

Ashcroft & Ramridge Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY278843
Inspection date	23/03/2012
Inspector	Susan Marriott

Setting address	186 Ashcroft Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 9AB
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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

Ashcroft and Ramridge Community Nursery is privately owned. The nursery opened in 2004 and operates from three rooms in a purpose-built building on the site of Ramridge Primary School in Luton, Bedfordshire. The nursery serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The nursery is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am till 6pm for 48 weeks of the year and provides funded nursery education for two, three and four-years olds. The nursery also provides wrap-around care for 10 children. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 78 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 members of child care staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery manager is working towards her Early Years Professional Status. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The nursery is part of a Children's Centre and provides additional services which are run on satellite sites. These provide health and education promotion for families as well as training for parents.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery has assembled an enthusiastic staff team of high calibre. They work very hard to implement the essence of the Early Years Foundation Stage creating a very welcoming nursery with a lovely atmosphere where every person is made to feel welcomed, included and important. The nursery is an exceptionally safe, secure and stimulating place where children make rapid progress in their learning and development and have tremendous fun in the process. Their individual needs are fully met within this highly inclusive setting and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well-supported. Partnership working with other professionals and parents is extremely well-established. Passionate, committed leadership and honest, realistic self-evaluation and a genuine desire to improve, secures the setting's excellent capacity for continuous 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:

- extending practical opportunities to develop children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills with particular reference to calculating.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The senior management team demonstrate an infectious enthusiasm for their work which significantly enhances all aspects of children's care, learning and welfare. The nursery is led and managed in a highly effective way and the manager is extremely supportive of her staff. There is a very clear structure of regular management meetings in place which ensures that standards within the nursery are monitored effectively. Safeguarding requirements are robustly met and all staff are suitably cleared to work with children. The manager has direct experience of making referrals under the safeguarding procedures and attends regular meetings to support children and their families. Security measures are outstanding, the identity of all visitors is checked before admitting them to the premises and the presence of visitors is suitably recorded. Thoroughly detailed risk assessments are carried out visually on a daily basis and written assessments are devised for every area of the nursery. All required documentation is readily accessible and effectively underpins the exceptionally safe and efficient management of the setting.

There is clear evidence of strong parental engagement and highly effective working relationships with partner professionals which enables the nursery to tailor activities to the individual needs of children in their care. The nursery is fully inclusive and meets the needs of all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are highly successful in securing appropriate help and support for every child, during their time in the nursery and in preparation for transition to school. Policies and procedures are consistently implemented to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. The nursery represents the multi-cultural community it serves and challenges any stereotypical attitudes by staff, parents or children. For example, boys are comfortable running about dressed as fairies, and girls are happy to be wearing builder's hats.

The manager is passionately committed to her vocation and receives enthusiastic support from her dedicated and loyal staff. They deploy themselves in a highly effective manner to ensure that children are constantly well-supervised as they move around the indoor and outdoor environment. Continuing staff development is vitally important in this vibrant nursery and the resultant enhancement of staff skills and knowledge contribute substantially towards the rapid progress the children make. The nursery makes outstanding use of the space available and ensures that the six areas of learning are reflected equally outside and as well as indoors. Parents are actively encouraged to share their skills, knowledge and culture with the children. Children's time at nursery is greatly enhanced by the commendable key worker system in place. All staff demonstrate a clear sense of responsibility for their key children and for liaison with their parents.

Both the owner and manager have a clear understanding of their roles and they show an overwhelming commitment to improving and developing standards within all areas of the nursery. They work in close partnership with other professionals and immediately act on any suggestions made or advice given. Many improvements to the provision since the last inspection have had an extremely positive impact on the overall quality of the provision and the outcomes for children. For example, tracking information showed that the babies and older children were not achieving at the expected levels. A re-structuring of the nursery resulted in the separating of the two and three-year-olds. Consequently, staff have observed concentration levels and focus of the three-year-olds improving substantially, along with the language development of the babies. Management has developed exceptionally reflective practice to monitor the quality of provision for children through regularly updated self-evaluation and this secures the nursery's outstanding capacity for continuous improvement.

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

Children are extremely well-supported in their learning within this delightful nursery. Their individual needs are always taken into account and effectively met. Consequently, the staff successfully implement the spirit and ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery provides experiences based on children's play to support children to learn with enjoyment and challenge and ensure there is a perfect balance between child-led and adult-led play based activities. The nursery provides a superior learning environment which significantly promotes children's progression towards the early learning goals.

Children have outstanding opportunities for fresh air and exercise. The nursery ensures that all children, including the babies, can free-flow to the outdoor area whenever they want and staff provide outdoor activities which represent the six areas of learning. For example, children gaze in awe and wonder as staff show them a bowl of frogspawn and they begin to learn about the life cycle of the frog. The manager has many ideas to enhance the garden area even further for the benefit of the children. For example, she wants to develop growing beds and a sensory area. Children develop their physical skills effectively as they ride their wheeled toys and they use their imagination as they search for treasure in the sand or play with dinosaurs in the floor tray.

Children form good relationships with adults and peers. They work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly. Children develop exemplary social skills, are well-mannered and polite. Every Child's a Talker is a government project used to promote children's speech and language within the nursery. All children within the setting are familiar with the puppet 'Signing Sam' and use signing throughout the day, during circle time, story time, and singing, as well as during conversation with staff. Children enjoy singing along to number rhymes and shape rhymes. Nevertheless, the manager agrees that there is scope to improve the use of visual aids to help children to learn about simple calculation, such as one more or one

less. Exceptionally effective planning systems ensure that the next steps are collated and fed back into the subsequent plans. Activities are evaluated daily and observational notes are recorded in an extremely manageable format to enable staff to track children's progress and identify the next steps in their learning. Careful tracking shows that although children make rapid progress in the nursery, less emphasis is given to the promotion of children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills with particular reference to calculating.

Children are extremely well-nourished by the healthy meals and snacks provided. Children are well-behaved because staff set consistent, clear boundaries for expected behaviour. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they practise fire drills regularly and ensure that they wear their 'hard hats' in the outdoor construction area. Caring staff are exceptionally alert to the signs of special educational needs and offer early intervention to support such children. They are justly proud of their achievements with particular children. Opportunities to develop independence and use simple technology ensure that children develop very good skills for the future, with a majority of children moving onto their next stage of learning with 'above age of development'.

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