



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 223186

DfES Number: 595015

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	18/05/2004
Inspector Name	Yvonne Chapman

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name	Apple Tree Day Nursery
Setting Address	27 Church Drive Markfield Leicestershire LE67 9UH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Steven & Yazmin Chadwick
Address	Apple Tree Day Nursery 27 Church Drive Markfield Leicestershire LE67 9UH

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

Apple Tree Day Nursery is situated in Markfield in Leicestershire. It operates from a single storey building and children are organised into age-related groups. There is also a Kidz Club available, taking children up to 12 years old before and after school and for holiday care.

The nursery opens between the hours of 07:30 and 18:00 each weekday all year round, closing for one week over Christmas.

There are currently 69 children on register. This includes 20 funded 3-year-olds and five funded 4-year-olds on roll. There are no children attending with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language.

There are 10 staff working with the children, four of whom hold early years' qualifications. Three staff are currently on training programmes.

The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Leicestershire Early Years' Development and Childcare Partnership.

The nursery holds an "Investors in People" award.

How good is the Day Care?

Apple Tree Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

Space is adequate for the number of children attending and children are grouped appropriately according to their age. Senior staff hold relevant child care qualifications. There are a significant amount of new staff members who, due to the unfamiliarity of routines and procedures, are not always aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staffing ratios are maintained for most parts of the day. However, on the day of the inspection, staffing ratios were not met during the first half hour of the early morning period. Written policies and procedures are available and include all relevant information.

Procedures are in place to ensure children's safety indoors, outdoors and on outings, however tiles within the toddler room present a minor hazard. Access to the premises is well monitored and staff are vigilant when allowing access to visitors. Good hygiene routines are established and positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Meals provided in the setting are well balanced and encourage healthy eating. Staff have a knowledge of child protection procedures and are aware of the process to follow to report any concerns.

Children are engaged in, and enjoy, a good range of play opportunities. The toys and equipment are age and developmentally appropriate and there are resources available reflecting positive images. Staff are aware of the individual care needs of children and their specific requirements are discussed with parents. Children's behaviour is managed in a positive, consistent and effective way.

Staff work generally well in partnership with parents and share regular written information about their child. Staff greet parents warmly and make themselves available for discussion on a daily basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

All actions from last inspection have been completed successfully. Drinking water is now accessible in all rooms. The light fitting is now working. All staff in the Person-in-Charge role have completed a suitable persons interview.

What is being done well?

- Staff work together to ensure consistent methods are used to manage children's behaviour. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged and children respond positively to this approach.
- Good attention is given to ensuring children settle happily into the nursery and to promoting their confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff have a good awareness of the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers. They ensure children are looked after according to parents' wishes.

What needs to be improved?

- the staffing ratios, to ensure National Standards are met at all times
- the deployment of staff and their awareness of their roles and responsibilities
- the safety in the toddler room in relation to loose tiles

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
2	Ensure minimum staffing ratios are met at all times.	18/06/2004

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

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure staff are deployed effectively and are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
6	Ensure the tiles in the toddler room do not present a hazard to the children.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. New staff are working well with the children. They are providing continuity of education by following planning structures set out by previous staff, and they effectively support children's natural curiosity by asking suitable questions and answering clearly to questions posed by children. However, the existing curriculum planning does not sufficiently address all clusters relating to each area of learning; and observation and assessment records are not used effectively to plan for children's next steps in learning, particularly in physical development. There is a good range of resources available to children, although the layout of the provision limits their accessibility. Behaviour is managed well.

Leadership and management is acceptable, but with some significant weaknesses. A number of staff have recently left the nursery and management have worked hard to ensure there are sufficient staff to support the care of children. However, support provided to new staff in terms of the provision of time to look at curriculum planning, policies and procedures, and to work as a team to ensure the changes are not detrimental to children's learning in the long term, is limited.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with daily verbal and written information on the activities their child has been involved with. They are given a termly progress report and this includes suggested targets for children's learning. Parents are invited to comment on the reports. However, parents are not clear about the foundation stage, and information provided does not effectively link-in with the stepping stones for each area of learning.

What is being done well?

- Children demonstrate good levels of self-esteem; they are keen to answer questions and hold their own work in high regard.
- Children have good conversational skills, and these are supported by staff's effective use of questioning.
- Children are provided with good opportunities to work creatively in both two and three-dimensions.
- Children have very good opportunities to count, recognise numerals, and identify shapes.

What needs to be improved?

- the lay-out of the room to make resources more accessible to children, and to

facilitate more creative and imaginary play

- observation, assessment and planning systems to ensure they effectively address the individual learning needs of each child; and that planning incorporates all clusters relating to each area of the curriculum
- partnership with parents so that parents have a clearer understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and how it relates to the progress of their child
- staff management and support to provide new staff with opportunities to improve their understanding of the individual learning needs of each child; to work effectively as a staff team; and to understand policies and procedures of the nursery
- staff's use of unplanned and routine activities to support aspects of children's learning and to make the most of the potential of each situation

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff increased their understanding of the curriculum and ensured the purpose of each activity was clear; although this improvement has not been sustained. Objects have been collected and are displayed on an interest table which ought to enable children to explore and investigate, but this is not being used effectively to increase children's natural curiosity. More opportunities in mathematics, particularly to support learning in ordering and sequencing, are now provided and children are now progressing generally well in this area. The play area now has excellent balancing and climbing equipment for children's use, although there continues to be insufficient awareness of children's abilities in the area of physical development overall, therefore inhibiting challenge and progress to their potential.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm and confidence when participating in planned and spontaneous activities. They have good relationships with their peers, and are forming good relationships with new staff. Behaviour is very good, with children having a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Children have the ability to care for themselves, including washing their hands, and helping to tidy up. They are not sufficiently independent in selecting their own resources.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have good listening and speaking skills, with older children conversing well with each other and adults. They have a growing awareness of how sounds link with letters and recognise their names in writing. Older children know the initial sound in a word. Children enjoy story time and know to read books from left to right. There are limited opportunities for children to write for a purpose and to practice writing in play situations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a good awareness of shape, matching and sequencing. They also demonstrate good counting skills and count to well beyond 10. Older children recognise numerals confidently, particularly between 1 and 9. However, there is a lack of support given to children to develop their early calculation skills through routines, and there is a lack of extension in mathematics for older or more able children. The representation of number using marks on paper or practical objects is limited.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are provided with good opportunities to explore and investigate the world around them. There are good planned activities for children to design and make through junk modelling and by using construction equipment. Children are developing a good understanding of their locality, of themselves and their families. Some technological equipment is available to children, but it is not easily accessible. Their understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others is not sufficiently addressed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have an awareness of space and those around them, moving with control and co-ordination. They are aware of the need to wash hands to stay healthy. Children have growing control over small tools and objects, such as small world play and paint brushes. They sometimes go swimming and have good access to larger equipment, such as climbing frames and balancing beams. However, physical activities are not effectively planned to support children's ongoing progress in this area of development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy planned activities such as painting, collages and junk modelling, using their imaginations well. They have good opportunities to explore rhythm in music, to sing, and to enjoy music and movement. They use small world play well to support their developing imaginations, although the room lay-out limits children's creativity in terms of providing space for them to fully engage in role-play and dressing-up or to participate in spontaneous creative activities, such as painting.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure assessments of planned activities are clearly linked to the impact the activity has had on children's learning. Use assessments effectively to account for children's individual next steps in learning when planning the curriculum. Ensure all the clusters related to each area of learning are visited regularly, and are then re-visited, to secure children's learning
- consider changes to the lay-out of space available to three and four-year old children to improve their opportunities to self-select activities and for creative self-expression; also improve staff's use of routine and unplanned opportunities to support children's learning
- improve the partnership with parents by providing parents with further information about the Foundation Stage, the nursery curriculum; and by linking their child's progress reports to the stepping stones more effectively
- improve support systems to staff to ensure they have sufficient time and resources to plan the curriculum effectively to meet the needs of individual children; to work effectively as a team; and to ensure they are fully aware of the nursery's policies and procedures.

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.