructions and use their imagination.

- There are many opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number, use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and experience shape, space and measure with the Montessori equipment provided.
- Sensory experiences through investigating and exploring the environment, objects and materials and with exploring media and materials are extensive. Children demonstrate high levels of involvement in these activities.
- Partnership with parents is greatly valued by both parents and the staff. Warm and responsive relationships are established and regular opportunities are provided for parents to be informed about their children's progress and development through parent evenings, open mornings, written reports and information sessions.

What needs to be improved?

- the evaluation process used to monitor the quality of nursery education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in addressing the two key issues identified at the last inspection.

Staff are providing children with more opportunities to engage in role play. Resources are provided both in the outside play area and within each of the rooms. There are opportunities for dressing up using multi cultural resources, a wide selection of hats and puppets and creative activities.

Outside play offers children access to climbing and balancing activities alongside the pre-set Montessori exercises. The outside play area has been refurbished with safety surfaces and large and small scale equipment. There is also access to a sensory garden.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children independently select from an extensive range of Montessori equipment. They work with confidence and actively engage in a variety of group situations. The children are secure and have good self-esteem resulting in effective relationships with adults and each other. They are learning to co-operate and work together well. Children are interested and motivated to learn in an environment in which there is time and space for them to focus on activities and experiences. Behaviour is valued.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children practise and explore their writing and handwriting skills through a range of activities provided. They enjoy singing and listening to stories and have access to a very good range of books. Children's communication skills are developing exceptionally well and they use them very effectively. They express their imagined experiences, thoughts, feelings and ideas with adults and each other. Children are learning to name and link sounds and letters and to recognise and read familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use number extensively and can count reliably up to 10 and well beyond. Their skills are being extended through a number of games and planned opportunities. They recognise numerals through the equipment and other visual means. They are given opportunities to use calculation and complete simple number operations. Children use a very good range of equipment to promote their understanding of shape, space and measure and they are using mathematical language to describe and compare them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently use a variety of equipment, tools and materials to build and construct in two and three dimensions. Children have a clear sense of time, place and awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others through topics and resources available. It is planned to provide more opportunities for them to access everyday technology. There are many worthwhile opportunities provided for children to use their senses to investigate and explore objects and materials and their surroundings.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children are provided with many opportunities that offer appropriate physical challenges so that they can practice and refine their skills using large and small equipment. Children can handle tools, objects and malleable materials effectively, safely and with increasing control. They run and move confidently during games and activities such as dance, showing an awareness of space both for themselves and others. Children's awareness of health and their bodies is continually addressed.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children can express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings using a range of materials and tools to develop their creative skills. They use and express their imagination through role-play and other activities. They enjoy taking part in an extensive range of art and musical activities in which they can use media, materials, musical instruments and all their senses. Children actively respond to experiences and express and communicate their ideas through their time in the nursery.	

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 key issues identified from this inspection. A point for consideration is
- consider and implement a system for the use of a formal evaluation of the quality nursery education being provided.

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.