

Apple Tree Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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16/03/2010

Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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

Apple Tree Day Nursery was registered in 1998. It operates from purpose built premises in the Markfield area of Leicester and serves the local and surrounding areas. The setting is open for 51 weeks, opening times are from 7.15am until 6.00pm. There is also a Kidz Club available, taking children up to 12-years-old before and after school and for holiday care. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is registered to care for 45 children at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language. The nursery provides places for children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

There are eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification Level 2, with the exception of one practitioner. Three members of staff are also working towards an Early Years degree. The setting receives support from the local authority and holds an 'Investors in People' award.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are provided with high levels of care and make good progress in their learning and development. Practitioners offer an inclusive and welcoming service, supporting all children to actively participate in activities which meet their individual interests and developmental needs. Children are confident, independent and clearly enjoy their time at the nursery. The nursery is led by a motivated and experienced management team who embrace the process of self-evaluation and demonstrate a very positive attitude towards continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the two way flow of information with parents, this specifically relates to informing parents of practitioners' designated roles
- evaluate adult-led activities to ensure that the particular aspect of learning identified is delivered to support children's development towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team and practitioners work together as a motivated and cohesive team as they share a commitment to offering the best possible experiences to children and their families. Children are cared for by practitioners who have completed a wide range of training to ensure they have strong knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All practitioners have an accurate and up to date understanding of safeguarding children issues. The management team provides very clear guidance to the staff and a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures are in place to fully support the running of the nursery. Thorough risk assessments of the areas accessed by the children are conducted and children benefit from high levels of adult supervision and attention. Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people and all children, parents and visitors to the nursery receive a very warm welcome.

The management team strive to improve practice, consistently monitoring and evaluating the quality and standards at the nursery. Regular staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for practitioners to share good practice and to identify their training needs, which are prioritised by the management team. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully addressed and have had clear benefits to children's experiences at the nursery. For example, behaviour management is consistent and practitioners value and build upon children's existing skills. A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice at the nursery, ensuring all children can achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. The management team demonstrate a strong commitment to working with external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with additional and specific needs.

Partnership with parents is effective and the management team provide regular opportunities for parents to become involved in the life of the nursery. Parents are very well informed regarding their children's care and are welcomed and valued. Although links are strong, parents are not fully aware of practitioners' designated roles such as behaviour management and special educational needs. Partnerships with other settings are well established and make a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being. The nursery dedicates time for getting to know children and their families, fostering delightful relationships and helping to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure. The management team employ a whole group approach and are enthusiastic and passionate about their roles in raising standards for children. Children benefit from high levels of supervision and individual attention and they blossom at the nursery.

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

Practitioners demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to promote children's learning and development. An interesting and well-equipped environment successfully reflects children's backgrounds and the wider community. Comprehensive policies and procedures ensure that children are protected and well supported. Practitioners are very well deployed to enhance children's learning and welfare and they are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning. High quality planning and organisation ensure that every child is challenged by the learning experiences provided. Activities are well planned, based upon thorough and accurate observations and matched to the full range of children's needs. Practitioners are currently reviewing the way that adult-led activities are evaluated to ensure that the learning intentions are fully encompassed.

Children display a strong sense of belonging within the nursery and all appear settled and happy. Their behaviour is very good and children are beginning to show a good awareness of responsibility. For example, dressing themselves, wiping the tables, helping younger children and tidying away their toys. Children play and work alongside their peers harmoniously and build strong relationships. Children of all ages actively explore their surroundings with interest and receive an abundance of praise from practitioners. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world and are well equipped with the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children know what is expected of them and good quality interaction and well-organised routines help them to become secure and confident. Children show a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They participate in topics about healthy eating, engage in food tasting sessions and understand the importance of washing their hands. In addition, children are actively involved in recycling. Children adore growing fruit and vegetables in the outdoor play area and chopping vegetables for dinner. They willingly participate in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outside. Children take pleasure using the large play apparatus, flying kites and playing with bats and balls. Trips to the local quarry are very popular and children run around on the grass and climb the rocks. Indoors, children take pleasure using the soft play equipment indoors. They jump, climb and squeal in delight as they dive through tunnels, scale the ladder, hide in the ball pit and shoot down the slide.

Children of all ages regularly come across new and interesting challenges and learning is unmistakably fun. Children listen attentively to stories which are brought to life by practitioners with lots of expression and gestures. Water play is popular and children add toy animals and cars. They introduce sand to make a beach and push the cars through to make tracks. Children relish play baking and mix pasta and lentils, transferring the materials from one container to another. Children excitedly extend the activity outdoors by adding water and mud to their mixtures. Children learn about the world around them as they dig and find ants and worms. During the 'Good morning' session, children are encouraged to talk

and find out about the day, month, year and season and they talk about the weather.

Children experience different media and materials in the messy play area such as glue, paint, pasta, toothpaste and play dough. Information technology is promoted in a number of ways, for example, through computers, cash registers, remote control toys and cameras. Children learn about change as they observe ice melting, jellies setting, chocolate melting and caterpillars transforming into butterflies. The role play area is regularly transformed into new themes to incorporate children's interests, for example, a carwash, bear cave, jungle and garden centre. The 'Beat Baby' is extremely popular and children learn about rhythm; they clap and sing and giggle in delight. These are fun, interactive sessions and children add their own ideas, suggestions and actions to the songs. Children learn to become independent through secure relationships with their key person and all children belong and feel part of the group. The management team and practitioners are dedicated to their roles and create an inviting and inclusive atmosphere where children thrive.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met