



Ashurst Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY273607
Inspection date	07 July 2006
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	Foxhills Lane, Colbury, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 7ED
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Registered person	Ashurst Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ashurst Pre-School opened in 1970. It operates from a nursery unit in the grounds of Foxhills School in the Ashurst area of Hampshire. It serves the local area.

There are currently 90 children from two years and nine months to five years on roll. Of those, 67 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 and 12:30 until 15:00.

The setting employs 10 staff, seven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff member is currently working toward a qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care and can independently access the toilet and washing facilities. They are reminded about washing their hands, although as they all share a bowl of water when washing hands before snack time, they are at risk from the spread of infection. Their physical needs are well met because staff follow effective procedures and practices. They consult with parents about the children's health needs and keep appropriate records on site. Over half of the staff have training in first aid.

Children are offered a choice of nutritious snacks such as breadsticks, toast and fruit, at each session. They are also regularly offered drinks, which they pour themselves, and can request others. They enjoy the social interaction with their friends and staff during snack times, talking about the foods which are good for them and the activities they have taken part in.

Children develop a good range of skills during their physical play. They enjoy their outdoor time in the garden when they can access a wide range of equipment which enables them to practise skills such as, climbing, peddling, balancing and scooting. They take part in music and movement sessions and get very involved when doing their action songs, completing the movements accurately. They also confidently use a good range of tools and small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors, hole punches and pencils and are all gaining in control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Good use of the available space enables them to move freely within the pre-school, confidently accessing well maintained and clearly labelled toys and play materials. Staff supervise children closely, both inside and out in the garden and reduce the risk of accidents by carrying out daily visual risk assessments on the premises and equipment. Children are protected by staff who follow effective procedures, such as making sure the children go home with a known adult. Children and staff are familiar with the fire evacuation procedure which they practise each term.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and keep local child protection team telephone numbers available. They share information about accidents and incidents with parents. Efficient safety procedures built into the daily routine, such as close supervision of children at all times, enables children to play and learn in a secure, child centred setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children show a real enthusiasm for learning and delight in their time at the pre-school, where staff provide a relaxed, fun atmosphere. They are happy and well motivated and all purposely involved in their learning and play. They achieve well because staff use their skill and knowledge of each individual child to provide high quality care, learning and play. Children are keen to take part in the wide and stimulating range of activities, both inside and outside in the garden area. They particularly enjoy their singing time when they all join in with great excitement. They are secure and settled and are able to form positive and caring relationships with each other and the staff. They are self-assured and confident and are able to ask questions, talk about what they have done and request assistance. Children happily participate in organised activities but equally enjoy initiating their own learning.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning because of the staff's knowledge of their individual needs. Staff provide a stimulating environment where children feel secure and able to learn. As a consequence, children can set their own challenges and progress at their own pace. They have access to a wide range of practical activities and are learning as they play, confidently making choices and moving between the different areas of the pre-school. Children's work is valued by staff and used for display purposes, providing a colourful and stimulating environment. Children often request that a particular piece of work is added to the display board. Children benefit from staff who have a good understanding of how children learn and extend their learning using positive teaching and questioning. They enthusiastically get involved in activities themselves, helping children to look up information in non-fiction books or making suggestions of resources to be used in making pictures or models. Plans cover all areas of learning, although they are not linked to the stepping stones for learning and do not always show clear learning intentions. Staff make accurate assessments of children's learning, but do not use these to inform future planning.

Children are confident speakers using language to initiate and organise their play. They use language to discuss what they are doing, both with staff and each other, for example explaining that they need blue paper to make a pond for their fish picture. They enjoy using books and listening to stories read by staff or the local librarian. Most children are able to recognise their names on labels when they self-register or find their place at snack time. All children use marks to represent their ideas, often producing detailed pictures, and some children are beginning to write recognisable letters.

Children take part in a wide range of games and activities to develop their number skills and many count and recognise numbers to 10 or above. Children use mathematical language, such as tall and centimetre as they measure themselves each month to see how they have grown. They talk about shape, size and quantity during planned and routine activities, for example when looking at photographs of the school grounds. They learn about addition and subtraction while singing number songs such as 'Ten Little Monkeys'.

Children regularly explore and investigate, for example when cooking, looking at snails and dragonflies brought in by the children, or when painting or model making. They talk about changes and living things when watching the tadpoles in the tank or doing leaf pictures after a walk in the school grounds. Children use their imaginations well in numerous play situations, for example during role play, when mixing paints or designing and making during art and craft work. They explore colour and texture when bead painting or using the wide range of collage materials, such as feathers, glitter and tissue paper. Children have a good understanding of routine and time. They talk about themselves and their families and are learning to value others. They are provided with opportunities to use information technology to support their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and fully included in the routine of the pre-school. They all confidently select resources and choose activities as they move around the pre-school environment. They play an active part in the routine of the session, choosing what is for snack and helping to tidy up. They independently access the toilet facilities and pour their own drinks. Their individual needs and personalities are valued and respected by staff, who praise their good behaviour and positive achievements. As a consequence, children behave very well.

Children have high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They show care and respect for each other, and are learning to share and take turns, waiting patiently for their turn on a trike or to use a pushchair. They form good relationships with adults and their friends, working alongside each other during activities, for example sharing the glitter and glue during craft activities. Children with special needs or English as an additional language are welcomed into the pre-school and provided with the appropriate support to enable them to access the wide range of resources. Children have access to a selection of resources which promote equality of opportunity, such as puzzles, dolls and books. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this has an important influence on children's wellbeing. The pre-school operates an open door policy and parents are welcomed in at any time. Parents are provided with a wide range of information regarding the aims and objectives of the pre-school, the Foundation Stage curriculum and activities provided and can request to see copies of the policies and procedures. They are able to be involved in their children's learning by joining the helpers rota or

sharing the books which children take home each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very settled, busy and happy in the purpose built and well organised pre-school environment. They are cared for by staff who are appropriately checked and qualified in early years. Staff all work directly with the children, providing good support when it is required. They work effectively as a team, know their roles and responsibilities for each session and are well deployed, ensuring that children's individual needs are well met.

Good essential records and written agreements are in place for each child and shared with the parents, ensuring that children's welfare and care are of a good standard. Staff know the children very well and keep records of which children to expect at each session. They complete daily registers for children, staff and visitors, although these are not always completed as soon as children arrive on the premises. A good range of policies and procedures which are shared with both staff and parents, means that the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. There is a clear management structure within the pre-school, and staff are supported by an active committee. All staff, management and the committee are involved in providing care and education of a good standard. Staff ensure that verbal evaluation and discussion about training courses and meetings attended is carried out during regular staff meetings. Staff turnover is low and as a consequence staff have established good routines and work well together. They all receive regular appraisals to identify their training needs, and regularly access new training opportunities. The pre-school supervisor works closely with the management committee and also receives support from the advisory teacher from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

Improvements since the last inspection

At their last inspection the pre-school were asked to ensure staff were able to access suitable first aid training. Some staff have recently renewed their first aid training, so there are always a number of people on site with training at each session. They were also asked to ensure that the registration system recorded children and staff, and ensured all visitors to the group were signed into the visitors book. There is now a good registration system in place which ensures that all staff, children and visitors are signed in at each session, although the register is often not completed until all children are present which could be some time after the beginning of the session. This has been raised as a recommendation at this inspection.

Staff were asked to improve planning to ensure that all areas of learning are included for each child, learning objectives are clear so that activities are presented at the right level and all children have access to a full range of resources. Children all now have access to the full range of activities and resources but staff are still struggling with a

planning system to meet the needs of all children. They have recently attended planning training and are working with the early years advisory teacher to ensure that they start to produce workable plans soon. This has been raised as a recommendation at this inspection.

They were also asked to improve staff's understanding of the stepping stones to support the system for observation and assessment and ensure that all aspects of learning are included and used to plan for individual children's progress. Staff now use the Hampshire record of achievement sheets and make accurate assessments of children progress, although they do not use this information for future planning. This has been raised as a recommendation at this inspection.

Staff were asked to provide opportunities during everyday routines and activities for children to recognise their names and link sounds and letters and to develop their mathematical understanding and solve simple problems. Children now choose their name card when they self-register and when they sit down for snack time. They take part in a wide range of songs and rhymes where they learn to link sounds and letters and are developing their mathematical understanding and problem solving.

Finally, staff were asked to provide opportunities for children to select a variety of tools and materials to design and make their own models. Staff have provided the children with a trolley on which are a huge range of tools and materials for them to self-select at any time for picture and model making.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.

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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):

- re-evaluate the system for hand washing to ensure that children are not at risk from the spread of infection.
- complete registers as soon as children and staff arrive on the premises to ensure that they are accurate.

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):

- continue to develop the system for planning to ensure that plans show clear learning intentions linked to the stepping stones for learning and include differentiation for the older or more able children. Ensure that the assessments are used to inform the planning.

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