

Ashby Castle Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Ashby Castle Day Nursery opened in 1996. The setting is one of three privately owned establishments and is located in the centre of Ashby-De-La-Zouch in Leicestershire. It operates from a purpose-built single storey building with an annex to the rear and includes seven rooms and associated facilities. All children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves children from the local and surrounding areas and children attend a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 74 children up to eight years may attend at any one time, of whom no more than 30 maybe under two years. Currently there are 142 children on roll in the early years group. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged three- and four-years-old.

The setting is open for 50 weeks of the year and sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The setting employs 34 staff who work directly with the children. Of these two hold the Early Years Professional Status, three hold qualifications at level 4 in early years, 19 hold qualifications at level 3 and eight hold qualifications at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is Outstanding.

Staff are extremely professional and endeavour to maintain the highest possible standards of safety, care and education. The exceptional organisation of the educational programme offers rich, varied and imaginative experiences that help children make outstanding progress in their learning and development. The organisation of resources is mostly highly effective to offer children choice. This highly stimulating and welcoming environment fully values the uniqueness of each child attending. There are excellent partnerships with parents and carers, professionals and agencies and the local feeder schools. Those in charge have extremely high aspirations for quality and consistently secure improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- making more freely available resources such as the arts and crafts, sand and water for children from 18 months to three years, to access at their own leisure.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented consistently to ensure any concerns are prioritised and dealt with effectively in relation to child protection issues. A designated team member who is very knowledgeable about child protection concerns takes a lead responsibility for safeguarding issues. All the key staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues and how to implement the safeguarding policy and procedures. Highly effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place. Consequently staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are well qualified and experienced. The organisation of the setting is exemplary to ensure an efficient and high quality service.

The assigned key worker system is excellent in ensuring children's individual needs are clearly understood, and as a result their needs are extremely well met. Teaching is rooted in expert knowledge of the learning and development requirements and a full understanding of how young children learn and progress. As a result, outcomes in children's achievement and well-being for all children are exceptionally high. The environment both indoors and outdoors is managed very well and outcomes are clearly attributed to the excellent use of resources in many of the rooms and the highly effective deployment of staff. A comprehensive equality and diversity policy outlines an excellent commitment to promoting inclusive practice. For example, staff plan motivating learning experiences according to children's individual learning styles and excellent provision is made to engage boys in early literacy. Assessment through high quality observations is rigorous and the information gained, is used effectively to track children's progress and guide planning. Consequently, children's levels of achievement are excellent in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Partnership with parents and carers is exceptional as staff discuss every aspect of their child's learning and development with them. They share extensive information at induction and throughout their child's stay. Parents and carers greatly benefit from the outstanding support and guidance they receive, to effectively be involved in their child's learning and achievements. For example, useful information packs and workshops about how to support potty training, manage behaviour and support children's language development are extremely well received by parents and carers. Parents and carers are heavily involved in decision making and shaping the service.

Those in charge have a clear and achievable plan for self-evaluation which is accurate, realistic and challenging. Leaders are exceptionally successful in inspiring the staff team to work towards meeting and sustaining ambitious targets across all areas of practice. As a result, an enthusiastic and happy staff team work exceptionally well to continually improve outcomes for children in their enjoyment, achievement and well-being.

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

Children make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported very well because this is given a clear focus from the beginning when a child first starts. All children, including babies, are very confident, show an extremely strong sense of belonging and develop strong relationships with adults. All children are involved, busy and occupied with the wide range of opportunities on offer to them, within this exciting and stimulating environment. Behaviour is exemplary due to the staff's consistent approach. Older children have a positive approach to learning and actively share their thoughts, ideas and what they enjoyed about the session, and this feedback is used well by staff to inform planning.

Children's communication, language and literacy is supported extremely well. Daily opportunities to initiate conversation and take account of what others say during circle time, story sessions and during activities, helps extend children communication skills well. Children build excellent foundations for early literacy through making sense of visual signs and symbols and use an extensive range of opportunities to engage in mark-making both indoors and outdoors. Daily singing sessions are warmly received by all the children including babies. Children enjoy these experiences due to the extended range of props and visual aids used to help sustain their interests.

Children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is fostered extremely well. Children have sufficient time, space and encouragement to discover and use new words and mathematical ideas, concepts and language. Children show a keen interest in counting, shape, pattern and size. They explore measures, weight and capacity through an extensive range of practical meaningful experiences, such as cooking activities and playing with the water, sand and in the role play areas. A real emphasis is placed on children problem solving during the daily routine. For example, calculating how many aprons they need, and considering and testing how to attach the fabric to create their den outdoors.

There are excellent opportunities provided for children to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children have first hand opportunities to explore about and find out about plants and creatures in the natural habitat and care for the pets. For example, they have use of the recently created garden, which has rabbits, guinea pigs and chickens and children are involved in feeding, caring and handling them. Children have good first hand experiences to observe and predict, such as when they follow the life cycle of the butterfly and frog. Children rapidly gain an understanding of diversity through well-planned themed activities, and access an extended range of resources, such as books, dolls, dressing-up clothes, pictures and posters.

Children's creativity is extended very well as they use their curiosity and exploration as they play. They have good opportunities to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through using a broad range of art and craft, music, dance and imaginative and role-play resources. Children explore colour, texture, shape and

form and respond well to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. For example, children use jelly, baked beans, dried chickpeas, shaving foam and soap flakes. Resources, for children from 18 months to three years, such as arts and crafts, sand and water are available but are not always made easily accessible for children to increase choice and to use at their own leisure.

Children learn how to stay safe through themed activities, for example they learn about road and water safety and safety in the home. The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Children benefit from the access to fresh air and the outdoor environment, which contributes significantly to their health and wellbeing. They build their confidence well as they competently use large and small physical play apparatus. Children become avid recyclers as they sort plastic, card and paper and learn to care for their local environment as they 'litter pick'. All children, including babies, benefit from freshly prepared meals which are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Staff follow stringent hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. Children successfully develop outstanding skills for the future through becoming active, inquisitive and independent learners.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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