

Ashby Castle Day Nursery

28 North Street, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH, Leicestershire, LE65 1HS

Inspection date	14/05/2013
Previous inspection date	11/01/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Children show they feel extremely safe, secure and happy in the nursery and arrangements for safeguarding the children are robust.
- An extremely effective key person system, which clearly works in practice provides children with stability and helps them to form positive relationships and gain confidence and self-esteem.
- Children's learning and development is closely monitored through precise assessment and includes all those involved in their learning. Consequently, the planning is sharply focused and leads to rapid development for children, taking account of their starting points.
- A superb and dynamic supportive management system is in place. Practitioners are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities within the nursery, which raises morale and makes them feel valued and highly motivated. They engage in highly effective methods of performance management and professional development. Consequently, practitioners are enthused and knowledgeable.
- Children benefit hugely from the highly successful partnership between the practitioners and parents, ensuring key information is shared between them.
- Rigorous systems for reflecting on practice, involving the provider, manager, practitioners, parents and children, identify priorities for continued improvement. The nursery actively seeks critique from external professionals to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

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 activities in the six main playrooms and outside play areas.
- The inspector spoke with the provider, manager, practitioners and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's development records, planning documentation, the nursery's self-evaluation form and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents through the nursery's parent feedback forms.

Inspector

Sue Riley

Full Report

Information about the setting

Ashby Castle Day Nursery opened in 1996. The nursery is privately owned 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 six age-appropriate playrooms and associated facilities. All children have access to the enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is easily accessible for all. Children come from the immediate and surrounding areas and children attend a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 174 children aged up to four years on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to two-, three- and four-year-old children.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, for 50 weeks of the year. There are a total of 33 practitioners including a manager who work directly with the children. Of these, 29 practitioners are qualified, 17 of whom are qualified to level 3 and above. One practitioner holds Early Years Professional Status and holds Qualified Teacher Status. Three practitioners are currently working towards a childcare qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue with the excellent relationship with parents by further developing their involvement in home learning.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners ensure that each child's uniqueness is fully embraced and celebrated and this ensures individual needs are fully met. The needs of the child lie at the heart of the daily life of the nursery, this guarantees that the children make excellent progress in their learning and development. Practitioners create a stimulating environment, where the atmosphere is incredibly positive and encouraging. Each child receives an extremely enjoyable, challenging experience across all areas of learning. Excellent systems for assessment and planning are in place to ensure activities and learning experiences fully support children's interests and the next steps in their learning particularly well. The nursery ensures the monitoring of children's progress towards all the early learning goals is enormously effective. The practitioner team promote children's development through an

excellent balance of child-led play, planned activities and interesting resources. For example, their current theme is 'new life' and the older children are carefully watching caterpillars as they will change into butterflies and they are caring for ducklings that have recently hatched. Practitioners plan first-hand experiences and challenges that motivate children to learn and ensure that they are extremely well prepared for school. For example, they plan group activities which extend, according to children's interest, such as dressing up so they learn how to dress themselves and manage the fastenings. Children play a game of picture lottery with a practitioner, who skilfully includes every child in the group ensuring that each child is benefiting from the activity. They learn to take turns and be aware of the rules of the game. Lovely discussions about the pictures encourage children's communication and language skills.

Children develop new skills and grow in confidence and rise to the challenge of trying something new. They are very active learners. For example, when playing outside the older children use 'number fans' as they hunt for and find hidden numbers around the play area. They then concentrate as they match the number in their fan. A young child smiles to themselves in amazement when they find they can move, as they push themselves along with their feet on a wheeled toy. Practitioners notice this 'wow' moment for this child and offers them lots of praise and encouragement. A young child has excellent supervision as they explore and investigate the shaving foam and animals. This ensures that they play in safety. Pre-school children enjoy themselves as they take part in a music and movement session before they settle down to eat their lunch. They move their large limbs with enthusiasm and join in with the words to the songs.

Practitioners demonstrate a very secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn. As a result, children are very motivated and develop a highly positive attitude to their learning and learn to work alongside their peers extremely well. Children's independence is promoted particularly well, they are developing skills, such as, putting on their own coats and shoes, seeing to their own drinks and helping to tidy up. All children enjoy many opportunities to choose, participate and become independent in their play. Children develop very good communication skills and chat happily both to one another and to adults. Practitioners support children extremely well, by offering praise and encouragement and they demonstrate an excellent understanding of children's individual learning needs. Babies are actively involved in their play, confidently selecting and exploring resources. For example, they investigate the different items and resources from a selected treasure basket. They feel and touch the different textures, they play 'peep-a-boo' with the foil blanket and are delighted as they see themselves in the play mirror. They are supported exceptionally well by practitioners and become confident in their daily routines. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and practitioners work exceptionally well with outside agencies and other professionals to support all children.

All children relish their time at nursery and are very happy and relaxed. They are able to thoroughly enjoy a wide range of exciting activities that stimulate and motivate them. The nursery has implemented the progress check at age two highly successfully and all related documentation is in place. The nursery are receiving very positive feedback from the health visitors around the excellent details they are being given. As a result of the highly effective assessment and recording of children's progress parents receive a very clear

picture of where their children are in their learning. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and development within the nursery. Children's learning would be enhanced even further by involving and encouraging parents to be more involved in sharing their learning at home. Parents are kept very well informed about the life of the nursery through the noticeboards, parent meetings and through daily chats to practitioners.

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

The premises are beautifully maintained and very well resourced to provide children with a stimulating environment in which they learn and develop. A well-established and extremely effective key person system operates throughout the nursery. This helps children to form secure emotional attachments and provides parents with a familiar person to share information with regarding their child. Every key person knows their children exceptionally well and can clearly demonstrate how they are helping them to move forward and make excellent progress. Practitioners in the baby room provide young babies with physical interaction and cuddles. This helps them to form emotional bonds and attachments. Older children are quick to seek out practitioners for a cuddle if they become tired or need reassurance. Children are exceptionally well-supported in their transitions between rooms and parents are fully involved. They are introduced to their child's new key person and new routines are explained. Practitioners ensure that children are familiar with the room they are moving into by taking them on visits and they share progress reports and any individual information needed to help children to settle. Parents are also asked to complete a new 'Unique Child' form to ensure the practitioners are fully informed about the child's current interests. Parents are also provided with a 'Welcome Pack' for the new room, so they are fully aware of the routines of the new room.

Throughout the nursery, children spend time with other groups in the outdoor activities. This helps them to become familiar with other children and practitioners. Children's health is very well-promoted and there are clear and consistently applied systems in place to protect them from infection. Excellent systems are in place to inform staff of any health or dietary issues the children may have and thorough records are kept of accidents or any medication administered. Children from an early age understand good hygiene routines and know why they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. The children benefit greatly from the carefully balanced menu offered. Younger children are supported to feed themselves and practitioners sensitively encourage them in this learning experience. Meal times for older children are sociable occasions as they sit together in small social groups. They learn how to use utensils correctly and wait until everyone has finished before leaving the table. This helps to prepare them for school readiness and promotes independence.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They know how to move safely through the nursery and start to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children thoroughly enjoy spending time outdoors and the resources and activities provided to enhance their physical development and well-being are exceptional. Ongoing in-depth risk assessments ensure that any potential hazards are identified and minimised. Children learn about their own safety as staff incorporate gentle reminders of how to use resources safely as they

play. They know the rules for play particularly outdoors and staff re-enforce these before children use the area. Children form very positive relationships with both adults and their peers, work happily alongside each other as they learn to share and take turns. They are extremely polite and use 'please' and 'thank you' as part of their normal daily routine. Children are very caring as they care for the nursery rabbit. They also have regular access to the 'Pre-Prep' nursery garden where there is an abundance of small animals as in rabbits, chickens, guinea pigs and the new ducklings to care for. This garden is a wonderful environment for children to explore and investigate the natural world. They have a real 'Mulberry Bush' for children to do ring games around. Practitioners model good social behaviour for children and offer them frequent praise. As a result, children gain a sense of self-esteem because they know that they are appreciated. Children's views are recognised and their interests form the basis of all planning. This is achieved by 'children's and parent's voice' displays in each room. Each child has their own 'photograph book' and they enjoy looking at these. This fosters their self-identity and extends their knowledge of the world as they talk and compare the photographs with their peers and practitioners.

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

The registered provider is extremely committed and highly dedicated to maintaining the highest levels of achievement for the children and their families. Very effective management structures are in place and communication with all levels of practitioners is excellent. Regular and robust reviews of all paperwork and procedures take place to ensure that all requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. Children are exceptionally well safeguarded. All practitioners are very aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting the children in their care. They fully understand the signs and symptoms to be aware of and know when and from whom to seek advice. Recruitment procedures are rigorous and robust. All practitioners are checked thoroughly before being employed and complete yearly declaration forms for suitability. Thorough induction procedures are in place to help and support new practitioners and students. Very effective appraisals and supervision meetings are used to identify any areas for improvement. The provider and manager are very hands on and supportive of all practitioners. They encourage them to reach their full potential and take on additional responsibilities within the nursery to develop their self-esteem.

All policies and procedures are shared with parents and comprehensive records are kept, including any complaints that are made. The manager and practitioners implement robust procedures to ensure that children are released into the care of a nominated adult, and cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Clear procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe on outings. For example, thorough risk assessments are carried out prior to the visit and parent's consent is gained for all outings. The practitioner team are very well qualified and vary in age range to ensure a lovely balance of maturity, which children clearly benefit from. Due to the management's high standards they work to excellent adult to child ratios and staff are very well deployed, to ensure the supervision, safety and security of all children.

Partnership with parents is exceptional. Parents are wholly valued and their views are

sought and respected. Practitioners provide parents with very useful informative 'Parent Packs'. For example, behaviour management, toilet training, and encourage them to share their ideas and thoughts for improvements for the nursery. Parents are extremely happy with the nursery and comments received are very positive. They say that the nursery is a warm, nurturing environment, it is very safe, practitioners are excellent and they are reassured by them, they are also kept very well informed. They feel that there is an appropriate focus on the Early Years Foundation Stage and children's learning, that there is a huge variety of activities and their children's reports are written in great depth. They say that they enjoy reading the newsletters and seeing what their child is doing and that they like the packs that the nursery does for the parents. The nursery has just implemented a 'texting' service. Where parents give their consent, practitioners text them with a 'wow' moment that their child has just achieved. This occurs at least once a week and parents comment that this brightens up their day. The manager and staff ensure that the extremely effective partnerships with parents and external agencies help to secure well timed interventions to ensure children receive the support they need.

The management team have high aspirations for quality. This is evident through ongoing improvement in all areas, in close consultation with practitioners, parents and children. Efficient systems are in place for self-evaluation of the nursery to reflect the excellent practice and prioritise any areas for improvement. Practitioners and parents are involved in the self-evaluation process and ideas for improvement are carefully considered and given the utmost priority. The provider invites other professionals to visit the nursery and offer critique on their practice. As a result, the nursery uses this objective feedback to help them to plan for improvement. This results in an extremely confident practitioner team who all demonstrate an excellent understanding about how to help all children develop and progress. The nursery is very proactive in implementing the changes necessary to sustain improvement and consistently explore new and innovative ideas. The management team are very supportive of practitioners and their caring and approachable manner ensures that practitioners feel able to talk openly about any issues they have or new ideas they would like to implement. As a result, they feel valued and appreciated. All children are included and supported extremely well and the nursery promotes equality and diversity highly successfully. Above all, children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend in this nursery and the skills they learn help them to prepare them for school readiness and lay firm foundations for the future.

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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
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 inspected again within 12 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	223187
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	918388
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	104
Number of children on roll	174
Name of provider	Gail Dawn Hodgson
Date of previous inspection	11/01/2012
Telephone number	01530 415541

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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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