



The Avenue Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333723
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Inspector	Jane Plested
Setting Address	The Avenue Methodist Church, Rutland Avenue, High Wycombe, HP12 3XA
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Registered person	The Avenue Pre-School Playgroup
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Avenue Pre-school Playgroup opened in 2006. It is a committee run pre-school and operates from the main hall in the Avenue Methodist Church in High Wycombe. Children have access to the main hall with toilet facilities available within this area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time and it serves families from the local community.

Sessions are from 09.30 until 12.00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday during school term time. Currently 16 children attend the setting and of these 13 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is supporting a high proportion of children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four staff, three of whom all hold relevant qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children learn to follow simple personal hygiene procedures. They do this through daily routines such as hand washing before snacks and after using the toilet. Practitioners maintain a clean environment for children by completing regular cleaning routines. They follow good procedures when changing nappies. These strategies contribute positively to preventing the spread of infection amongst children.

Children take part in some activities to support their physical health, although at present these all take place indoors. They enjoy using equipment set out as an obstacle course, when they can crawl through tunnels or balance on stilts and stepping-stones. They also have fun taking part in parachute games. This aids them in developing increasing control of their bodies.

The pre-school has ample, well-organised first aid resources. All practitioners hold a current first aid certificate so they are confident to manage minor accidents involving children. The incident of a child falling over and banging his head is managed very well during the inspection. All relevant records, policies and agreements are in place to support this area of the setting's work, thus assuring children's good health and well-being.

Snacks for children are highly nutritious and plentiful. They can select from a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Practitioners cut these into manageable pieces and present them attractively on large plates. As a result, children eat these enthusiastically and often ask for and receive more. Children can access drinks throughout the session so they remain refreshed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children can move around freely within a very well maintained, clean and spacious environment. Children's play equipment is new and is suitable for their age and stage of development, although planning for challenging children that are more able is not evident. However, some areas are poorly organised and uninviting, such as the book area, which has no cosy seating or cushions for the children to sit comfortably and enjoy books. The home corner also lacks furnishing and appeal, limiting children's ability to develop their ideas and play.

Practitioners have a generally good understanding of how to keep children safe. The risk of accidental injury is minimised through the appropriate use of equipment such as socket covers. However, practitioners do not use the opportunities presented to help children learn about using tools such as scissors safely. There are daily procedures to ensure the premises remain safe for children. Information on health and safety requirements for employees has been sought but the recommended poster is not on display for staff.

There are clear procedures for the collection of children. Practitioners are careful about monitoring arrivals and departures and keep the door locked during the session to prevent children leaving unaccompanied. Records are in place of visitors to the setting, assuring the

security of children. Practitioners have a generally good understanding of child protection issues and of the group's procedures to support this area of their work. Practitioners keep records of any pre-existing injuries to children but they have not thought to ask parents to sign these.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

All ages of children enter the premises confidently and separate from their main carers without a problem. They settle quickly to a variety of play activities that are set out ready for their arrival. All children move around the setting freely and are familiar with the daily routine. Throughout most of the session they are busy and occupied. Children are recognised as individuals and their care needs are established in the 'all about me form'. Practitioners are building relationships with children and are able to name each child's likes and dislikes.

All children interact with staff and peers, showing that they are confident in their relationships. However, children have to sit for long periods in a restricted area at welcome time, story time and home time. Practitioners do not always lead these sessions effectively and as a result, children sometimes become bored, fidgety and sometimes disruptive.

All children enjoy playing with dough. They have access to ample resources and there is plenty of dough. Practitioners spend time supporting children at this activity and as a result, their interest is sustained.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Some practitioners have little understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this directly affects the children's learning. The Manager plans the curriculum for children, however, some of these do not take place. When asked, practitioners are not able to identify clearly the learning intention for their activity. Some teaching is weak and practitioners are not confident when managing poor behaviour from children. They do not take opportunities in everyday practical situations to promote learning in areas such as counting. There is no differentiation of the activities for more or less able children. This hampers children's opportunities to make steady progress. Records on children have no systematic process so practitioners do not clearly know each child's starting point in their learning and therefore cannot plan to move them forward.

Children generally play well together; they are developing good relationships with both their peers and adults and on most occasions understand the need to share and take turns. They have opportunities in everyday situations to develop their independence through making choices and pouring their own drinks. Children have opportunities for listening to stories in a one-to-one situation, which they enjoy. Whole group activities and stories are disrupted by poor behaviour and unrealistic expectations from staff. Books are not set out in an inviting manner, as children cannot see the covers easily and consequently rarely use these independently. Opportunities for children to practise writing/mark making are not available in everyday play situations such as the home corner. As a result, children lack the opportunity to develop these skills.

Children are encouraged to count items, such as dough models, by some practitioners but do not take any of the many opportunities within the daily routine to support these skills. Some of the children can recognise simple shapes such as circles. Practitioners do not provide enough focus on mathematics to allow children to develop their understanding of calculation, measurement, positional language, quantity or capacity. Children have access to construction materials but practitioners are often directive during these activities, for example by building towers with bricks for children. Practitioners do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to develop a clear understanding about the world they live in. Information technology equipment is not being used. Children receive no support to use the electronic toy correctly and they have no opportunity to operate real equipment. Practitioners do not provide enough opportunities for children to learn about the natural world or the local and wider community.

Children have limited opportunity to develop their senses and the activities to support this are mainly restricted to manipulating dough. They are competent in using tools during this activity such as rollers and cutters. Practitioners help children to understand the texture of food but provide answers for them rather than encouraging them to think, for example by stating: 'the carrots are crunchy'. Some children can name primary colours and they have some opportunities to use paint. Craft activities are adult directed, as practitioners guide children and the results are often uniformed and do not contain children's own designs or ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children mix with peers and staff from differing ethnic backgrounds. They have access to resources depicting differences such as toys, books and in displays. Those children with English as an additional language receive some effective support as several practitioners speak their home languages. The group have no children with special needs currently attending the setting. A Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is in place. She has an understanding of her role and of some of the support systems available. However, she has not completed the relevant training course on this area of her work.

Children generally behave well during their play activities. They are familiar with routines such as 'tidy up time'. Practitioners occasionally use praise to reward good behaviour and to recognise children's achievements. However, a number of children find whole group activities such as 'welcome time' and 'story time' more challenging. Practitioners are not confident in managing those who become disruptive. As a result, children tend to lose interest, irritate others, or wander off. Children who behave poorly rarely receive clear explanations so they do not learn why their behaviour is unacceptable. Overall, the children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is not fostered.

Children benefit from the positive and friendly relationships developing between parents and practitioners. Parents are satisfied with the care their children receive and feel the staff are approachable. The sharing of information with parents helps them work together to meet children's individual care needs. Parents receive a brief prospectus about the setting and they have access to a notice board and all the setting's policies and procedures.

The partnership with parents of children receiving nursery education is inadequate. None of the parents have seen their child's developmental record and there are no systems in place, or planned, for sharing these with them. Parents have no opportunities to contribute to observations about children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, children's care is of a satisfactory standard. The premises and routine is adequately well organised so that children can participate in a range of activities and remain busy. Children are confident and secure within their surroundings. Adult-to-child ratios are high so children are safe, but a lack of behaviour management skills by staff sometimes results in disruption to whole group activities.

The recruitment and induction procedures that are in place are adequate. All required policies and procedures are in place and most of these have sufficient detail. However, the complaints policy is not fully up-to-date. All other regulatory documentation is in place and generally well maintained, although parents do not have the opportunity to sign the record kept of children's pre-existing injuries.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are inadequate. The knowledge of the Foundation Stage by some staff is limited and the quality of teaching at times is poor. Record keeping on children's progress is basic and not systematic, consequently this hampers the setting's ability to plan for the next stage of learning. The provision is not therefore meeting the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- provide a plan to show how staff will develop awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development
- share the record of pre-existing injuries with parents and update the complaints procedures so that they comply with the latest changes set out in the Addendum to the National Standards
- provide a plan to show how the appointed Special Educational Needs Coordinator will complete the appropriate training offered by Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- provide an action plan to show how a more effective system of planning and evaluating the nursery education will be implemented so that children's learning covers all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and practitioners build on what children know already
- provide an action plan to show how the quality of teaching and practitioner's knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum will be improved
- provide an action plan to show how an effective system for assessing and monitoring children's progress will be introduced and to show how opportunities for parents to contribute to these records to aid more effective planning for the children's next stage in learning
- provide an action plan to show how practitioner's will plan and manage whole group activities such as 'welcome time' more effectively to promote children's learning and development.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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