



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 133481

DfES Number: 547393

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/02/2005  
Inspector Name Jill Milton

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care  
Setting Name The Ace Centre  
Setting Address Burford Road  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire  
OX7 5DZ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Trustees of the Ace Centre

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Trustees of the Ace Centre  
Address Burford Road  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire  
OX7 5DZ

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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

The Ace Centre in Chipping Norton provides a variety of children's services including Gems Day Nursery and The Out of School Scheme. Both these services have charitable status and are managed by a Board of Trustees. The Ace Centre also provides a number of other services which include: a family centre; local authority nursery school; health clinic; adult learning facilities; outreach support to other settings and families; parenting support and a forest school. The Out of School Scheme opened in 1995, operates from a large room and adjacent hall and offers both after school and holiday care. The nursery opened in 1999, operates from four interlinked rooms and offers full day care. The centre serves the local area, outlying villages and other towns as needs dictate.

There are currently 46 children on roll in the nursery, which includes 7 three-year-olds who receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions and the centre welcomes children with special needs.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round (except a week at Christmas) from 08.00 until 18.00. The after school club opens each day during term times from 15.00 until 18.00. The play scheme operates during each school holiday (except a week at Christmas) from 08.00 until 18.00.

Four part-time and four full-time staff work with the children in the nursery. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three. Two members of staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The Ace Centre provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children make generally good progress in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world and very good progress in the four other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Some aspects of teaching are very good; in particular, the way that staff assess the children's development and plan the next steps in learning. They support children with differing learning needs very well. Staff have a generally good understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and they use this information to plan the activities. In most areas of learning this works well, though in some sessions staff place little emphasis on counting and using numbers. Staff plan focus activities in some detail, with clear learning outcomes and evaluative comments. Staff interact well with the children and they are effective at managing a range of children's behaviour. The staff are calm and consistent in the way they deal with situations. Staff plan an appropriate routine to the day and use resources well to support learning in all areas, apart from knowledge and understanding of the world.

Leadership and management are very good. Staff receive very good support from both the director at the centre and a range of professionals, to help them meet children's needs. Staff attend training and undergo appraisals as part of their personal development. Staff work well as a team and they are effectively led by a conscientious manager. They reflect on the provision and have a clear focus on areas for improvement, such as the outdoor play.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Families receive a good range of information about the centre overall and about the activities, which happen in the nursery. Staff make parents welcome and spend time in conversation with them about the children.

### What is being done well?

- Staff make good use of time spent with small groups of children to focus on their particular learning needs. This may include quiet language activities or some time spent outdoors in physically energetic play.
- Children spend a lot of time in imaginary play in the home corner of the nursery. This play is supported well by the staff who encourage them to talk about their families and provide a good range of props to extend their play.
- Children frequently select story books for sharing with the staff. These times are spent on the large, homely sofa where children are learning to enjoy books whilst feeling safe and secure.

- Staff provide very good support to parents and carers and this approach echoes the ethos of the whole centre. Staff are flexible to the needs of the families and work to build a friendly and supportive partnership.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the development of children's interest in numbers and counting
- the opportunities for children to use simple technology and to explore and investigate objects which stimulate their curiosity.

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are building up good relationships with the staff and their needs for comfort and reassurance, when their carers leave are effectively met. Children are beginning to socialise with their peers and share games together. They happily play alongside each other at the sand tray or when outdoors. The children select activities by themselves and they are developing independence with tasks like pouring a drink. Children are learning to behave appropriately and consider the feelings of others.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children engage in many conversations and are developing good language skills. They receive encouragement to express their ideas as they play and to voice their needs. Staff help children extend their vocabulary with simple but effective games. Children are developing an interest and delight in books. They share frequent stories and they contribute their comments about the pictures. Children often use mark-making in the 'office' area and they use resources like clip boards and post-it notes.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing good matching skills as they set out cutlery in the home corner play. They have opportunities to sort and match by size and colour and they see numerals on display in the nursery. They are learning how to count when they sing rhymes, though in some sessions there is little emphasis on counting during play or in the daily routine. Children show an awareness of shape and size, identifying a circle or selecting a long or short construction brick.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are familiar with the nursery routine and they talk readily about special events. They play with toys like a roadway and a set of cars, demonstrating their awareness of the environment. The children are developing respect and knowledge of customs and beliefs in the wider world. They have regular opportunities to build and design but little chance to use technology. Children enjoy using sand in play but can lack access to objects and materials to stimulate their curiosity.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children are good at identifying their own needs for food, drink and rest during the day. They find a space for action songs and co-ordinate movements as they sing. In the outdoor area, the children learn to run, avoiding most collisions. Children access a good range of challenging outdoor equipment and all enjoy play with items like balls and hoops. Children are becoming confident at using pencils and they are progressing well with a range of manipulative skills.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children express their own ideas with paint and collage and they can see their efforts on display around the nursery. They are able to experience different textures, such as foam, water and sand. Children become quite involved in imaginary play and they share story lines with their peers and the staff. They know a range of songs and readily make their own requests for favourite ones. Children use scarves, instruments and listen to visiting musicians, as part of their creative experience.

**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**

- develop children's interest in numbers and counting more effectively, by using opportunities as they play
- provide more opportunities for children to use simple technology and to investigate and explore objects which stimulate their curiosity.

*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.*