

Apple Blossom Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	17/08/2011
Inspector	Samantha Powis

Setting address	Apple Blossom Day Nursery, London Road, Strete Raleigh, Whimple, EXETER, EX5 2PT
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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).

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

Apple Blossom Day Nursery is privately owned. It has been registered since 2000 and operates from a cabin-style building on the outskirts of the village of Whimble in Devon. Children are cared for in three rooms and two age groups. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play and an adjacent field with various animals which children visit under supervision.

The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm, all year round, except for one week in December. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They may care for up to 29 children from birth to under eight years. There are currently 86 children on roll, 66 of these are in the early years age group. The nursery welcomes children in receipt of government funding for three- and four-year-olds. The nursery supports children who learn English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The owner manages the setting and employs nine staff. The manager holds a level 3 qualification in childcare and a level 5 qualification in management. Of the remaining staff, four hold level 3 qualifications and three hold level 2 qualifications and are working towards level 3. Two staff are on apprenticeship schemes.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and settled within the welcoming nursery as adults working with them have a secure understanding of their individual needs. Children are provided with an adequate range of activities, however, these are not always well organised or planned to fully support their learning and enhance their enjoyment. Good links are established with parents and carers to offer consistent support for families. Staff meet regularly as a team to discuss children's needs. However, systems to evaluate the extent to which the provision is supporting children's welfare and learning are not always effective in identifying areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- increase use of the outdoor areas and extend the range of activities offered to improve learning opportunities for all children
- use the information gathered from assessment to identify learning priorities

- and plan relevant learning experiences for each child
- extend monitoring and evaluation systems to identify and prioritise areas for improvement throughout the nursery, including staff recruitment and vetting procedures, risk assessments and organisation of daily routines to improve outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a confident awareness of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns, which supports them in their safeguarding role. Many staff have attended safeguarding training and are introduced to the nursery's safeguarding policy as part of their induction. Although references and health checks are completed for all staff when they are first appointed, Criminal Record Bureau checks are not always completed immediately to ensure all aspects of staff suitability are fully explored. There are systems in place to ensure that staff who have not had full checks completed are not left unsupervised with the children at any time, therefore, minimising any impact on children. Children remain well supervised at all times, which helps to keep them safe, however, risk assessment procedures are not always effective in helping staff to identify potential hazards. For example, the storage of some medication has not been fully considered to ensure it supports the safety of all children. Another example is the failure to cover the outdoor sand tray when not in use to protect children's health when using it. Children's health is generally supported appropriately, with children encouraged to follow good hygiene routines. However, some items used for the youngest children, such as the nappy changing mat, are damaged, making it difficult to ensure staff can clean them thoroughly. Overall, documentation is used effectively to support children's ongoing welfare.

Written information is obtained about individual children's needs, all staff are fully aware of any medical or dietary needs of each child to ensure these are met. Staff support all children in communicating their needs through the use of sign language, visual notices and use of some key words in other languages, helping all children to feel included. The nursery is welcoming to children; it is brightly decorated with some examples of children's creative work on display. However, some areas are cluttered and space is not always used effectively to promote children's learning and development. For example, children are only able to access the outdoor area at specific times during the day, limiting their play opportunities.

The nursery has addressed some of the recommendations raised at their last inspection, which has led to improvements in children's behaviour, some aspects of their health and safety, their confidence levels and self-esteem. However, although procedures to monitor children's progress have been improved, this has not yet had a significant impact on planning to ensure children are offered a wider range of activities to support their learning and development further. Staff meet regularly as a team to share information about the children being cared for and consider the settings policies. However, systems to monitor the effectiveness of day-to-day procedures in supporting children's welfare and enjoyment are not always effective

in ensuring that areas for improvement are consistently identified and addressed to improve the outcomes for children.

Positive working relationships are established with parents and carers. They receive detailed information about the setting through the prospectus and are updated daily about activities and forthcoming events through the notice board and diaries. Their thoughts are valued and sought through regular questionnaires, to identify improvements that will have a positive impact on families, such as the newly extended opening times. Formal arrangements are made annually for parents to meet with their child's key person, which back up daily discussions to ensure parents are kept involved in their child's learning and progress. Good links are established with local schools to ease children's transition from nursery to school and staff work well with other agencies in partnership with parents to support children with additional needs.

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

Children throughout the nursery are generally happy and settled and are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. They are welcomed individually by a familiar adult, giving them a sense of belonging. They are encouraged to value and respect those around them. For example, children enjoy sharing photographs of their holiday and examples of pictures they have made. Other children and staff listen attentively and applaud their efforts boosting children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are polite, which is encouraged by the good example of staff. They are beginning to understand behaviour expectations and boundaries, which help them to manage their own behaviour, keep themselves safe and consider the safety and needs of others.

Although there are a range of resources accessible to the children, not all children appear to recognise that they can help themselves. Nursery sessions are very structured, with little flexibility in routines to improve children's opportunities for play. For example, children are unable to play outside until after craft time, which limits their choices in how and where they want to play. Staff make regular observations of the children as they play, and use these to identify children's progress and development needs. However, this information is not then always used effectively to ensure children are offered activities and opportunities which suit their learning styles, personal preferences and developmental requirements.

Children are confident when communicating, joining in enthusiastically at singing time and sharing their news and stories in front of a small group. They have some opportunities to engage in mark making, however, this tends not to be during practical activities to increase their interest and understanding. Numbers are sometimes used as children play, for example when making a hand-print with the paint children are encouraged to count how many fingers they can see. However, this is not extended for older children to encourage them to become engaged in

problem solving and simple calculation to challenge them further. Children enjoy using equipment, such as telephones and computers, helping them to become confident in using modern technology. They enjoy using paint with tools, such as feathers, to make patterns and access resources, such as paper, tape and glue to make their own models. However, these activities are sometimes a little overly adult directed, limiting opportunities for children to freely express their own creativity and use their imaginations.

There is a wide range of resources and equipment to extend children's physical development out of doors, which can be accessed at certain times by the children. Although children sometimes engage in music and movement activities indoors, there is sometimes limited floor space to enable younger children to move about freely in safety. Children learn positive procedures regarding personal hygiene through regular routines and discussion. They know to wash their hands at certain times during the day and enjoy the healthy snacks and meals they are offered. Children learn about safety within the nursery as they take part in practising the emergency evacuation procedure, ensuring they are confident in the arrangements should an incident occur.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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