



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101533

DfES Number: 521751

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 12/11/2003
Inspector Name Jennifer Read

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Abbots Day Nursery
Setting Address 49 All Saints Road
 Cheltenham
 Gloucestershire
 GL52 2HF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Marguerita Kemple

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

Abbots Nursery opened in 1966 and is located on the ground floor of a Victorian house, situated in the residential area of central Cheltenham. The nursery have sole use of three play rooms during operating hours, a sleep room and an outdoor area. The premises are also used as a training centre for the National Vocational Qualification at level 3. The two organisations never use it at the same time. There is an enclosed outdoor area with grassed and impact absorbent surfaces. A studio, situated in the garden is used for additional physical and creative activities.

The nursery is registered to care for 37 children aged between birth and eight years at any one time. There are currently 36 children on roll. The group is in receipt of education funding and at present has 13 funded three-year olds and 2 funded four-year olds attending. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 17.30 for 49 weeks of the year, and offers care for children up to the age of eight years during school holidays. There are currently no children who attend with special needs or who speak English as an additional language. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The children are cared for by a team of eight members of staff all of whom hold recognised childcare qualifications. The manager is a qualified teacher and the deputy has the Nursery Nurses Examination Board qualification. Three members of staff are currently working towards the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 and one at level 2. Specialist staff are employed to support children in French and dance. The nursery is a member of the Gloucestershire Nursery Association and Gloucestershire Playgroup and Toddler Association.

How good is the Day Care?

Abbots Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for the children who attend. The nursery offers a warm, cheerful environment where children and parents feel welcome. There are suitable systems in place to manage access to the provision and most staff are vigilant about children's safety.

The staff are well qualified in childcare and are currently up-dating and undertaking further training. Staff value children's achievements, give frequent praise and encouragement during play and adult-directed activities, and promote younger children's independent skills well. However, organisation of staff, access to resources and the range and balance of activities provided do not support them to explore, investigate, extend their own play ideas and interests or meet their individual needs effectively.

Children are given a good range of healthy snacks and meals. Staff have a good awareness of children's individual dietary requirements and incorporate these into the menu. Snack and meal times are used effectively to support and encourage children's social skills.

The nursery policy for behaviour management is clearly written. Methods used to manage children's behaviour are not always consistent.

The nursery has built up a satisfactory partnership with parents. They ensure a regular exchange of information is shared daily about their child's care. Some staff's knowledge and understanding of procedures to follow with a child protection concern is limited. Most documentation and daily records are clear, accessible and meet the requirements of registration.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the provider was given three actions to address: to ensure contingency plans are made for staff absence; to record details of any visitors; and to ensure the under two-year-old children are closely supervised whilst eating.

There are additional staff available to cover staff absence and this is outlined sufficiently in the nursery policies. A visitors book is available and accurately completed on most occasions to give a clear indication of all persons present on the premises at any one time. All the children eat together in one room and are closely supervised by sufficient numbers of staff. This provides valuable opportunities for the children to develop socially.

What is being done well?

- Good adult to child ratios are implemented at all times. Children are grouped appropriately according to their age and demonstrate a good awareness of their key groups.
- Younger children's independence is promoted well during activities and daily routines. Staff give frequent praise and encouragement during play and value children's achievements.
- The premises are warm, cheerful and welcoming to both children and parents.
- Staff take satisfactory steps to ensure a safe environment and provide suitable levels of supervision. Fire procedures are clearly displayed and children demonstrate an awareness of the procedure to follow.

- A weekly menu is clearly displayed for parents. Children are given a good range of healthy, nutritious snacks and meals and staff demonstrate a good awareness of children's dietary needs. Children's social development is supported and encouraged well during meal times.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of staff, resources and play activities to effectively support and develop children's interests and meet their individual needs
- observations to ensure they are used effectively to help to plan the next steps
- consistency of staff when implementing the behaviour management policy
- the written records of medication administered to children
- staff's knowledge and understanding of procedures to follow with a child protection concern.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
7	Ensure the records of all medication or treatment administered to children, is signed by parents.	12/12/2003

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

Std	Recommendation
2	Organise staff and resources so that children are able to extend their own play ideas and interests and their individual needs are met.
11	Ensure all staff fully understand and implement the behaviour management policy and the approach is consistent and developmentally

	appropriate.
13	Develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.
3	Use observations to plan the next steps in children's play, learning and development.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Abbotts Day Nursery provides acceptable nursery education but has some significant areas for improvement.

Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses particularly in the areas of communication language and literacy, mathematical, physical and creative development. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is generally good as is knowledge and understanding of the world. Children form good relationships with staff who welcome the children warmly to the bright cheerful premises. Children are encouraged to be independent with their clothing but lack of access to resources limits their independent choice of activity. Staff plan a range of topics to encourage children's awareness of their world. The nursery garden is used well as a resource for nature topics such as collecting autumn leaves.

Staff work well together but there are significant weaknesses in teaching due to limited knowledge of the early learning goals and how to implement them. There is no systematic process for observing and assessing individual progress so children build on what they already know. Play activities do not have clear objectives.

The leadership and management of the nursery has significant weaknesses. Staff are not deployed effectively to take advantage of their skills and training. There are no effective systems in place to monitor the success of the education they provide or to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The nursery are, however, committed to improving the care and education they provide.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents feel welcome at the group and are happy with the care offered. They are provided with a wide range of written and verbal information regarding the nursery but are not given written information on the Foundation Stage of learning or asked to contribute to ongoing assessments of their child's progress. This limits their involvement in their child's education.

What is being done well?

- Children form good relationships with staff and each other. They settle quickly to the daily routines, which they know well, following a warm greeting from staff.
- Children in the pre-school group sit quietly and patiently when required and their behaviour is good.
- Children participate in some good topics, such as one on Autumn. The nursery garden is used well as a resource to support learning with areas for growing and observing the natural world.
- Children are developing an awareness of other cultures and disabilities and

are able to use sign language to accompany simple songs.

What needs to be improved?

- staff understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals to ensure they are able to plan effectively and identify objectives for all activities
- the system for observing and assessing children so that planning is well informed and individual children are sufficiently challenged to build on prior knowledge
- opportunities for children to explore mathematics, practise emerging writing skills and develop their imagination and independent creativity as they play
- ease of access to a wide variety of resources including story and reference books and somewhere comfortable for children to use books independently
- information for parents on the Foundation Stage of learning and their child's progress to allow them to become fully involved in their child's education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made limited progress since the last inspection when they were asked to develop planning to include the specific purpose of an activity, that is, what children are intended to learn, and which outcome is being addressed. They were also asked to develop appropriate strategies to hold children's attention when they become inattentive or behave inappropriately, for example visual strategies, involving them with props in a story, or using finger rhymes.

Limited progress has been made in planning. Daily topic plans are linked to the early learning goals but only to one area of learning with limited objectives. All other activities throughout the day are unplanned and do not have any particular learning objective. Plans do not show staff deployment, child grouping or highlight individual children for extension or reinforcement of skills. All the above factors limit children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

Behaviour was managed appropriately for the funded children during this inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident, well behaved and form good relationships with both staff and each other. Children know the daily routine well and are able to describe what will happen next. They settle quickly on arrival and move to group activities without hesitation. Children are able to sit quietly and patiently when required. They show good independent skills when managing their clothing and eating. Lack of easy access to toys and equipment limits their independent choice of activity.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate well with staff and each other. They listen well but have limited opportunities to share their news and ideas. Children use language confidently to organise their play when in the home corner, assigning roles such as 'Grandma' and the 'dog'. Children have little opportunity or readily available resources to practise emerging writing skills as they play. Children do not have easy access to books for story or reference or a welcoming area in which to relax and enjoy them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children count confidently but there are limited practical opportunities and resources available for children to explore mathematics as they play. Staff miss spontaneous opportunities to encourage group counting within the daily routine and to introduce children to mathematical concepts, for example, comparing leaves collected for the collage activity and sorting them by shape, type or colour. More able children are not sufficiently challenged as activities are planned for the whole group.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore, investigate and observe through a range of staff planned topics such as 'Autumn'. They record their observations through staff directed art-and-craft activities. Resources to encourage observation are limited with no reference books to support the topic. Children are developing an awareness of other cultures and disabilities and use sign language to accompany simple songs such as 'Baa, Baa, Black Sheep'. The nursery garden is used well as a resource to support learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
------------	------------------------

Children have daily opportunities to climb and balance but there are no clearly defined learning objectives or plans associated with their physical play. Small play equipment was not offered to reinforce physical skills such as throwing. Children move confidently around the setting avoiding equipment, furniture and other children. They show control over their speed and direction. Children handle small equipment and construction toys with increasing confidence as they cut, stick and build.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
------------	------------------------

There are no planned learning objectives for free play activities and opportunities for free creativity are limited. Children take part in daily staff-directed, art-and-craft activities associated with the topic, which they complete as a group. Children join in enthusiastically with familiar songs and rhymes, matching their movements to their singing. They use their imagination well during role play in the home corner when they set up the kitchen and assign character roles to each other.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve staff knowledge of the stepping stones within the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to use them to support planning and teaching for children's learning.
- develop a system for observing and assessing children so that planning is well informed, objectives for all activities are clear and individual children are sufficiently challenged to build on what they already know.
- provide opportunities for children to explore mathematics, practise emerging writing skills and develop their imagination and independent creativity as they play.
- provide a welcoming area where children can access a wide variety of books for both story and reference. Ensure easy access to a wide range of resources.

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.