

The Ace Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	133481
Inspection date	29/09/2011
Inspector	Sheila Boyle

Setting address	Burford Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5DZ
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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

Gems Day Nursery and Out of School Scheme registered in December 1998. It is located within the Ace Children's Centre, in the town of Chipping Norton. The centre also houses a nursery school with the same name. The head of the nursery school is also head of the children's centre and the day nursery. The day-to-day running of Gems Day Nursery is undertaken by an Early Years practitioner who is part of the centre's senior management team. This provision has charitable status, and is managed by a Board of Trustees. The Gems nursery is located at the rear of the children's centre and has its own facilities, including a dining room, a sleep room, a kitchen, a baby's changing room and two adjoining classrooms. Each of these rooms has its own outdoor play area and children have access to the excellent outdoor facilities at the Nursery school. The setting has access for disabled persons. The setting offers full and part-time day care and wrap-around care from 8am until 6pm for a maximum of 22 children from three months to the end of the early years' age group. There are currently 44 children on roll, between the ages of seven months and four years. Two attend full time. Twelve children receive funding for nursery education. 13 children between the ages of three and four years attend the Nursery School for their provision. The Out of School Scheme caters for a maximum of 32 children between the ages of three and seven. During term time it is open from 8am until 9am and from 3pm until 6pm. During school holidays it opens from 8am until 6pm. Currently there are 15 children on roll between the ages of three and five. Out of school sessions operate from a large hall in the centre and use the outdoor play facilities at the centre. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The centre employs nine staff three of whom work part-time. One is a qualified Early Years practitioner; six hold early years qualifications at level three. One member of staff is currently working towards a level three qualification. The Gems Day Nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The quality of care and the way that children are kept safe is a particular feature of this outstanding setting. Strong links with parents and other providers on site, ensure children make a smooth transfer from home and between settings and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff recognize the uniqueness of each child and plan effectively for their needs and, as a result, they make good and often outstanding progress. Highly effective systems for planning have ensured all the issues from the last inspection have been addressed and indicate an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- investigate ways of providing more opportunities for children to explore the environment beyond the setting

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Management place strong emphasis on safeguarding children as well as providing them with enjoyable learning experiences and opportunities whilst they are at the nursery. Highly effective procedures for keeping children safe are in place. These include child protection procedures, the vetting of all adults working in the pre-school provision, regular checks of the areas where children play and learn and checks on the equipment. Trips off site are also risk assessed very thoroughly. Staff are well trained in first-aid procedures and suitable equipment is stored in a convenient location. Regular fire drills are undertaken and staff and older children know the procedures for evacuating the building.

The leadership and management are shared with the Ace Children's Centre and the Nursery School. As a result they share policies and procedures which are implemented consistently. Leaders and managers embed ambition and drive improvement to an outstanding extent. Outstanding relationships and systems of communication within the setting itself and across the provisions, together with strong links with parents and carers, result in children settling quickly and making smooth transitions at all stages. The excellent links with parents are evident from the very informative notice board for parents, the way that parents, carers and staff communicate at daily handovers, and in the good attendance at parents' and carers' meetings. Outstanding links with other providers on site and with outside agencies ensure children with additional needs are supported exceptionally well and their needs met effectively. Excellent links with the Nursery School enable some older children to attend daily where their needs are well met. The sharing of its excellent outdoor resources contributes greatly to children's personal and social development and their self esteem. Regular visits from the nursery teacher to this setting, and return visits by staff to the Nursery School, ensure children are exceptionally well prepared and confidently move on to the next stage of learning. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are excellent. All staff have completed training on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. As a result, their excellent planning takes exceptional account of the children's needs and interests as well as the areas of learning for that age. Equality for all children and promotion of diversity lie at the heart of this successful setting. Effective use is made of the excellent range of resources including toys, story books, sensory materials, sand water and outstanding outdoor equipment to support children's learning and development. The very good range of visits off-site, including regular visits to the town centre and the local wooded area, greatly enhance children's opportunities for learning and increase their confidence and self esteem. The setting's leader is highly committed to improving the provision and regular reviews and evaluation of its work are undertaken. However, some policies reviewed recently do not have the date of their review recorded. Nevertheless the

setting's track record to date indicates that it has excellent capacity for further improvement.

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

The quality of provision is outstanding and leads to outstanding outcomes for children. Children arrive at Gems Day nursery at a young age with different levels of ability. The high level of care provided together with a highly stimulating environment and learning activities ensure children feel safe, settle quickly and enjoy their learning. Assessment based on ongoing observations and discussions with key workers is used effectively to plan next steps for individuals. Children's economic well being is outstanding as they continually develop their literacy and number skills. The development of communication skills is at the heart of learning. The focus on building vocabulary through singing nursery rhymes and songs, listening to stories and regular interactions with staff and older children, helps toddlers and babies to develop good language and communication skills from an early stage. This in turn helps them develop their skills in all other areas of learning as they grow and develop. Skills in writing are encouraged at every turn, with results and observations simply recorded on paper. Toddlers count in many activities, for example they count the steps as they go up to the dining area, they count the number of children present and the pieces of equipment they use when in groups. Most leave the setting with higher than expected skills for their age having made outstanding progress. Children with particular learning needs are helped skillfully by experienced staff who recognize the uniqueness of each child and plan effectively for their needs. As a result they make at least good and often outstanding progress.

Children have good opportunities to develop their social and physical skills through the excellent resources and outdoor facilities which include an environmental area where they experience nature first hand and increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. Occasional walks to the town centre help them grow in confidence and learn about road safety. Opportunities to explore the environment and wider world beyond this are less evident. Children develop excellent relationships with peers through cooperative play in messy water and sand activities and through group activities which requires them to take turns and listen to others. Responsibility and independence are encouraged, at every stage. Toddlers for example are encouraged to dress and feed themselves. Older children know when to wash their hands and how to walk safely when they are accompanied on a walk to the town centre. As a result their ability to adopt safe practices is excellent. There are many excellent examples of children's painting and creative work displayed on walls and recorded in their profiles.

The children have an excellent understanding of how important it is to eat healthily and take exercise. They are very active, accessing the outdoor equipment when they wish to. Through stories and feedback from families who have holidays abroad, children are aware of other people in the world, their cultures and beliefs, which impacts very well on their appreciation of diversity and equality. This knowledge is enhanced through celebrations throughout the year, such as a

birthdays and the celebration of religious and cultural festivals.

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

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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