

Ashton House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	17/11/2011
Inspector	Sylvia Cornock
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Ashton House Nursery has been operating since 1988 and became a limited company and re-registered in 2007. It operates from a large detached property within its own grounds in Ashton Hayes, Chester. Areas used are age-appropriate rooms on the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local community and wider area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

A maximum of 168 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. not more than 54 may be under two years. The setting serves the local and surrounding areas, and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 582 children on roll. Of these, 254 children are aged under eight years and of these 232 are within the early years age group. Of these, 53 are in receipt of funding for early education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 52 members of staff, including the manager, 43 of whom work directly with the children. Most staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, one staff member holds the Early Years Professional Status, three hold teaching qualifications, one holds National Vocational Qualification Level 4, 18 staff hold NVQ level 3, five staff hold NVQ level 2, five hold Nursery Nurse Examination Board (NNEB). Six staff members are currently undertaking NVQ Level 3 and two undertaking NVQ level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare needs are rigorously safeguarded. The staff are very professional and show high levels of commitment as they aspire to maintain the highest possible standards of care and education. The setting's superb stimulating and challenging environment enables children to develop independent, active learning as they have fun. Children are valued as unique individuals and a strong inclusive ethos threads through all aspects of the setting. Children make outstanding progress within their individual learning journey, which is imaginatively shared through superb partnerships with parents and carers. The nursery continuously improves through well developed rigorous self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending further opportunities for children to work alongside artists and other creative adults so that they see at first hand different ways of expressing and communicating ideas and different responses to media and materials.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The superb management team ensure the safety and welfare of children is given high priority throughout the nursery. The safeguarding, complaints and emergency procedures are robust and known to all staff. Rigorous staff recruitment, employment and induction procedures are in place to protect children. Staff undertake daily risk assessments and safety checklists, to ensure that the environment is always safe, clean and fit for use. Robust risk assessments for all outings are undertaken and completed, to ensure children's safety. Staff are highly motivated and management consistently aspire to maintain high quality care and education for children. For example, all staff are fully involved in the continuous improvement of the nursery through self-evaluation. The staff focus on promoting children's welfare and helping all to make outstanding progress through the provision of excellent resources and learning opportunities. Management and staff evaluate the outcomes for children on a daily basis to ensure that the service continues to effectively improve.

Most staff are well qualified and experienced, annual appraisal systems and supervision systems are in place to support staff and identify future training needs. Staff work superbly as a team because they feel valued, supported and involved within the nursery. Records, policies and procedures are robust and organized well to support an highly effective service. The partnership with parents and carers is superb. Each child's key person works closely with parents and carers to secure a excellent understanding of each child's needs. The setting supports families and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities superbly to ensure specific needs are met. Parents and carers of all children are included in what their child is doing, and are encouraged to continue this at home so that they too can enjoy seeing their child develop. The provider liaises superbly with other settings and carers to ensure the progression and continuity of learning supports the transition of children as they move on to school.

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

Staff organise the dynamic environment, space, resources and outdoor experiences with great skill. The excellent daily records kept of children's progress ensure that the six areas of learning capture children's interests. For example, children suggest a 'rally' using the wheeled toys in support of a national charity event. Staff help the

children design the superb race track. They use recycled tyres with chequered start and finishing lines. All children including the babies and toddlers take part as they look for a number of charity mascots on route to raise money. Excitement from all as they receive their certificate of completing the course. This activity is further developed as they view actual adult-sized racing cars. Children receive an extremely rich and stimulating play experience, with a well balanced mix of adult-led and child-initiated play. They make significant gains in their learning and development and achievement is excellent in relation to individual starting points. Staff focus on children's personal, social and emotional development. There is an emphasis on self-esteem. Staff make great use of praise and confidence building to successfully teach children to behave well, respond enthusiastically and play cooperatively. The superb range of resources is expertly used to enhance children's communication, language and literacy skills. Older and more able children are competent in the recognition of numbers and letters. They view their names and observe labels and print representing words. They show an ability and understanding of sign language.

Children's creative and physical skills, their problem-solving skills and their understanding of the world develop well as they engage in a variety of activities suitable for their age and stage of development. They enjoy extensive opportunities to design and make objects using recycled materials. However, opportunities for children to work alongside artists and other creative adults so they see at first hand different ways of expressing and communicating ideas are less well developed. They select and explore the sounds of musical instruments from other cultures and countries. Children really benefit from the superb outdoor areas; they play, view the gardens, grow vegetables and enjoy the environment around them.

Children's welfare is promoted to a consistently high level. Staff blend daily routines and activities expertly together so that children acquire competency, confidence and independence in all areas. For example, children are taught how to be safe through activities, discussions and practicing emergency evacuations of the building. The setting promotes healthy eating and provides children with an understanding of what is good for them, through offering healthy meals and snacks. Children celebrate different festivals and engage in activities to support their understanding of other cultures. The setting focuses upon emotional and physical health, and cultural diversity, as they embrace and welcome everyone into a wholly inclusive environment. As a result, children exhibit excellent skills. They know how to act safely indoors and outdoors, make healthy eating choices and adopt good personal hygiene.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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