

Abercorn School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Jill Nugent

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Abercorn School Nursery registered in 2009. It operates from one room within the school's main building located in the St John's Wood area of the London Borough of Westminster. Access to the building is at ground level from the main street and the nursery is situated one floor below ground level, with direct access to an outdoor play area at the rear of the building.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 20 children at any one time. Currently there are 31 children on roll. The setting runs two sessions a day. A total of four qualified staff work with the children, including an early years teacher. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Children receive extra timetabled lessons in physical education, music and French.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Abercorn School Nursery offers a welcoming and inclusive setting for children where they participate in a variety of play activities which promote the acquisition of new skills. A strength of the setting is its engagement with parents, encouraging them to be actively involved in their children's learning. Staff implement effective procedures regarding health, hygiene and safety so that children's welfare is promoted appropriately. All paperwork is well organised and maintained, providing a sound framework for their practice. Through the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the provision staff maintain an overall good capacity for continual improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- explore ways to offer extra support to children with differing interests and needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is very well managed as part of a whole school organisation. All the required documentation is on file and additional information about the Early Years Foundation Stage is made available to parents. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that children are safeguarded whilst at nursery. The school is rigorous in its conduct of regular risk assessments and fire checks, in order to maintain a safe environment for children. Staff request information from parents about children's medical needs and update their knowledge of first aid as necessary. They know what to do if having any concerns regarding child protection

and follow strict procedures involving the seeking of advice and reporting of these concerns.

The nursery has an excellent working partnership with parents. A welcome pack contains detailed and useful information for parents and regular newsletters keep them up to date with events. The nursery teacher completes entry profiles with parents in order to assess children's stages of development and find out about any particular interests. These are especially useful in providing staff with a starting point from which to work. Parents are also asked to contribute to their children's profile books, thereby becoming involved in their children's learning. Parents express their satisfaction with the care and education offered to their children. They feel very much involved themselves and appreciate the chance to communicate daily through link books.

Staff work together effectively as a team, sharing tasks and supervising children closely. They make good use of the available space to offer a variety of play activities, both indoors and outdoors. The resources are arranged so as to be easily accessible to children in different learning areas. Staff are deployed so that they can move around and engage with children, thereby promoting individual learning through the various experiences on offer. In this way children are encouraged to feel valued and included within the nursery setting. However, staff have not yet established effective systems for offering extra support, when required, for children with particular interests or needs, for example, children with more complex emotional or communication needs.

The nursery teacher works closely with her senior manager in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the setting. The teacher is new to her post but has already introduced a more effective system for the assessment of children's progress and changed the focus of the profile books to show more clearly children's learning journeys. Senior management in the school are very supportive of the nursery and proactive in continually driving improvement. Through self-evaluation staff highlight aspects of their practice for further development with a view to improving the outcomes for children, for example, focusing on extending children's awareness of different cultures. Staff have regular appraisals and are encouraged to attend training to increase their own knowledge and understanding of childcare.

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

Children enjoy a variety of play activities and often have fun as they explore, for example, dipping their hands into a coloured cornflour mix or making patterns in paint using their fingers. Staff offer good support, interacting with children as they play and investigate. In this way staff increase children's awareness and encourage them to become active and creative learners. Staff help children to make decisions for themselves by suggesting ideas and offering choices, for instance, when engaged in a collage activity. Children gain self-confidence and become independent learners, enjoying much praise from staff for their efforts and achievements. Children particularly enjoy role play and benefit from the

involvement of staff, enhancing their play and contributing to the development of their communication skills. Children develop good relationships with others and often play happily together in pairs or groups. They also enjoy opportunities to explore independently and can become quite engrossed in their play, for instance, investigating mark-making equipment.

Staff make observations of children's learning and development and then record individual children's progress in each learning area so that their next steps of learning can be identified. The system works well in linking their focused observations to the developmental stages of the Early Years Foundation Stage and is used effectively to plan a range of adult-led and free-choice activities which meet the needs of all children. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning in all areas. For example, they listen with interest to stories, join in rhymes and discover the different sounds of letters of the alphabet. They learn to solve problems, count objects and use numbers in different situations. They experiment with tools and materials and find out about their senses as they listen, taste and smell. The nursery teacher is adept at challenging individual children to think and converse through her open-ended questions, for example, when sharing photographs of a celebration. Children's learning is reinforced as staff share their learning profiles with them, encouraging children to recall and reflect on their experiences.

Staff are attentive to children's well-being and ensure that they keep safe and healthy in their care. Children feel safe within the setting as they move around freely, and confidently, selecting activities. They are encouraged to be aware of their own personal safety, for example, when using outdoor equipment or walking up and down the stairs. Staff liaise with parents regarding snacks and children bring an interesting array, helping them to learn more about healthy eating. They benefit from being able to access the outdoor play area throughout the day, enjoying the opportunity to be active in the fresh air. Staff encourage children to develop good physical skills as they move in different ways and use balancing equipment or throw balls. Children behave well and are reminded of the nursery rules if necessary. Staff help them to solve disputes through negotiation and to make a positive contribution to the group, for example, by tidying away. Children's self-esteem is boosted through staff recording 'things they can do' in their profiles, encouraging them to adopt a good attitude towards learning.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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