

The Ambleside Centre

The Ambleside Centre, Ambleside Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4JJ

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

15/05/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Children interact with adults confidently and demonstrate an effective understanding of the routines.
- The nursery environment is welcoming and inviting with toys easily accessible to children. This enables them to initiate their own play and ideas.
- Staff are friendly and provide a calm atmosphere for children. They involve themselves in children's play and activities following the children's lead.
- The management team have high aspirations for the children and staff. Robust self-evaluation processes gain feedback from staff, parents and children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always fully extend children's learning through their play and interaction with them. Support for children's developing self-care skills is not always consistent.
- Support for children's developing self-care skills is not always consistent.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- At the inspection, an additional inspector accompanied the lead inspector.
 - Discussions were held with the centre manager, the nursery manager, staff, children and a small number of parents/carers.
 - A joint observation was undertaken with the nursery manager.
 - The inspectors observed children's play and activities indoors and outside.
- A selection of written records were viewed at the inspection, including self-
- evaluation documents, suitability records, parental questionnaires and records relating to children.

Inspector

Sheena Bankier

Full report

Information about the setting

The Ambleside Centre registered in 2004. It is operated by the governing body of the centre. The centre is situated in Woodley, near Reading, Berkshire. It offers day care for children within the 'Pastures' nursery for children aged three months to the term following their third birthday. Children can then transfer to the 'Meadows' local authority maintained nursery situated within the centre, which offers wrap around and holiday care. The children's centre offers a variety of services including drop in groups, a toy library and adult educational services.

The Pastures nursery is open for 48 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm. Children may attend for a variety of sessions, including morning, afternoon and all day. Children are cared for in a self-contained area in an open plan room with an adjoining sleep room, toilets and kitchen facilities. There is access to an outdoor play area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of free early years education funding for children aged two- and three-years-old in the Pastures nursery. There are currently 57 children on roll in the early years age group.

The centre employs a manager who oversees the management of the centre including the nursery and a nursery manager. A further 11 staff are employed to work directly with the children in the Pastures nursery. The centre manager and nursery manager hold qualifications at level 6 and above. The centre manager is working towards a Masters degree in Education and Leadership and the nursery manager is working towards a Masters degree in Childhood and Youth studies. Nine staff hold recognised childcare qualifications, two staff hold level 2 qualifications, six hold level 3 qualification and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 6. Three staff are working towards gaining or furthering qualifications. Additional staff are employed at the centre, including administration staff, a domestic assistant and cleaners.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's further learning experiences through using daily routines, staff interactions and activities, for example, using counting with the younger children and by staff using questioning techniques more consistently

- provide consistent opportunities for children to use their independent self-care skills, such as at snack and lunchtime.

Inspection judgements

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

Home visits and initial observations on entry to the nursery enable key persons to establish children's starting points securely. They gain a good range of information from parents about their children's needs on entry to the nursery and continually exchange information with them. As a result, this promotes a consistent approach to supporting children's ongoing progress. The nursery offers a wide range of information to parents, such as photo boards of activities with information about how these support children and ideas for activities to try at home. Parents and children are invited to 'stay and play' sessions, including on a Saturday, which enables all parents to take an active part in their children's learning. These measures build strong relationships with parents and support parents effectively in helping their children progress well. Staff complete ongoing observations of children's progress and identify their next steps in learning. The open and effective communication across the staff team means that there is clear sharing of this information, which enables all staff to provide support to children.

Children progress effectively from their starting points and develop their skills and abilities ready for the next stage in their learning. The quality of teaching is strong and staff engage in children's play and learning securely, overall. They follow children's lead and interests to support their learning well. For example, a child indicates they wish to mark make with a paintbrush and water and staff help them to fill a bucket with water. Staff model language to children very well when talking to them during play and activities. However, at times staff do not always make consistent use of questions to further support children and extend their thinking skills. Children learn about numbers and mathematical concepts through different activities. For example, they sing number songs and staff show children actions in relation to positional language. Children develop their small physical skills and eye and hand coordination as they spoon oats into containers using spoons. Staff develop children's understanding of size as they talk about the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears as they play. However, staff do not always make the best use of routines particularly in relation to developing babies awareness of number and counting, such as counting their hands when cleaning them.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating different types of sensory materials. They talk excitedly about how the water has 'flooded the sand' and observe the changes to it. Children, babies and younger toddlers enjoy music and songs with musical instruments and ribbons. This stimulates their sensory development and promotes their language skills through songs and rhymes. Children use their large physical skills as they negotiate large-scale apparatus both indoors and outside. For example, children balance on the large construction, scale the slope to go down the slide and learn to balance, and use steps at the nappy changing station.

There are strong procedures in place for supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff make effective use of the integrated services of the children's centre, such as seeking support and advice from the centre's special educational needs coordinator or the speech and language therapist. Through ongoing discussions in

the staff team and with the managers about children's progress, they identify any gaps in development and quickly take action to close these. Staff implement individual education plans when needed to target support for children. They monitor and support children's language development through using the 'Every Child a Talker' programme. As a result, children progress strongly in their language skills. Staff provide positive support for children who are learning English or using it alongside other languages. Key words in home and other languages children speak are gained and staff use these at appropriate times with the children. Visual images including words in other languages and photographs of children's routines and activities promote an inclusive approach.

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

Staff provide a warm, caring and calm environment for children, which enables them to feel safe and secure. Children have a key person allocated to them at the time of entry. The key person has a co-key person, which supports children consistently. The family feel and approach to the nursery means that all staff spend time with all the children through the day. This builds positive relationships throughout the nursery. The key person takes responsibility for their key children, such as care routines including nappy changes and there are group key times for activities. This builds secure relationships with the children. Babies' home routines are closely followed, such as sleep times. This promotes their sense of security as they follow a familiar routine. Staff have a clear understanding of the comforters babies need at these times, helping them to settle to sleep. They carry out regular checks on sleeping babies to promote their safety and well-being.

Children settle easily on arrival as they are welcomed warmly along with their parents by staff. Parents are welcome to stay to settle their children and there is time for parents and staff to exchange information. This means staff gain ongoing information about children's individual needs. Effective processes support children thoroughly as they move from the nursery to the local authority maintained Meadows nursery. The children are able to constantly view the Meadows nursery as there are windows that separate the two provisions. This means children become familiar with the staff and environment from an early age. Staff from both nurseries meet to discuss children's individual needs and progress. As a result, the Meadows staff benefit from in depth information to support children at this time of change. Children visit the Meadows nursery, which develops their confidence very well to manage the change in their learning environment.

Children build positive relationships with staff and each other. They form friendships with other children and are learning to play cooperatively. Children's behaviour is good and they are beginning to negotiate with each other and take turns with little adult support. Staff provide effective role models to children as they model good manners and are calm. Children develop strong levels of confidence, for example, they approach new adults and ask them questions and demonstrate a sense of curiosity. Children receive positive praise and encouragement, which supports their self-esteem effectively. Staff support children's awareness and understanding of their safety through reminding them about safe practices, such as using the slide safely.

Children initiate their own play and activities as the toys are freely available to them. They benefit from interesting and well considered resources and activities that support their learning and development effectively. Individual named art boards value the children's own work. Resources reflect the diversity of the children attending the nursery, such as the music which is played and the use of dual language books. Children choose where they wish to play in the open plan room and all children spend time in the outdoor area, where they benefit from fresh air and physical activity.

Children demonstrate that they know they need to wash their hands at appropriate times, they go to the basins to wash their hands before eating with few prompts from the staff. Children enjoy healthy snacks and meals that promote their social skills as they eat together around the table with staff. They develop their independence as even the youngest children serve some of their own food. However, the older children do not always pour their own drinks at snack and meal times, which means that they do not consistently build on their self-care skills.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The managers demonstrate a secure understanding of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are highly qualified and provide effective role models to staff with their good practice. Staff receive ongoing strong support and mentoring to help them fulfil their roles and responsibilities. The managers undertake focused observations of practice and use team and one to one meetings to support and extend the professional development of staff. They undertake regular in house and external training to build and develop their practice further. Robust recruitment procedures check the suitability of new staff to work with children. Staff are within view of each other while working with the children and safeguard themselves effectively by ensuring other staff know where they are. They supervise children closely in the nursery and carry out daily risk assessments to promote children's safety. Staff have a secure understanding of child protection, including signs and symptoms that would raise their concerns and the appropriate steps to manage these. They receive regular training and refresher meetings to ensure their knowledge remains up to date. This promotes the strong safeguarding of children's welfare and well-being.

Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of how children learn and of implementing the learning and development requirements. They provide activities and play experiences that incorporate all areas of learning successfully. Staff monitor children's progress clearly through the recording of observations and assessments. For example, they complete progress checks for two-year-old children with their parents. As a result, there is a joint perspective of children's progress both at home and the setting. Managers and staff track funded two-year old children's progress thoroughly from the time of entry to the nursery in order to measure their progress. The implemented 'Every Child a Talker' programme monitors all children's language skills closely. Staff continually discuss all children's progress with managers and parents. As a result, they identify children's next steps in learning accurately and take steps to close gaps in their achievements.

Self-evaluation processes are robust. Staff, parents and children contribute to the process through a variety of ways. For example, managers and staff gain informal feedback through discussions with parents and children. Parents and staff complete questionnaires to gain their view formally. There are written self-evaluations focusing on the nursery and the whole centre, including development plans. These measures strongly identify the strengths of the whole centre provision and areas to develop and improve. The managers demonstrate a proactive approach to making improvements using the feedback they receive. As a result, they demonstrate an effective capacity to maintain continuous improvement. Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents have access to a wealth of information to support their understanding of the nursery service and the wider services available. For example, there is a website and a variety of information displayed within the centre. Communication with parents is thorough and staff exchange information with them continually. Parents have ongoing access to their children's progress records and are able to contribute their knowledge to these. This promotes a shared approach to supporting children's care and learning needs. Thorough links with the integrated services in the centre support children and parents significantly well. In addition, staff form positive links with other early years providers that care for children. This supports a consistent approach to meeting children's care and learning needs.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY284428
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	814713
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 3
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	The Ambleside Centre Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	0118 377 6444

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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