



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 205163

DfES Number: 518356

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/11/2004
Inspector Name Julie Kim Davies

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Abacus Nursery School
Setting Address Unit 2 Lickey End Buildings
 Barnsley Hall Drive
 Bromsgrove
 Worcs
 B61 0EX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Shirley Anne Wilks

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

Abacus Nursery School is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 1998 in refurbished premises leased from the National Health Service. It is situated on the outskirts of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. The children are based in two main playrooms with additional space for small group activities. The secure outdoor play area includes garden with grass and tarmac areas. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year.

There are currently 76 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 44 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the surrounding urban area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 11 staff and has additional relief staff available for emergency cover. Of the 11 staff employed, including the managers, 7 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

Abacus Nursery School provides good quality care for children.

There are effective procedures in place for appointing and vetting staff. The majority of staff are suitably qualified and experienced to provide care to children. All staff are committed to attending a wide range of training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date and relevant.

Activities are well organised to meet the differing needs and interests of the children. The staff provide a safe, secure and child-focused environment. There is attractive, well-organised play space both inside and outside. The furniture and equipment provided is child size and suitable for the children's use. They are well maintained and help to create an accessible and stimulating play environment. Resources are well cared for and provide children with a good variety of play and stimulating

activities.

Attention to health and safety is good with appropriate risk assessments in place. However it is recommended that staff update the good range of risk assessments in place to reflect recent training staff have attended and changes to the disability discrimination legislation. Staff promote hygiene awareness amongst the children, e.g. hand washing, however, the hand drying facilities in the group rooms require improving to reduce the risk of cross infection.

The setting's equality and special needs policies are positively implemented, with staff treating all children as individuals. Effective policies, procedures and staff training help to ensure that all children's needs are met. There are very good systems in place to keep parents informed and to encourage and foster good working relationships. There is a good range of documentation in place to support all aspects of the service. These are stored appropriately, kept up to date and are relevant to meeting children's individual needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Effective systems are in place to monitor and record all children's progress and achievements.
- Activities provided are stimulating, fun and support children in all aspects of their development.
- The environment is bright, welcoming, child friendly with staff working supportively together to nurture the children in their care.
- Effective procedures are sensitively implemented for children identified as having special needs, and staff work closely with families and other professionals involved.
- There is a comprehensive range of methods for communicating with families/carers to ensure children's needs are well met and parents kept informed.
- There is a wide range of well-organised documentation, policies and procedures in place to support all aspects of the service offered.

What needs to be improved?

- the range of risk assessments to reflect recent training and changes in legislation relating to disability discrimination
- the hand drying facilities within the group rooms.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
6	Update the good range of risk assessments already in place to reflect recent staff training and changes to disability discrimination legislation.
7	Improve the hand drying facilities in the group rooms.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Abacus Nursery School provides very good nursery education. Children are making very good progress in all six areas of learning.

Staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and plan balanced practical activities that interest and motivate children to learn. Staff act as good role models and have realistic expectations of what children can achieve so that they succeed and progress well. Children behave well due to clear expectations and caring relationships with the staff team. Staff are knowledgeable about the children through a key worker system and plan activities directly related to the early learning goals. Detailed assessment procedures link with the early learning goals and inform the planning and activity development. Staff are able to clearly explain and demonstrate their understanding of how to vary activities to meet children's individual needs however, this is not always recorded in the planning documents for sharing with others. Staff have regular training opportunities to support their delivery of the Foundation Stage. Children with special educational needs are particularly well catered for.

Leadership and management are very good. The provider and senior staff have good systems to monitor and support staff and all aspects of the service provided. Staff time and resources are effectively organised to provide an attractive setting that promotes children's learning.

Partnership with parents is very good. There are detailed systems for promoting working with parents which include parents meetings, regular newsletters, detailed prospectus, and notice boards throughout the setting; which inform parents of activities and topics related to early learning goals. Parents receive a very warm welcome and their comments indicate a high degree of satisfaction with all aspects of the service. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning and systems ensure their views are regularly sort.

What is being done well?

- Staff plan effectively and provide a good range of play experiences and activities which children enjoy and supports their progress in the six areas of learning.
- Staff are knowledgeable about the children, their needs and abilities.
- Children are secure, confident and very well behaved. They develop warm and trusting relationships with each other and the staff.
- Children are active talkers, listeners and communicators. They count readily and recognise and use numbers in play and every day routine situations.
- Children enjoy good opportunities to develop their creativity through activities

such as cooking and use simple equipment such as scales and jugs to weigh and measure.

- The environment and resources are well organised to create an effective, attractive and inviting learning environment.

What needs to be improved?

- the activity plans to record the effective steps staff are taking to vary activities to meet individual children's learning needs and for sharing with others.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to consider improving the following:

Make assessment more effective in informing and supporting teaching. Assess and record children's progress and learning towards all the early learning goals to give a full picture of overall attainment. Share fully with parents.

The nursery has made very good progress in all aspects identified. A prompt detailed action plan identified steps to take.

Assessment systems were researched and resulted in the implementation of the current system which directly relates children's development to the early learning goals.

Staff observe and record children's development and this directly feeds into the planning of topics and activities. Open evenings, planning information display boards in the nursery, use of home/nursery diaries and the collation of a range of children's work in individual folders which are regularly shared with parents, demonstrates the effectiveness of their response to the point raised.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and eagerly approach learning with interest. Three year olds display a high level of involvement in activities. Children behave well and have a good awareness of the boundaries set for behaviour. They develop good relationships with adults and peers and show a strong sense of self as well as growing respect for others. They have opportunities to work in small and large groups, or individually with staff.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are becoming very active communicators and listeners. All children are very interested in books and listen intently to stories and action rhymes. Most children make suggestions and predict what might happen next e.g., when making jelly. Children are able to recognise their names and some are able to write these with increasing confidence. All children are displaying increasing ability in using and recognising letter sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn about number, space, shape and volume through a wide range of planned and spontaneous practical play activities. Three year olds match shapes well in board games and craft sessions. They are confident at recognising numbers on a number line up to ten. Children are becoming skilful at cutting out shapes to match spaces. They talk about size in their play and are learning about adding and subtracting through enjoyable activities i.e., baking and singing songs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have very good opportunities to explore and learn about the natural world and how things grow and change e.g. walks in the lane, planting seeds and watching them grow. Children see positive images of diversity throughout the nursery and regularly take part in cultural celebrations. They build confidently with a wide range of materials and construction toys e.g., make logs into dinosaur caves. They are competent with equipment such as a cash till and tape recorder.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to move with confidence and skill. They are developing a good awareness of space and control of their bodies both in and out of doors e.g. standing and sitting still at group times or running and weaving between each other outside. Children have very good opportunities to use a wide range of tools and equipment e.g. three year olds propel balls through a raised net outdoors, spread glue and use pencils with increasing control. They learn how to keep their bodies healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have very good scope to explore, create and respond to music sounds and rhymes. They move expressively and spontaneously. They learn about colour, forms and shapes through spontaneous and planned activities. They examine different textures e.g. through use of natural materials such as sand, wood, play dough and weaving. They express their individuality using a variety of materials including paint and collage materials. Children enjoy varied and interesting role-play activities.

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: ensuring the activity plans record the effective steps staff are taking to vary activities to meet individual children's learning needs and for sharing with others.

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.