

Abacus Nursery & Out of School Club Dawley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	208157
Inspection date	11/11/2008
Inspector	Olwen Pulker
Setting address	Abacus Day Nursery, 10-12 High Street, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2ET
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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.

Description of the setting

Abacus Nursery and Out of School Club opened in 1999. It is located within a two storey building on the main street of Dawley in Telford. There is level access to the nursery rooms and outside play area. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 76 children at any one time on the Early Years Register and 32 on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. In addition the nursery is registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register for children over eight years.

Children attend for a variety of sessions including before and after school and during school holidays. The nursery serves the local community and is open each weekday from 07.30 to 17.45 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to enclosed outdoor play areas. There are currently 66 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage on roll. Of these, 30 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff. Eight of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and the remaining four are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Staff promote children's care, learning and welfare well and children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. An inclusive environment is provided for all children. Staff constantly strive to improve the experiences of the children who attend the nursery. The manager is putting in place a formal self-evaluation process to monitor practice throughout the nursery. This process will involve staff, parents and children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the systems of observational assessment to support provision of experiences which help children progress towards all the early learning goals
- ensure that the outside play area is secure in relation to the uncovered section at the bottom of the gate.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff work well as a team and have regular meetings and appraisals when training needs are identified. The manager has formulated a questionnaire for staff to address the strengths and weaknesses of the setting to include them in the self-

evaluation process and all are enthusiastic about their role in making the improvements happen. Parents have also been included in the self-evaluation process through questionnaires and the children are to be given disposable cameras to photograph their favourite things within the nursery to inform planning for future improvements. These are seen as important elements of the process to continually improve the setting.

As well as the self-evaluation process the parent partnership is also developed through the key person system which helps staff meet the needs of individual children and provides a strong link with home, through daily diaries and the sharing of the children's profiles. Partnerships in the wider context are used to develop the quality of education and care. Links with local authority staff are used to gain ideas about best practice and the sound link with one of the local schools, which some children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend, ensures continuity for the children and promotes their welfare.

Children are safeguarded well. There is a robust system in place for security and main long-term risk assessments and risk assessments for all types of outings are in place. Daily visual safety checks are completed of all indoor and outdoor areas which the children access to ensure their safety. Children benefit from the effective maintenance of records, policies and procedures which promote positive outcomes. The provider has improved the setting's documentation to ensure that previous recommendations have been dealt with for example, the written safeguarding procedure has been amended to ensure that staff are up-to-date with current local safeguarding procedures so any concerns about children in their care can be addressed promptly.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted well through the provision of healthy diets and robust hygiene practices. They have access to drinking water throughout the day and the nursery discourages parents from sending squash or fizzy drinks for the children. Mothers wishing to breast feed are made welcome and supported to feed their babies in comfort. Children are shown how to keep themselves safe through clear rules and timely reminders from staff help prevent accidents. However, the outside play area is not entirely secure as children could exit via the gap at the bottom of the gate.

The nursery uses everyday routines as a way of promoting children's independence for example, all become involved in putting toys away and children in pre-school clear away their plates and cutlery after lunch. Mealtimes are social occasions with staff engaging children in conversation during which they share news about their interests and home life. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are appropriately cared for with activities creatively adapted as is required.

Children are provided with suitable opportunities to help them make good progress across all areas of learning and development. Staff use their sound knowledge of how children learn to plan a flexible programme of play opportunities. Children respond readily to activities and are keen to engage with staff who regularly praise

and congratulate them on their progress and achievements to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The children behave well; they share and play companionably together and are learning to be mindful of others' feelings. Staff use good questioning and consolidation techniques to prompt children's critical thinking and independence. This encourages children to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes which promotes their progression throughout the breadth of the framework. Staff are beginning to use their observational assessments to inform future plans for individual learning. They share information with parents about their child's progress, themes and topics. Parents are able to view their children's profiles at any time and are invited to share their skills and talents in the setting and become involved in their children's learning.

Children are content as they play. Younger children explore and experiment with a good range of resources such as pop-up toys, activity centres, soft play and construction equipment. Staff interact appropriately with them; they maintain eye contact and get down to the children's level as they play with them. Staff read stories to children and they have easy access to books which they look at independently. Children learn about the wider world through walks in the local community to visit the park and library. They are able to see and discuss aspects of nature, for example, by growing, harvesting and eating their own vegetables or going on a bug hunt. Even younger children have opportunities to use natural elements in their play through the use of sand, bubbles and oatmeal. Children have ample space to move around both inside and outside. Various festivals are celebrated to introduce children to other cultures and where children speak English as an additional language their home languages are valued. The walls are used to display a range of creative craft work which values the children's achievements.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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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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