

Abacus Childrens Nurseries LTD

Balcarres, Southfleet Avenue, Longfield, Kent, DA3 7JG

Inspection date	12/11/2012
Previous inspection date	16/02/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The gentle, calm staff provide a nurturing environment which has a positive effect on children's well-being. Caring relationships are forged and staff meet the children's physical needs well, so they are safe, emotionally secure and happy.
- The staff provide interesting experiences based on their thorough understanding of children's interests. As a result children enjoy their play and are gaining useful skills for their future lives.
- There is a strong emphasis on monitoring practice and staff development. Staff have positive attitudes to training, which helps continually improve their practice and provision for the children.
- There are positive relationships with parents. Staff successfully engage parents in their child's learning, particularly in supporting early speech, language and communication skills.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not fully support children to understand what is healthy to eat and why.
- Staff do not make the best possible use of the garden to support children's understanding of the natural world.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the children participating in activities and interacting with staff in three play rooms and outside.
The inspector sampled records and documentation relating to children's progress and development, safeguarding, staff records, self-evaluation and communication with parents.
- The inspector observed the daily routine and practice and discussed the organisation and management of the service with the manager and provider.
- The inspector discussed risk assessment with the manager and inspected the areas used by the children.
- Parents' views were taken into account through interviews during the inspection.

Inspector

Denys Rasmussen

Full Report

Information about the setting

Abacus Children's Nursery Ltd, Longfield is one of two settings run by Abacus Children's Nurseries Ltd. The nursery registered on the Early Years Register in 2005 and is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from three rooms

in a detached building in New Barn, Longfield, Kent. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 38 children in the early years age range on roll. Children come from the local and wider communities. The nursery employs seven staff. Six staff, including the provider and manager, are suitably qualified and working towards further qualifications. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the garden to maximise every opportunity to support children's understanding of the natural world, for example, through undertaking investigations.
- increase opportunities for children to understand what foods are healthy to eat and why, such as through discussing healthy options and a healthy diet during times when children are eating

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The nursery staff provide a broad range of experiences, especially indoors, that capture children's interest and cover required areas of learning well. Children are keen to join in with the play activities and resources offered and staff allow them considerable freedom to decide what they want to play with or make. This system means children enjoy their play and are well-motivated to learn. They gain positive attitudes to learning, which are useful as they move through the nursery and for when they eventually start school. Children enjoy using the garden, particularly for active play, but this area is not used as well as possible to help children learn about the natural world around them.

Staff start the process of finding out about the children prior to their admission. This means that right from the first day at nursery staff know what activities children enjoy and can provide the right environment to help them settle in quickly. Staff treat each child as an individual with their own interests and personalities. They know the children well from observing their play and regularly completing progress records that are shared with parents. Parents' contributions are valued, and staff take account of what children's interests are at home when deciding what children need to learn next. This means that

future learning builds on what children already know, understand and can do. This means that they are not expected to do things beyond their capabilities, and remain interested in what is offered.

Children of all ages make good progress from their starting points because staff support their play well and provide a good balance of child-led and adult-led activities. Younger children play alongside each other happily, such as when sharing bricks to build towers and houses, showing their developing hand control. Staff follow the children's lead, skilfully extending vocabularies and including early mathematical language, as children persevere to build what they wish.

In the pre-school room, staff provide a good range of books and children clearly have favourite stories. Their positive attitudes towards using books stem from staff reading captivating stories well and using good strategies to engage the children, even when in a larger group. Staff 'miss out' a page of a familiar story, for example, and children quickly declare 'You've missed a page!' Children learn to listen carefully, repeat refrains and learn initial letter sounds through such experiences, and by learning nursery rhymes. Again, all children are gaining useful attributes for their move to full time education. Some of the skills used by staff stem from making use of knowledge gained through national initiatives for improving young children's basic literacy.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The nursery staff implement an effective 'key person' system whereby each child and their family is allocated a member of staff to take particular responsibility for them. This system helps children to settle quickly, and to feel emotionally secure and happy, so that they are confident, and can get the most from the experiences provided. Staff use the system well, not only to support children when they change rooms within the nursery, but also when they eventually leave and move to other early years settings. Children build close, trusting relationships with their special member of staff, who understands and meets their individual needs, including meeting their physical requirements. Parents interviewed commented on the 'friendly and caring staff', all being well aware of their family's specific key person.

Staff promote children's good health and their safety well. Children contribute busily to mealtime preparations taking on responsibilities such as fruit preparation and laying tables. Staff make these occasions sociable times, engaging children in discussions about what story they would like later, showing that they value children's contributions, so boosting their confidence and self-esteem. Staff provide healthy meals and snacks but do not pick up on chances to discuss what foods are healthy and why, to support children's understanding of healthy lifestyles. Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe and extend this learning well by inviting in outside specialists, such as a community support officer, to talk about 'stranger danger'.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

The leadership and management implement robust vetting and recruitment procedures that help ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Their ongoing suitability is clearly tested through induction, supervision and appraisal systems. Staff have attended training in safeguarding and understand the procedures to follow, taking effective steps to protect children. Risk assessment is effective and subject to review to maintain children's safety. For example, the garden hedge has been cut to provide staff with a clearer view of the area and staff deployment here has been reassessed to ensure proper supervision of children at all times.

The leadership and management give good attention to driving and sustaining improvement through staff training and professional development. Areas for improvement are identified in response to the needs of the children, the nursery, individual staff and national initiatives. Training is planned accordingly, showing the provider's good understanding of their responsibilities to implement the learning and development requirements. Staff use newly acquired skills and understanding well. After attending training on how to support boys' learning in particular, they improved their practice in regard to them. Additionally, staff have attended training on how to implement the new progress checks for children aged two years. The current useful assessment systems and the good relationships with parents, mean the processes are already in place for these checks to be undertaken. The effective systems for performance management mean staff remain motivated to continue to improve in their practice in order to support all children as needed.

Relationships with outside professionals, including other early years providers and local authority advisors, are effective. The views of parents and children are sought and acted on to help evaluate and improve the nursery provision. Children suggested having table clothes and vases of flowers on tables for mealtimes, which staff then provided. Such attention to their views helps the nursery provide children with the care and attention they need to gain the right approach to learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs
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		of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY309106
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	890783
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	36

Name of provider	Abacus Children's Nurseries LTD
Date of previous inspection	16/02/2009
Telephone number	01474 702190

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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