

University Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507728
Inspection date	07/02/2011
Inspector	Susan Andrews

Setting address	University of Warwick, COVENTRY, CV4 7AL
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

University Nursery opened in 1993 and operates from spacious, purpose-built and designed premises that can be easily accessed by all children. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is situated on Scarman Road in the Lakeside area of the campus at the University of Warwick in Coventry.

A maximum of 78 children nursery may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 120 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The setting is open throughout the year except for bank holidays, one week between Christmas and New Year and a staff training week in August. Hours of operation are, Monday to Thursday from 8.15am to 5.45pm and on Friday from 8.15am to 5.15pm.

All children attending are connected with the University as their parents are students, university staff members or researchers. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 29 childcare staff who are experienced and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. These include National Vocational Qualification Level 2/3, B.A.(Hons) degree in Early Childhood Studies and one member of staff holds a Fine Arts degree and has Early Years Professional Status. Additional staff are working towards both Early Years Foundation Stage and Masters degrees. The nursery also employs additional support staff in dance, catering, housekeeping and administration roles.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, confident and flourish because the highly-skilled and motivated staff take great care to ensure children's needs are met. They systematically obtain and update the relevant information about their individual care, learning and development needs. The safe, caring, vibrant and inclusive, environment provides innovative and challenging learning opportunities, therefore, children make excellent and rapid progress. Extremely effective partnerships are in place between the nursery, parents and others involved in the children's care. The nursery takes every opportunity to involve parents and keep them well informed, providing them with a wide range of policies and information. Systems used to monitor and evaluate the setting's performance are highly effective and demonstrate the staff's purposeful commitment to continue to drive improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- creating additional opportunities to enable children to engage with the wider community, both within and outside of the university campus.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The managerial team are experienced and inspiring role models, setting high standards of professionalism for the whole staff team. Children's safety is of paramount importance and staff, who all hold a current first aid certificate, are fully aware of their responsibilities to protect and safeguard the children. They recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear about reporting procedures, should they have a concern about a child in their care. Consequently, children are kept safe and their welfare is safeguarded. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place. These are regularly reviewed and amended where necessary, ensuring potential hazards to children are identified and minimised. All visitors are supervised and access to the building is secure. Therefore, no unauthorised person is ever left alone with children. Robust recruiting, vetting, induction and appraisal systems ensure that all adults working with children are suitable and have the necessary qualifications and skills. This results in a cohesive, knowledgeable staff group, committed to achieve excellent outcomes for the welfare and learning of all children attending the setting.

A comprehensive and detailed range of operational policies and procedures are in place which are made readily available to parents at the time they place their child at the nursery. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they are in line with current legislation and the setting's excellent day-to-day practice. Parents are fully acknowledged as their child's first educator and their contribution to children's learning and development at the nursery is valued. Their views are regularly obtained through daily discussion, questionnaires and parents evenings. Those parents spoken to during the inspection, indicate they feel staff are extremely caring and approachable. Parents confirm that their cultural heritage is really valued and they are listened to and kept well informed. They trust the staff and have absolute confidence in the care and education provided for their children. Links are well established with other settings and specialist workers who are involved in children's lives.

The setting has created a vibrant, exciting, challenging environment where children feel cherished, enjoy innovative opportunities and learn through their play and experiences. Consequently, children are inspired, achieve well and reach their full potential. Staff are dedicated, enthusiastic and continue to actively promote diversity and embrace training opportunities to further their skills and knowledge. They develop new initiatives which spring from rigorous reflective practice and self-evaluation systems. This demonstrates the setting's substantial capacity for continual improvement which benefits all children.

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

Staff interact affectionately with the children and they clearly know them well as individuals, spending lots of time with their key children. An extensive range of stimulating and fun learning opportunities that cover all six areas of learning, are offered to children. Therefore, each day children enter the setting eagerly to take part in the activities. Staff plan a vast range of adult-led activities, furthermore, they continually encourage children to explore their environment independently whilst always being there for support. Consequently, children extend their own play initiatives, make choices and develop their independence.

Children build firm friendships, they play together harmoniously agreeing to take turns with the train set or collage materials. Babies smile and develop confidence as they play 'peep bo' with an adult then holding out their arms for a cuddle. A positive approach to behaviour management is implemented based on praise and encouragement. Staff are excellent role models and give children clear explanations that guide their behaviour, so that they know what is expected of them. Older children are beginning to understand how their behaviour affects others. They are kind and sensitive about the needs of the younger ones. For example, helping them to join in, hold hands, tiptoe and twirl in the dance activity.

Communication, language and literacy is actively promoted through words and letters displayed around the room and older children recognise their name on their pictures on the walls. Staff engage children in lively conversation extending their language through a range of extensive opportunities for children to explore the spoken and written word. Staff use the Makaton signing system to support children's learning and this proves particularly helpful for some children who have English as an additional language. Careful attention is paid to children's interests and staff build on these skilfully to extend child-led activities. For example, on an extremely blustery day, children build kites and excitedly discover which way the wind blows.

Children enhance their writing skills as they make marks with chalk, crayons, paint, pencils and form letters in the sand. Children are enthralled at story time. They listen attentively and are encouraged to use their imagination to predict what may happen next, using prompts to fill in gaps. The environment is a celebration of stimulating pictorial and written messages. For example, displays placed around the rooms show letters, numbers, a wealth of creative artwork and photographic displays. Children have opportunities to explore information technology as they use the interactive whiteboard, computer, digital cameras, CD player, WiFi facilities and programmable toys.

Children are curious and solve problems as they use construction toys, looking at how things balance and what jigsaw puzzle pieces fit into spaces. They measure, weigh, count and compare size and shape on a regular basis through a range of activities including cookery, games, puzzles and songs. Babies explore different textures, respond to toys that make sounds and become inquisitive looking for their reflection in mirrors or look at the coloured lights in the sensory room.

Children's imagination and creativity is inspired through dance, music, arts and craft activities and role play such as dressing up in fairy wings or builders' hats.

The nursery actively promotes diversity by embracing and celebrating children's cultural heritage. A wide range of toys and resources promote positive images of culture, gender and disability and multicultural festivals such as Chinese New Year are celebrated and planned into the broad-based curriculum. A unique link with a Norwegian pre-school has been established. Regular two-way dialogue through Skype enables children to learn about each other and share experiences. For example, they sing, 'the people on the bus' in English and then hear and see their counterparts sing it in Norwegian. Children are encouraged to learn about the natural world. They care for the nursery pets, watch the nesting swans on the lake and have hands-on opportunities to plant and tend things in the garden or walk in the nearby woodland. Children enjoy occasional off campus trips, for example, to Warwick Castle. However, additional opportunities to enable children to engage with the wider community, both within and outside of the university campus lack frequency.

Extensive efforts are made to ensure children learn how to keep themselves well and safe. Emergency evacuation practices take place on a regular basis, this ensures children know what to do should a real emergency occur. Children know about the importance of personal hygiene, always washing their hands after going to the toilet and before mealtimes. Standards of hygiene and health care practices throughout the setting, such as nappy changing procedures are exemplary and a healthy lifestyle is promoted. Well-balanced, nourishing meals are provided and children learn about the importance of eating their 'five a day' fruit and vegetables. They have free access to drinking water, so they remain well hydrated and older children can serve drinks for themselves from water coolers. They are reminded of the benefits of fresh air and daily exercise as they run, jump and clamber over the climbing wall and geo-boulders in the outdoor play areas. A peripatetic music specialist visits the nursery each week to spark children's interest in movement and dance which aids their co-ordination and balance.

This setting effectively recognises the uniqueness of each child so that no individual is disadvantaged. Staff skilfully implement robust systems to observe, check, secure and record children's learning which means that children's next steps are clearly identified. Therefore, every child attending becomes an active and confident learner. Children make excellent progress according to their starting point and capabilities as they develop and have fun during their time at the setting.

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met