

Wilmington Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Linda Nicholls

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Asquith Nursery Wilmington was registered in 2000. It is one of a large chain of nurseries owned by Asquith Court Nurseries Limited. Registration is for the Early Years Register only. Registration does not include overnight care. The nursery is registered to receive 53 children in the early years age range, of whom no more than 20 may be under two years of age. There are currently 90 children on roll of whom 36 are in the early years age range.

The nursery operates from a purpose-built building situated in the grounds of Wilmington Grammar School, Wilmington, Dartford, Kent. The nursery has three group rooms, comprising a baby/toddler room, for children under two years, that has its own milk kitchen and nappy changing area. There is a nursery class for 2-3 year olds and a pre-school room for 3 & 4 year olds that share a bathroom area. All children have daily access to an enclosed outside play area. All food is freshly prepared on site by the nursery cook. The nursery provides a curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are 26 staff who work directly with children. All are suitably qualified and attend training to further their professional development. One member of staff has a Degree in Early Childhood Studies and a member of staff is preparing to achieve Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery combines excellent reflective practice with a dynamic team spirit to drive continuous improvement in the welfare, learning and development outcomes for children. A flexible, productive management structure provides comprehensive and highly effective systems that build and track children's steady progress towards the early learning goals. Children thrive and develop rapidly because they are valued by caring and committed staff who provide them with a happy, joyful and stimulating environment. This acts as a highly effective foundation for individual growth, well-being and achievement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- initiating additional methods to encourage parents to be involved in a dynamic partnership with the nursery to support and extend their child's care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision for safeguarding is fully comprehensive and thoroughly understood by all staff following recent training. A full and professional audit of safety and child protection processes has been undertaken. Staff know what to record and who to report to, should they have any concerns for children in their care so potential delay is avoided. Training and procedures reflect current Local Safeguarding Child Board practice. Children benefit from exciting, well-managed resources including ongoing training and a rolling appraisal programme for all members of the team. The layout of the nursery and newly refurbished gardens provides children with a stimulating environment where gardening equipment, practical resources and play materials support and strongly encourage exploration of the natural world. Storage systems are easily accessible to children from open shelving and systems, such as self-registration tags, are creatively used to develop and encourage children's independence. Effective risk assessments are in place, including those for occasional outings in the locality. Daily visual checks are made in each room and security processes are thorough so children play safely. Welfare requirements are consistently applied with constant and close supervision by caring staff so children's well-being is fully promoted. An emergency exit procedure is displayed and practiced ensuring all children are aware of what to do should an emergency arise.

Members of the staff team work closely together to ensure the nursery's policies and procedures are understood and implemented. Clear aims and priorities for development are supported by resourceful staff recognising the importance of reflective practice and focused general planning. Steps taken since the last inspection are recognised as having had a substantial and beneficial impact on all who attend. Children's needs are now very well met following training around the role of key persons. Staff now understand their role, and the five Every Child Matters principles. They plan daily outside play covering all aspects of the curriculum and children are encouraged to contribute to the routine of the nursery with, for example, the preparation of tables for lunch. Children have gained an understanding of those that care for the whole community meeting police officers who have been invited to visit the nursery. The comprehensive methods of recording children's progress, assessing and planning for next steps closely reflect children's individual interests as well as the high standards of both room and nursery management. Regular team meetings are used to build confidence in new systems of working. There is a close partnership with local authority professionals who provide support and advice for management and staff. Developed links with other providers within the parent company and without it are regularly reinforced so that senior practitioners and managers gain from the exchange of experience. A highly inclusive self-evaluation process has been initiated to encourage parents and children to comment on how well the nursery meets their needs and expectations. This is an area the nursery management considers needs further consideration and home visits are to be offered to all parents and families that may find this beneficial. Equality and diversity are creatively and delightfully promoted with resources and celebrations such as family photo boards, displays of cultural clothing, listening to music from around the world and the display of other

languages. The seasons, annual festivals and special events are used to give structure and meaning to children's learning. They learn to respect and value their own cultures, as well as those of the children they know and meet daily. There are posters and signs displayed showing other methods of communication, including signing, to benefit pre-verbal children. All children benefit from clear assessments of their individual needs by experienced and trained staff. Specific support and specialist care from the local authority is welcomed into the nursery to ensure inclusion for all.

The partnership with parents and carers is considered and fruitful. Parents take advantage of the open door policy to discuss their specific requirements. They praise the managers and staff for their flexibility, understanding and caring attitudes. Notice boards, brightly coloured education displays and clear individual learning records inform parents of children's achievements and experience. Parents are invited to contribute their skills to extend children's learning whether visiting the nursery or through play at home. This is, however, an area the nursery management considers needs further development to consolidate children's achievements. Links between school or childminders at periods of transition are made so children's learning and development is smoothly extended.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Unique learning records are clearly and simply presented identifying children's progress towards the early learning goals. Recorded starting points provided by parents act as a foundation for future learning. Assessment of individual progress is carried forward from observations that link to the six areas of learning. Individual next steps are planned by well qualified and professional staff who use informal jottings to structure formal achievement reports in children's individual learning journals.

Children are animated, happy and express an eager enjoyment to learn during their time at the nursery. They show they feel safe by their exuberance and active capacity for independent experiment and exploration. Children are purposeful and fully occupied during their play. They use their imaginations as they play in the tent, or in the role play areas such as the corner shop area and in the baby doll area. They are absorbed during craft activities, layering paint or making leaf rubbings. They proudly show their work in displays around the nursery and know their work is valued because it is displayed and photographed. Children experience a range of textures handling fabrics, feathers, shells and artificial grass. Babies practice and consolidate balance and walking skills with expert staff providing discrete support and direction. Children use a variety of tools, such as brooms, spatulas, brushes, glue sticks and scissors. They are focused and concentrate as they watch the water they paint on the concrete steps in the garden, first darken, then evaporate. Children gain confidence rapidly with support from consistent, familiar adults who praise their attempts and achievements as they gain pencil control or recognise and name number during their play. Some write their names competently. They are confident and readily engage adults to join them

responding to questions as to their likes and dislikes. They listen and join in with movement, jumping and marching to familiar nursery rhymes. They learn number and sounds as they listen closely to adults who ask them to jump on numbers on a number line in the garden, or shapes such as circles and stars drawn on the concrete. Children examine illustrations in books independently and together with adults. They are articulate, confident and communicative identifying where they went with Patches the weekend bear who 'visits' a child each weekend. Adults encourage children to describe what they know so helping consolidation of information. For example, they know that worms like leaves and that plants need water to grow. Children have a rapidly growing knowledge of how things work and the skills they will need in the future. They develop knowledge and understanding of the world as they explore keypads or interactive resources such as the colourful computer keyboard. They are patient and take turns with resources during both inside and outside play because adults reinforce sharing with well-deserved praise. They problem-solve and self-challenge as they climb up and through the large outside play equipment, swing independently or hit the ball successfully with the stick.

Children have increasing understanding as to how to keep themselves safe as they progress through the nursery. They demonstrate a strong sense of self-reliance as they self-register, place used tissues in a bin and wash their hands after messy play or before eating food. They build secure relationships with adults and children they know well and use the displayed Golden Rules to control their own and others behaviour. The oldest children independently access the outside play area to take advantage of the superb outdoor equipment and engaging natural environment. Children support and care for each other, they sit sociably together and chat to each other as they tuck into healthy, freshly cooked meals. They know that fish live in the sea and that their daddy goes fishing. The nursery works closely with parents to meet cultural and individual preferences or medical requirements. Older children are encouraged to make a positive contribution to lunchtime by helping lay the table with placemats, cutlery and gain independence as they serve themselves and each other.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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