

# abc Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223497
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 December 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Mrs Margaret Beeley & Mr Howard Beeley
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

abc Nursery is one of two nurseries run by the proprietors in the city of Hereford. This nursery opened in 1990 and operates from three floors of a four storey converted house. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery and out of school club at any one time. The setting is open from 07:30 to 18:00 each weekday all year round. Children attend from the city and surrounding areas. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children aged from birth to under five years attending the nursery. Of these 12 receive funding for nursery education. There are also 24 children attending the out of school club and 23 children attending the holiday club. The setting offers sessional and day care to children under five years and a before and after school and holiday club for school age children. There is a drop off and pick up service from a variety of schools. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs nine staff, supported by two ancillary staff. All staff hold or are working towards an appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is a qualified speech

and language therapist. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting has completed a Quality Assurance award at the silver level.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted satisfactorily because the nursery takes adequate steps to promote children's good health, and encourages them to begin to take responsibility for their own health and hygiene. Staff promote good personal hygiene by encouraging children to learn about hygiene through regular hand washing and use of hankies. Good hygiene routines are not always followed particularly in relation to areas used for the storage and heating of food. This potentially compromises children's good health. Children's health and safety is maintained because accident records are appropriately maintained, containing all relevant details, signed by parents. First aid trained staff are available each session which enables them to deal with accidents effectively. Procedures for recording the administration of medication have been improved, and now include additional information for parents when medication was not needed to be administered. This means that children receive effective continuity of care when they return home. However, staff must ensure that all parents are fully informed about medication records at all times.

Children benefit from the provision of a hot cooked lunch. They are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. A freshly cooked hot meal is prepared daily for the children as well as snacks mid-morning and afternoon. Children's dietary requirements are noted on admission forms. All staff responsible for food preparation are kept aware of specific needs through recorded details and discussion with parents. Children are developing their independence and self-care skills as they learn to manage feeding themselves. Older children competently use their cutlery and are able to pour their own drinks. Children are able to access their own beakers of drink throughout the day ensuring they are well hydrated. Children are learning about healthy living through talking about healthy eating, learning about hygiene and cleanliness and physical exercise.

Children benefit from regular daily access to fresh air and exercise. They are able to develop their physical skills such as pedalling or scooting bikes and other wheeled toys. They develop their co-ordination as they use the climbing frame or play on the trampoline which is well supervised. Ball games and throwing and catching activities also enable children to develop their co-ordination and dexterity. Children are able to access other physical play equipments indoors such as soft play shapes and balancing equipment. This means that children have access to a varied range of activities which help promote their developing physical skills. Children are able to develop their small muscle movements as they use tools and equipment such as scissors and cutlery.

The staff have a sound understanding of the needs of the younger children and provide appropriate care and a range of suitable activities and resources to support the children's physical and emotional development. Children separate well from parents and carers and respond well to the support offered by staff. They are active and are becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies as they acquire new physical skills such as feeding, walking and toileting. Children have times to be active and times for rest, all children have a rest in the afternoon and the sleep routines of babies are respected.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe and well cared for in premises that are secure and suitable for their purpose. Children are provided with adequate space to meet their needs with a secure outside play area provided at the rear of the building. Rooms are maintained in a satisfactory state of repair and decoration. A wide range of toys and activities are available to support children's learning and development. However, they are not always used effectively or stored in a way which is inviting and encourages children to develop their independence and make choices.

Children's safety is promoted because the registered person takes adequate steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures satisfactory precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Children are learning to keep themselves safe because the staff encourage the children to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside. For example the staff explain how to use tools and equipment safely, not to run around in case they fall down or trip and to put toys away after use so they do not cause a trip hazard. Staff carry out risk assessments and informal checks on rooms and the outside environment. These are not used effectively to protect children or to support staff in ensuring children's safety. For example, potential hazards in the outside play area have not been identified and removed, checks are not carried out on the cleanliness of kitchen appliances and activities are not risk assessed routinely. This means that children are not fully protected. Security arrangements are good, staff have secure systems for monitoring and recording any visitors to the nursery and collection arrangements are discussed and agreed with parents. This ensures that children are only allowed into the care of authorised persons. There is a designated person responsible for fire safety who has attended fire marshal training. Fire drills are conducted regularly to ensure that staff and children are able to evacuate the building safely. However, through this it has been identified that not all areas of the nursery are able to hear the fire whistle and not all fire exits are clearly identifiable. This potentially compromises children's safety. There are good procedures in place to ensure sleeping children are protected. These include regular visual checks on children as well as the use of a baby monitor and the use of a thermometer to ensure the sleep room is maintained at an appropriate temperature. Children's welfare and safety are well protected because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. Staff follow child protection procedures in line with Local safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well settled and happy; they receive a good level of support and access to a range of planned activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. They are becoming increasingly independent and able to do things for themselves. Children have their individual care needs met appropriately because staff know the children well and work with parents to ensure children's individual needs are understood. Staff working in the baby room ensure daily routines are followed and provide a good level of emotional support for these younger children. Staff ensure their needs are acknowledged and affirmed by providing comfort when needed, enabling the babies to feel secure and cared for. The babies are learning to communicate, staff sit on the floor at their level as they play and encourage the babies to explore the toys and to begin to express themselves.

Staff are well qualified and experienced and use early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, to support

children's learning and development. However, at times the challenges offered to the children in the toddler room are not effective in ensuring children are consistently provided with stimulating activities which effectively enable them to become competent learners; connecting ideas and understanding the world. For example although staff encourage children's independence through making choices for themselves about what they want to do, this sometimes limits the range of activities to specific favourites such as 'Bob the Builder'. This results in younger children not benefiting fully from the activities provided.

Children are grouped by age and ability but are able to join together for some activities, enabling them to share resources such as the role play area which the children decorated as Santa's grotto. Children are provided with times to be actively engaged in play such as exploring sand and water play or arts and crafts. They are able to play outside or go on walks away from the nursery, for example visiting the local town and its amenities. They have quiet times when they can rest and relax, listen to stories or have time for a sleep.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have the necessary training and experience to deliver a well-planned curriculum to the children. Planning of activities is generally good and ensures all areas are covered. Written plans include sufficient detail to allow all staff to deliver the educational programme. Children are able to contribute to the planning of activities. They sit together with staff, discussing their own ideas and experiences which are incorporated into the monthly plans. This helps promote children's self-esteem and sense of self-worth. Planning shows that children have opportunities to learn in many different ways. For example children are able to use practical activities, such as visits to the supermarket or library, to extend their knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live. Although staff interact well with the children, developing their conversation and understanding of phonics well, they do not always provide sufficient challenge for the older or more able children when introducing new concepts and ideas. For example activities and daily routines are not used effectively to extend children's vocabulary, particularly in relation to mathematical language.

Staff use information already obtained on children's progress as they move up through the nursery to plan suitable learning opportunities which meet children's needs. However, the assessment records of children in receipt of funding are not effective in providing clear information on each child's stage of development. The arrangement for gathering and recording this information is not systematic or informative. This means that parents are unable to access clear information on their child's progress through the written records. Staff are able to provide verbal information on children's progress because they know the children well.

Satisfactory use is made of time, resources and the accommodation. Staff work with the children for most of the time. They provide a good level of support and encouragement which enables children to develop their confidence and independence. The staff use positive methods to enable children to understand what is expected of them in terms of acceptable behaviour. Good use is made of opportunities to get children to think about the consequences of their actions. For example how they may feel, talking about emotions and feelings in a sensitive and supportive manner. Children's self-esteem is promoted because they receive lots of praise for their behaviour and achievements. This helps promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Resources are not always used effectively to support children's learning and development. Although children are encouraged to become increasingly independent and make independent

choices about activities and resources this is at times, hampered because resources are not stored in a manner which makes them appealing and easily accessible.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is well supported. They are becoming increasingly independent and well able to manage their own self-care. For example children independently pour their own drinks at snacks and meal times and competently manage their own lunches. Most children are confident and have good levels of self-esteem because staff use praise well to reward good behaviour and achievements. Staff are supportive and are able to help children learn new skills and complete tasks. For example staff help children manage scissors to cut fur fabric enabling a child to complete her collage. There is a good relationship between staff and children enabling children to feel secure and confident. Children are learning what is acceptable behaviour as they share and take turn with activities.

Children are able to share their experiences and develop their language for thinking because staff listen to and value their contribution. Children are happy and confident in talking with staff and other children. Their ideas are used in the planning of activities. For example children discuss their own ideas of Christmas, suggesting making reindeers and Santas. They are developing their mark-making skills as they draw intricate and detailed pictures on the planning sheet. Displays of children's work also shows children's developing writing skills as they attempt to label their own work. Planned phonic sessions enable children to learn about letter sounds and rhythm and rhyme. Children eagerly join in with these sessions and ask for phonics to be included. Stories and songs are enjoyed by the children, they sit still and listen and are able to talk about favourite stories. This means that children's communication, language and literacy development is supported generally well.

Children are introduced to numbers through practical use of number games such as floor dominoes, compare bears and number puzzles. This enables them to become familiar and use and recognise numbers in practical activities. Children count the number of children present each day but are not yet confident to calculate more or less than. For example working out how many more children are needed to fill all the seats. Children see written numbers around the room on number lines and displays. They are beginning to develop a sound understanding of number work. However, children are not introduced to mathematical language regularly during activities and daily routines; this hampers their developing understanding of wider concepts of mathematics such as the use of positional language and mathematical vocabulary. Children use cooking activities to learn about weight and measurement and have made a height chart with hand and footprints.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. They are well motivated and interested to learn. Effective use is made of outings into the town and local countryside to support children's topic work. For example children have visited the local museum to look at toys and the library to select books as part of a topic on books and stories. Children are able to develop their understanding of how things work. They have used a camera to take photographs of their train journey, capturing pictures of the countryside and their friends as they enjoyed the outing. They also have access to computer equipment and tape recorders which enables them to develop their understanding and use of information and communication technology.

Children are able to use playtime and physical play sessions to develop their physical skills in climbing, balancing, throwing and catching. They confidently use bikes and other wheeled toys to move themselves around the outside play space. These activities help children to develop their co-ordination and large muscle movements. They use tools and equipment safely and

with growing competence. For example children use equipment to write, draw and make marks; they are given support to master their ability to cut using scissors.

Children are able to express themselves freely through art and music. They are encouraged to be creative and produce work which is individual to them. Displays of children's work shows that children are able to explore a range of different media and materials in their art work. However, although staff give praise and encouragement to show they value children's work it is not displayed in a way which fully acknowledges the value and effort children have put into their work. Children are able to use musical instruments during child-initiated activities or during structured music session with a visiting musician. Opportunities for imaginative play are provided, although children are unable to freely access the role play area which is located in the toddler's room. Children share the role play area and are setting the house up as Santa's grotto, wrapping parcels and putting up Christmas decorations.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children. They are cared for by staff who demonstrate a supportive and caring attitude towards the children in their care. Information on children's individual needs is provided by parents and carers and used to ensure children's needs are met. For example in relation to daily routines, diet, health, and language. Good support is provided for children who speak English as an additional language because staff use sign language to support children's developing communication and find out how to say key words in the child's home language. This helps them to develop their sense of belonging and to settle in. Children work harmoniously with others and are encouraged to make choices and decisions for themselves. They play well together, sharing activities, sitting quietly for stories and helping to tidy away activities. They receive praise for their good behaviour and their achievements. These all contribute to the children developing good self-esteem and respect for others.

Children are developing a good awareness of the wider society because they have access to a good range of resources which reflect diversity and positive images. They celebrate festivals, special days and traditions such as Divali, Nativity and Saints' days. Parents are invited to share their celebrations such as showing children how to bake cakes for Hanukah. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The needs of most children are being met satisfactorily because the nursery works generally well with parents and carers to enable most children to achieve in their care and learning. Parents and carers are able to make informed decisions about their child's care because they are provided with information on the provision and have opportunities to discuss their child's needs with staff. Parents in turn provide the information on any specific needs, any developmental information and information on children's care routines. Trained staff are available to provide any additional support required for children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However there are ineffective arrangements in place to consult with parents about the need for any special services, equipment and developmental opportunities to meet the needs of individual children. This means that the individual needs of some children are not met. Arrangements for keeping parents informed of children's progress are satisfactory, staff are friendly and approachable and use daily chats and a home-nursery diary to share information on the children's day in the nursery; parents are able to contribute by adding comments about their child at home, which are shared with staff. This ensures a two-way flow of information which is useful and informative.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the provision ensures that children are generally well cared for because there are well qualified and suitable staff able to meet the needs of all the children for whom the setting cares for. Staff continue to update and improve their knowledge of childcare and development because training is regularly accessed. This broadens children's experience and increases staff knowledge of childcare issues which contributes to the quality of care provided. Staff have specific roles and responsibilities and are deployed throughout the nurseries depending on their skills, experience and qualifications. They work generally well as a team and are flexible in working in either of the two nurseries. The organisation of some of the daily routines are not effective in promoting children's good health or ensuring children are well occupied with meaningful activities particularly at the start of the day. Children are well supervised and receive a good level of care. They are grouped effectively to ensure they have appropriate access to a satisfactory range of learning and development opportunities. Documents required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are available although there are some omissions, for example in regard to vehicle documentation. Children's well-being is generally safeguarded because staff obtain all required information and any required consents from parents when children are admitted to the group.

The leadership and management is satisfactory.

There are suitable arrangements in place for ensuring the suitability of staff working with the children. Staff recruitment procedures are satisfactory and induction processes ensure that staff are informed of their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings and appraisals enable staff and the management to discuss ongoing professional development, any concerns and to share training information. Although the management has a commitment to providing good quality care and education and has completed a quality assurance award at silver level, systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision and for identifying the strengths and any weaknesses are not effective. The professional development of staff is well supported through training. This enables staff to support children's learning and development appropriately. The issues raised at the previous inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was required to: allow more time for children to develop their own ideas/activities in greater depth to consolidate their learning especially in the role play, creative and writing areas; further develop planning to ensure individual children build on and reinforce prior learning; ensure all fire safety equipment is checked regularly and checks recorded; ensure all medication records and accident reports are completed including the parent's signature and to review policies for special educational needs, complaints and child protection.

Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the issues raised particularly in relation to the provision for nursery education. Staff make good use of activities such as mind mapping to enable children to develop their own ideas and contribute to the planning of activities. This enables children to build on what they already know as they suggest ideas and share their own experiences as part of the process. Children are able to express themselves creatively as they draw pictures of what they want to do as part of the ongoing topic work. Activities linked to the planned theme enable children to use the role play and writing areas to consolidate their

learning. Children use the role play area to extend their Christmas ideas, decorating the home corner ready for Santa. They learn about size and shape as they wrap parcels of differing sizes.

Children's safety has been improved because fire safety equipment is checked during every fire drill and the details are recorded in the fire log book. However, there are ongoing fire safety issues. The procedures for completing medication and accident records have been improved with all required details completed, including parent's signature. This ensure that children's health is protected. The written policies for special educational needs, complaints and child protection have been reviewed to ensure they contain all relevant information. This means that parents and staff are fully informed on the procedures to be followed.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

Concerns were raised about hygiene practices relating to nappy changing and potty training. This related to National Standard 7 ( Health). Ofsted investigated these concerns by carrying out an unannounced visit to the nursery on 15 February 2007. As a result of the visit one action was set in relation to National Standard 7: to ensure staff are aware of the importance of, and practise, good hygiene procedures when nappy changing in order to prevent the spread of infection. For example; routinely use apron and gloves. In addition a breach of National Standard 2 (Organisation) was identified and the following action was also set: to ensure that an accurate record of children's attendance, including times of arrival and departure, is maintained at all times. Ofsted is satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns raised and remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure areas used for the storage and heating of foods are kept hygienic. This specifically refers to refrigerators and microwave ovens
- extend written risk assessment procedures and ensure they are followed through into practise at all times
- ensure that vigilant fire safety procedures are adhered to at all times

- provide a range of activities for babies and toddlers that are well planned and resourced and which effectively promote meaningful play
- ensure there are effective arrangements in place to consult with parents about the need for any special services, equipment and developmental opportunities to meet the needs of individual children.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop children's understanding and use of mathematical language in activities and daily routines
- improve procedures for recording assessments of children's progress to ensure they are systematic, informative, objective and clearly linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)