



## Appletree Childrens Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY336106
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Brenda Joan Flewitt
<b>Setting Address</b>	Apple Tree Nursery, 51 The Park, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA20 1DF
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<b>Registered person</b>	Appletree Children's Nursery (Yeovil) Ltd
<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?

Appletree Children's Nursery was registered in 2006. An established nursery has been on this site since 1992. The setting is privately owned and operates from a converted Victorian house with grounds, near the centre of Yeovil, Somerset. The accommodation has been converted to provide seven play rooms and two sleep rooms, over two floors. In addition there is a separate entrance hall, kitchen, laundry room, an office, and toilet facilities for the children and staff. There is a fully enclosed area of the rear garden available for outside play. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00 all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays and the Christmas period.

A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 53 children on the register. Of these, 19 receive funding for early education. Children attending

the nursery come from Yeovil and the surrounding rural areas and have a range of social backgrounds. The nursery support children who have special needs.

The nursery is run by the owner who holds a BTEC National Diploma in child care and education. She is supported by 18 members of staff, most of whom hold child care qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's healthy eating is promoted well. They make choices from a good variety of nutritious meals and snacks, which provides them with a balanced diet, and included fruit and vegetables on a daily basis. Hot midday meals are cooked on the premises from fresh ingredients. From an early age children develop practical skills in managing cutlery as they sit with their friends and enjoy food such as pasta and bolognaise sauce with garlic bread.

Children are involved in some form of exercise during the day, usually in the afternoon. Older children become skilled in managing stairs as they move between areas. In fine weather children play in the garden area where there is equipment like a climbing frame, wheeled vehicles and ball games for them to use to increase large muscle skills. Children practise their coordination as they take part in music and movement activities.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where they develop independence in some good practices for their own personal hygiene. There is a generally good system for nappy changing and hand washing, however, some of the equipment for disposing of nappies is not in a safe and hygienic condition. Children learn to wash hands after using the toilet and before handling food, as routine. Older children can easily access the toilet area and start to use the facilities without help. Children are protected from the spread of infection through some of the staff procedures such as cleaning the tables before food is served and clear hygiene practice in the kitchen area. The sickness policy makes clear to parents that children must not attend if they have an infectious illness. However, there are occasions when many children and staff share a towel for drying hands, which is not effective in preventing cross-infection. Children's medication and accidents are managed well. There is always more than one member of staff on duty with up-to-date first aid training and the relevant records are completed accurately.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in safe and secure premises where most hazards are identified and minimised. Staff put measures in place to help prevent accidents such as safety gates at door ways and the top of stairs, socket covers and guards around heaters. The good security system means that children are protected from uninvited visitors and cannot leave the building unsupervised.

The activity areas are organised appropriately to allow children to move around in safety as they choose their activities. Younger children move between two rooms on one level and older children manage steps with increasing confidence as they move between various areas of play.

However, some activities such as playing recorders, are not always supervised appropriately and pose a risk to children's safety. Children use a variety of equipment to keep them safe while they eat, sleep and play. This includes high-sided cots, high chairs with harnesses and low-level tables and chairs. Children make choices from play provision which is well organised and kept in good condition.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency, as they are involved in regular fire drills. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and fire exits are clearly marked. This all helps towards children's safety in a real situation.

Overall, staff have a satisfactory understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and know what procedures to follow with concerns. Therefore children's welfare is safeguarded appropriately.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They are cared for by staff who are friendly and approachable, which means that children develop confidence in making their needs known. Babies are responded to appropriately as they make attempts to communicate. They are given some opportunities to explore using their senses during messy play such as finger painting and water play. They enjoy staff singing to them and respond with smiles and claps. Babies' individual routines are discussed with parents and respected. Some babies and toddlers fall into a sleeping pattern which fits with the nursery routine.

Mobile babies and toddlers are cared for in large groups with a 'free-flow' system between two rooms. While this enables children to access a satisfactory range of activities at any one time, some children wander and do not focus well on the activities offered. Some of the children enjoy books and can easily access a selection for themselves. They are involved in art activities and exploring various materials such as dry pasta and lentils. Some of the activities are not appealing to younger children, and staff in these rooms do not interact effectively with all the children to fully support their development. Key workers make observations of children's achievements and record these in note books and assessment records linked with the Birth to three matters framework, but do not use them to plan for each child's next stage.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Key staff have a satisfactory understanding and working knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They use this to plan activities so that children cover all areas of learning over a period of time. Children move freely between rooms to access a suitable range of activities and experiences. For example, one room is equipped with provision for children to use their imagination such as role play resources and small world toys. Children like to act out real life situations like talking on the phone, taking a 'baby' for a walk in a buggy, or making a 'cup of tea'. However, not all staff use these play opportunities to extend children's learning in other areas such as maths, vocabulary and understanding of the world.

In another room, children explore a range of materials using their senses. These include paints, chalks, shells, fir cones and twigs. They have opportunities to feel different textures as they touch objects like feathers or polythene in 'feely boxes', thinking about whether they are 'soft' or 'hard'. One child describes dry pasta as 'cold', and is then asked to say whether the jug is 'full' or 'empty' by a member of staff. Children enjoy singing familiar songs such as 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and sometimes take part in planned adult-led activities where they explore sounds with musical instruments. However, the free-choice music opportunities are not always adequately supervised and children make 'noise' rather than learning about different sounds and rhythm. Children have daily opportunities to practise using a computer. Some are becoming skilful in using a mouse to move images on the screen.

Children use language well to communicate. Some children are confident in talking about events in their lives to a small group. For example, during a discussion about Christmas a child proudly says that 'on Christmas day I eat all the chocolates'. Most children are confident to initiate conversations with adults and peers. Children are encouraged to respect books. They enjoy stories both individually and in small groups, joining in familiar words and phrases as appropriate. Children start to recognise their written name through daily activities like identifying their individual cups at meal times. They are encouraged to write their name by tracing but do not always practise the skill in other areas like naming their work or writing as part of their play. Children count and link numbers to numerals during adult led activities such as circle time, counting cups and plates at meal times, and as they find the correct door to open on the advent calendar. They learn about shape and measure during activities such as construction, cooking and craft. They do not regularly hear and use numbers, comparative and positional language during their play.

Children move around freely with coordination as they move from room to room. They are developing confidence in making choices through the 'free-flow' system. They are encouraged to be thoughtful and aware of other members of the group. For example, a child remembers what another child likes for snack as they save him some fruit for when he returns from his short visit out of the nursery. Children use a variety of large and small equipment to develop their muscle skills. This includes pens, paintbrushes, scoops, and cutlery and jugs at meal times.

Children are making satisfactory progress in their learning. Staff make observations of their achievements and record them in assessment records, linked to the stepping stones, in each area. However, these are not always used effectively to identify each child's next stage. Therefore, the children are not always encouraged to reach their full potential.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children behave well. They know the routine, for example washing hands before meals, or waiting patiently for their turn to have a nappy put on before sleep time. Some children like to be helpful when packing away equipment, and they respond well to tasks of responsibility such as handing out food to their friends. They receive praise and encouragement for effort and achievement from most staff, which helps build their self-esteem.

Children start to develop a sense of belonging and being part of a wider community through every day activities, displays and planned topics. Babies and toddlers begin to identify who they are as they see themselves in low-level mirrors, and snuggle in to a familiar member of staff while they enjoy a bottle. Children see photos of themselves and their work displayed within the nursery. They become aware of various festivals as they take part in activities linked to Christmas, and discuss differences in the way other people celebrate. Children with special needs are supported appropriately. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) has attended initial training and links with advisors and connected professionals to help all children to be included. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the staff's positive relationships with parents. Staff make themselves available as children are delivered and collected to share information which helps meet their individual needs. Parents receive a daily report sheet which indicates sleep and eating patterns, and activities their child has taken part in. Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive useful information about the setting in various forms. This includes notice boards, monthly newsletters and easy access to policies and procedures. They are well informed about the curriculum and are invited to discuss their child's progress records either at formal parents evenings or at their convenience.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

There is a well established staff team, most of whom have worked together for several years. They work well together to provide smoothly run sessions where children know what to expect. Therefore they settle well and feel secure. The satisfactory staff recruitment procedures helps to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children.

The organisation of the premises, staff deployment and resources is satisfactory in supporting children's care, learning and play. However, staff are not always consistent in their support of children's activities, and the grouping of the younger children does not always meet individual needs effectively. All the required documentation and records are in place, well organised and completed accurately. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a new system for evaluating practice which helps to identify some areas for improvement. For example, the menu has been improved to ensure children learn about eating healthily. Staff are establishing positive relationships with local authority advisors to help monitor the provision offered. Although there is a staff appraisal system, this is not fully effective in identifying how effective the staff are in delivering the curriculum and helping children progress.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 all equipment and resources for nappy changing and hand washing are hygienic and help prevent the spread of infection
- develop the assessment system to include planning for each child's next stage (also applies to nursery education)
- review the provision for the younger children, to ensure that all children's needs are met effectively.

#### **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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above
- develop the systems to monitor staff's effectiveness, to ensure that there is consistency in their support of children's activities.

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)