

Audlen House Day Nursery

131 Station Road, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 4QH

Inspection date

10/02/2014

Previous inspection date

04/06/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The accuracy and rigour of the setting's assessments supports effective planning for each child's next steps in learning resulting in excellent levels of progress for all children.
- Partnership working with parents is strong supporting children's learning and development and well-being.
- Staff are enthusiastic about sharing new skills and they are extremely well supported by skilled and sensitive management. Consequently, children are keen and content learners, excited by life's opportunities.
- High aspirations and effective self-evaluation informs the setting's priorities and drives forward further improvements.
- Robust arrangements are in place for safeguarding children, including risk assessment of the premises, staff supervision and health and safety.

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.

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

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities across all areas of the nursery and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
- The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding, staffing, supervision, risk assessment and health and safety, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the nursery's systems for planning, evaluation and exchanging information with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day, and reviewed responses to a recent parent questionnaire.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and undertook a joint observation with the deputy manager.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Full report

Information about the setting

Audlen House Day Nursery registered in 2002. It is one of two privately owned nurseries. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 62 children on roll, all are within the early years age range. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The nursery welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. Children attend on a full time or part time basis and there is flexibility with the hours offered within each day. The nursery is open from 8 am to 6 pm throughout the year.

The nursery operates from a detached building situated near the town centre of Thatcham in Berkshire. It currently operates across two floors, with the older children using the upstairs rooms. The current large, enclosed garden at the rear includes designated outside play areas for each age group of children.

There are 12 members of staff And of these, one holds an honours degree and early years professional status and nine others have relevant early years qualifications at level 3. One member of staff is qualified at level 2 and currently training for level 3 and a second is a junior trainee. Two cooks are also employed by the nursery.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- Enhance opportunities for children to help make choices about their environment for example the newly refurbished play areas.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development in this happy and welcoming nursery. Highly reflective teaching and the delivery of inspiring activities, result in a rich learning environment for children of all ages. Staff take good care to establish all available information on each child's achievements, needs and care routines prior to their start at the nursery. Every child is allocated a key person who tailors care to meet the individual needs of individual children and their families. As a result children quickly settle in to nursery life. Staff use the knowledge they have of children's preferences and achievements to plan interesting activities.

All staff have very high expectations for themselves and for the children in their care, and

they are ably supported by well qualified and experienced early years teachers. Appropriate and exciting activities are planned on the basis of frequent observations and precise tracking of each child's progress. For example babies freely explore ball pools, noise makers, many baskets of different toys and photographs of their families and friends. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to strengthen physical skills for rolling and walking to reduce gaps and delays in babies' development. Babies make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and become competent communicators.

A clear focus remains on developing children's physical skills, personal, social and emotional development and communication and language within the toddler group. Detailed monitoring ensures next steps in children's learning are continually in focus and included in the week's planning of stimulating activities. Children enjoy planting bulbs and digging for worms in the outside vegetable plot. Children learn from the staff as they enthuse, question, adapt and evaluate their creations. They are happy and confident in their learning.

Staff provide excellent support to the older children who decide to change the role play area from a new baby clinic to a police station. Staff ensure there are a wide range of appropriate resources for children to dress themselves as police (or fire) officers and to share out enough hats for themselves and their team of staff. Children set up a little desk with a toy 'phone, paper and pencils and anything else they identify they need from their clearly labelled and accessible resource draws. Staff maintain children's enthusiasm for their plans by suggesting a 'search of the community' by building on their new skills in relay races in the outdoor play area. After a combined risk assessment of the garden, children work out the best race tracks to avoid puddles and slipping in muddy areas and staff hand out police hats to exchange in preference to batons. Children work together, planning and negotiating, adapting and moderating their ideas to make something happen. They learn to tolerate each other's different ideas and play fairly together. Consequently they have a lot of fun together, exercise well and finally resort to returning to a previous game of storytelling with their painted beanstalk prop at the giant's castle. This is a very rich learning environment for children who make excellent progress towards their early learning goals.

An extensive and highly productive range of strategies engage parents in their children's learning in the setting, at home and in the wider community. A series of parent notice boards provide information on educational programmes, routine practices to keep children safe and interesting links to support some of the projects in each age group. Parents learn more about their children's activities through regular new letters and make their own contributions through annual questionnaires and more regular personal contact. Daily menus and children's care routines are recorded and made accessible to parents. The home -preschool note book is also used effectively by many families who add their own photographs of activities from home so that children are supported to tell their news. Each child's key person invites parents into the nursery to learn about some of their new teaching strategies, celebrate special days and exchanged formal and informal update on their children. Progress checks for two-year-old children and reports to support children's moves to new pre-schools and schools are also completed together.

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

Children's behaviour illustrates how safe, secure and happy they feel in the presence of their key person and room team staff. Across the nursery, children turn to staff to share their successes and to reassure them. Staff make up rhymes to embed good practice as two-year-olds clean the germs from their hands before lunch, or travel through parts of the building near sleeping babies. Children sing a mix of new and traditional songs adding occasional signs, or words from a different language. Staff develop additional responsibilities and use their skills and training to further enrich the children's learning environment. This includes leaders for music and movement indoors and for the garden music area. Words are also translated into other languages that children in their care hear at home. On other occasions parents are welcomed in to help children dress up in saris, make German decorations or listen to a very competent violinist. Children learn to appreciate and value diversity as they are promoted so positively and in a context that makes sense to them. Staff are good role models and have clear and consistent expectations for children to love and respect the people around them.

Staff and management have turned the outdoor play area into a particularly inspiring and creative use of space. They are ever mindful of keeping children safe from harm. Consequently, fixtures and fittings are robust and staff always take out kit bags that anticipate all the potential scenarios raised in their comprehensive risk assessments. Babies have direct access on to a securely enclosed area of decking. They also use the toddler play area which, while substantial, is divided from the main play area with a low fence. Sandpits in both play areas are a good size for large groups of children to dig without undermining other children's constructions. Sandpits are covered from general garden debris and so they may be used in all weathers. Both outdoor play areas include appropriately sized apparatus to challenge children's physical skills and help them gain confidence in taking incremental risks in their exploits. Children are happy to play and learn in the outdoor space for as long as they can, as it is such a diverse and interesting place to be. A small shed houses cushions and story sacks, where children can retreat for a quiet read or puppet show. There is also an outdoor classroom, where equipment is on hand to magnify real mini-beasts, dig for worms or sow seeds in the extensive vegetable plot. Staff have designed these areas to encourage children to question and investigate the natural world, try new physical challenges and skills and benefit from plenty of fresh air. Children enjoy these experiences immensely.

Staff continue to develop children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy by taking advantage of daily snacks and mealtimes and offering plenty of cooking practice. Children learn increasing independence in their personal care as they gradually take on more responsibility for laying tables, pouring drinks and tidying dishes away. Water is available at all times, and children become increasingly skilled at preparing fruit and vegetables for their snacks. Specific dietary needs are clearly indicated and respected. Older children are excited by the cookery club where clever staff find recipes that use fruits or vegetables in dishes created around the world. This helps children understand more about diversity in the world around them while encouraging them to try new flavours in healthy dishes. Children make excellent progress towards adopting a

healthy life style from a very young age.

Careful preparation delivered through a highly effective key person system ensures that children are emotionally well prepared for their next ventures. Children's comprehensive learning journeys illustrate in detail their progress through the setting. A summary sheet records the time they have spent in each area of the nursery and each key person who knew them especially well. Staff also liaise with other pre-school settings as well as local schools to keep changes smooth and positive for children.

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

There is a clear and highly effective management structure at the nursery. Ideas and expertise are shared across the two partner nurseries where leadership is strong. The regional manager finds time to support her team, while driving a significant improvement project to extend the premises and outdoor play areas. Wiring is installed for cameras and a new monitoring system that will provide additional security inside and outside. Currently, parents speak into a transmitter to gain access to the building and baby monitoring in their sleep room is again through a radio transmitter with a visual indicator. Staff currently enter the room to check each baby every ten minutes and leave detailed records of their activities with each child. Older toddlers sleep on mattresses where attentive staff soothe and watch over them. Staff ratios and deployment are very good so that children receive a high level of individual care. Management have thorough systems in place to monitor the number and location of children and staff throughout the day. Both the manager and her deputy manager step in to supervise, teach and support staff and children alike. This gives them the flexibility to release staff to meet with parents and professionals as required. Children therefore receive care and learning that is more specifically tailored to their individual needs.

Staff are constantly improving their knowledge and practice through a targeted programme of professional development. Staff return from courses enthusiastic to share and try out new strategies with the rest of the team and raise achievements for all the children in their care. Staff work very effectively as a team, with managers clearly identifying individual strengths and fostering further confidence across an already very capable team. Recent training includes a focus on working with two-year-old children, 'communication friendly place', 'letters and sounds', 'sing and sign', and 'every child is a talker'. The management team moderate all the observations, next steps and progress that every staff member makes routinely. This enables them to assess the benefits of different teaching strategies, projects and resources. Management, staff and parents have good networks of additional support and guidance which support prompt and timely interventions. Any gaps in children's learning are therefore quickly addressed.

Children's care, welfare and learning are significantly enhanced by the highly effective way in which the nursery evaluates all that they do. Systems for vetting and recruiting new staff are robust. There are clear procedures for ensuring the suitability of those who work at the setting and to ensure they remain fit to do so through a thorough system of

induction training, appraisals and supervision. Staff regularly update their training in safeguarding children and the subject is included on the agenda of every staff meeting. Children are therefore in safe hands and parents express their confidence that procedures are in place to keep it that way. All mandatory documentation for the safe management of the nursery is in place and is accurately maintained. For example Ofsted has been kept informed of the nursery's plans to extend their premises, with further consultations imminent.

The setting has clear and well-understood policy and procedures for assessing any risks to children's safety. Routine procedures for risk assessments for all rooms are regularly completed within each room with staff responsible for identifying and assessing potential risks. Daily checks derive from these assessments to ensure that potential risks such as low hanging cords or wiring from electrical appliances are tied up firmly out of children's reach. Radiator guards are in place and window locks ensure that children cannot push windows far enough open to put them at any risk. Cleaning materials are also locked away so that children cannot access hazardous substances. Staff clean the premises themselves as by the end of each day the downstairs hall is often scattered with mud from wellies or bits from children's artwork. All doors are fitted with adult height windows so that staff have clear sight of activities on the other side of the door. There is also a door at the top of the stairs to secure the landing library area, where visual monitoring is also to be added to enhance observations of staff and children's activities. Staff and children practice emergency evacuation procedures twice a day as they use the outdoor facilities.

Partnerships with neighbours in the local community also promote equality, diversity, tolerance and understanding. The local vicar welcomed children and their parents in to the church to explore the nativity story and celebrate Christmas. The children also benefit from visits from a police officer, the local postman, a parent who is a dentist, and from visits to the vets and a local hairdresser's. One parent brought his dustcart to the nursery, and a local builder parked a digger on the drive for the children to explore. These links with the community help to place children firmly in their own world and extend their understanding of the services and people who help them. Children thrive due to the caring nature of all those around them and the wonderful experiences staff create to enhance their lives and learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

Met

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	EY100052
Local authority	West Berkshire (Newbury)
Inspection number	953891
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	62
Name of provider	Myrtle Tree Holdings Ltd
Date of previous inspection	04/06/2010
Telephone number	01635 876667

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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