

Little Apples Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY423938

Inspection date

02/09/2011

Inspector

Jenny Read

Setting address

Cunningham House, Christowe Lane, CHELTENHAM,
Gloucestershire, GL53 7BY

Telephone number

08454 222 260

Email

sarah.penston@glos.nhs.uk

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Little Apples Nursery is managed by Gloucestershire Hospitals National Health Service Trust for staff working at Cheltenham General Hospital. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. It transferred to its new two-storey, converted premises close to Cheltenham Hospital in 2011. The nursery consists of three base rooms downstairs and two base rooms upstairs for children under two years. There is a sleep room, two kitchens, a laundry room, staff room and office. There are three separate gardens for children of different ages, all with hard standing, impact absorbent and grass surfaces for outdoor play.

The nursery may care for a maximum of 75 children in the early years age group, of these, 25 may be under two years, at any one time. There are currently 93 children on roll. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. The trust employs 14 permanent staff, including the manager, deputy and housekeeper, and six bank staff who are available to call on at any time. The manager holds a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in Childcare Studies and is currently working towards Early Years Professional Status. The deputy and all other staff hold suitable childcare qualifications ranging between levels 2 and 5. One is currently working towards a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in Early Childhood Studies and the deputy a Foundation Degree in Early Years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, outcomes for children are good and effective arrangements exist to encourage their involvement in the nursery. Routines and procedures to promote children's safety and health are robust. Observation, assessment and planning are generally good. Partnerships are sound and positive links with parents help to involve them in their children's care and education generally well. The dedicated and enthusiastic management and staff team are self-critical, with thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery and how to address these, so showing a high level of commitment to driving and securing improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the observation, assessment and planning systems to offer more opportunities for children to do things in different ways and on different scales in the outdoor environment across the six areas of learning

- develop further the regular two-way flow of information with parents and other settings children attend to promote progression and continuity of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management and staff team show a high level of commitment to promoting children's safety and arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and regularly reviewed. There are effective security measures, including, a key pad entry system to each department, use of 'walkie talkies' and internal telephones in place. Extensive recruitment and vetting procedures, and good knowledge of the policies and procedures, are well implemented to promote children's welfare and safety. Documentation which is required for the promotion of children's health, safety and welfare, and the safe efficient management of the provision, is well maintained.

Staff promote diversity generally well to help children begin to understand the society they live in through celebrating and learning about cultural festivals. Staff foster close links with parents, which enables all parties to collaborate in meeting children's individual care and learning needs. Consequently, staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and prompt action is taken in identifying a child's need for additional support. Children benefit from stimulating, warm and colourful play areas inside that are extremely well resourced, conducive to learning and well cared for. Overall, outcomes are clearly attributable to good quality resources and highly effective staff deployment to provide a good level of supervision. The wide range of resources and interesting play materials are stored at low level so that the children can exercise their own independent choice throughout the day.

Leaders and managers are ambitious and consistently communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement. Morale is high and the motivated and well-qualified staff team channel their efforts to good effect to support children's learning and provide good quality care. Processes for managing the performance of staff, and for their professional development, are implemented successfully through good access to training, yearly appraisals and regular senior management, department and staff meetings. Using those in conjunction with realistic and challenging action plans that are communicated well to staff, shows confidence and a good knowledge about what the nursery needs to do to improve to meet and sustain further development; for example, identifying steps to improve the planning and use of resources, across all areas of learning, in the outside areas to maximise children's learning and development.

Partnerships are satisfactory. Communication with other providers and partners supporting children with special educational needs is purposeful, although this is in its infancy for other children attending other settings. The prospectus, parent handbook, regular newsletters, use of email and numerous notice boards, keep parents well informed about most aspects of the nursery and up-to-date about the

main events that are taking place. Occasional parent evenings, easy access to their children's learning journey in some rooms, displaying the activity plans, food and nappy charts and daily informal discussion, provide parents with satisfactory information on how well their children are achieving, their wellbeing and development.

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

Children play in a welcoming and stimulating environment indoors and they are provided with a variety of interesting activities and fun experiences, which enable them to make good progress in their learning and development. Good planning overall ensures that most children are well challenged by the learning experiences provided. Strong emphasis is given to some key elements within each area of learning including language for communication, numbers as labels for counting, and exploring media and materials. Activities are based upon children's interests, suitable observations and assessment and matched to most children's individual needs. However, observations, assessments and planning differ in quality throughout the nursery. This is because processes to identify, track and monitor children's next steps and variations in their learning styles across the six areas of learning, especially in the outdoor environment, are not fully established.

Children make some choices about the activities they engage in and display pictures of their chosen activity on the visual daily routine. Children display a strong sense of belonging and security within the nursery and all appear settled and happy, as the staff are friendly, loving and engage purposefully in their play. Children's good behaviour is encouraged through positive praise and frequent reinforcement of the golden rules that they help to devise. As a result, they are confident, show good levels of self-esteem, and build strong relationships with both adults and their friends. Children have fun together as they actively participate in the 'hokey cokey' action rhyme during daily 'stretch and grow' and share their news in large and small groups. They respond well to staff's kind and positive interaction; for example, effective questioning enables them to recall how they watched and helped to clean and feed the African snail. Children sit comfortably sharing books, using gestures, sounds and facial expressions to communicate.

Children are beginning to learn fundamental skills that support future learning, such as using the touch pad to negotiate programmes on the laptop. Opportunities to use and extend their skills outside are satisfactory. Staff introduce and model how to use new tools and equipment, such as a hole puncher and they intelligently extend children's interest in making holes in the paper. Children readily explore various media and materials, including investigating porridge oats, salt dough and making marks and patterns in paint using vehicles, brushes or their hands. Pre-school children show confidence with numbers. They count, recognise and write numerals beyond ten to show how many children are present at meal times and circle times. Effective questioning and purposeful adult support enables them to

predict what number comes next when reviewing the day, date and weather.

Children's health is effectively promoted as they are encouraged to adopt good personal hygiene routines and understand the importance of healthy eating. They show some ownership of their health and wellbeing and increasing independence in washing their hands after snacks, using the toilet facilities and messy play activities. Healthy eating topics, helping staff to put on their sun cream and hats, and engaging in regular exercise and physical activities extend children's understanding about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Robust safety precautions and good levels of supervision help keep the children safe, both inside and out. Staff actively encourage children to recognise and confidently talk about dangers and how to keep themselves safe. Children practise the escape plan, are given clear explanations for safe play and complete their own daily risk assessments alongside staff.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

