



Elim Church Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142869
Inspection date	29 January 2007
Inspector	Mary Daniel
Setting Address	Elim Church Hall, Southville, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA21 4JA
Telephone number	(01935) 431625
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Registered person	Elim Church Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Elim Church Day Nursery operates from premises which form part of Elim Pentecostal Church and is situated near the centre of the town of Yeovil. Children are cared for in three main play areas, where they are grouped according to age and ability. There is a separate nappy changing room and a sleep room available for babies and toddlers. A tarmac surfaced outdoor area is available to the nursery and is situated along the road from the premises. Children attending come from Yeovil, and the surrounding villages within an approximate radius of 10 miles. The nursery operates under a church management committee formed from the Pentecostal church.

The day nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children aged from three months up to five years. There are currently 49 children on register. The group is open on Monday to Friday, from 08:00 - 18:00, all year round except for bank holidays. The nursery employ 10 staff, which includes an overall nursery manager, a cook and a cleaner. Students training in

childcare also attend the setting. The majority of nursery staff have completed training in childcare and early years education.

The nursery is in receipt of government funding, and there are currently 19 funded children on roll. The nursery cater for children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The nursery receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily supported through use of some relevant records. For example, any administration of medication is recorded and parental permission for necessary emergency medical treatment is obtained. Dietary needs and allergies are discussed with parents and recorded. This contributes to children's continuity in care. Staff are trained in first aid and regular checks are made to ensure contents of first aid boxes are maintained as complete. This supports the appropriate management of emergency situations.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks, such as pieces of orange, apple or yoghurt covered raspberries. They tuck into a tasty spaghetti bolognese with garlic bread, or fish pie, roast dinner or tuna pasta for lunch. As part of a themed activity children talk about what was in 'Little Red Riding Hood's' basket. This helps them to develop some awareness of foods that are nutritious through enjoyable experiences. Children are provided with regular drinks. Pre-school children have access to a water machine throughout the session. Babies bottles are stored in the fridge and heated appropriately. Toddlers have their drinks bottles kept on a low table and all children have drinks of water or juice at snack time. This helps to ensure they stay well hydrated.

Children are encouraged in their awareness of suitable hygiene routines. They know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. When doing this in the children's bathroom they use 'Mr Soapy' liquid soap, and paper towels. This helps prevent cross contamination. However, before snacks they wash their hands in a communal bowl and sometimes share the same hand towel for drying. As a result, suitable procedures to help prevent the spread of infection are not consistently followed.

Children are sometimes taken on local walks. During the daily session they take part in a music and movement activity and have fun doing the actions for the 'Okey Cokey' or 'Heads and Shoulders' songs. Some themed indoor activities help children to learn to move in different ways, for example, slithering like a snake or rolling and snuffling like a bear. However, these activities do not always effectively challenge children's physical skills and enable them to sufficiently use up their energy or provide them with regular exercise in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in attractive and inviting rooms. Pictures, posters and photos are displayed all around the nursery creating a welcoming environment. Playrooms have soft areas with cushions and bean bags, where children can rest to look at a book or play with a favourite toy. Separate areas are available for them to sleep quietly. This helps them feel settled. Children play with a wide range of bright, age appropriate toys and resources. Babies explore colourful rattles and soft toys, while safely supported by comfy cushions. Toddlers climb easily into the ball pool boat and pre-school children use easy to hold glue sticks or dual control scissors with their creative activities. This helps to encourage their interest and independence in play. Suitable equipment is available to support children's care. Babies sleep in comfortable cots and sit securely in their highchairs. Small steps are used in the bathroom to help toddlers reach the sink and toilet seats are available to help them feel secure when starting to use the toilet. Pre-school children sit on small chairs at low tables to eat their food. They are encouraged to pour their own drinks from small jugs into their brightly coloured cups. This supports their independence skills, but they do not always use plates for their snacks.

Children's safety is monitored satisfactorily. Daily checks of play areas are completed as staff arrive and any identified hazards are recorded and addressed. Safety prevention in place, such as socket covers, smoke alarms and a main entrance security system help to keep children safe. Fire drills are practised regularly and clear procedures displayed. This helps to minimise accidents. Visitors presence is recorded, but at times children's arrival and departure times are not recorded and registers do not show accurate attendance numbers. Clear access along a corridor is hindered by storage of pushchairs and a Hoover. These issues impact on children's safety in an emergency. Children's overall welfare is supported by the sound understanding management have of child protection issues. Staff continue to update their knowledge through training and clear procedures are in place to support them in following any concern arising.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children respond happily to the caring and friendly approach given by staff. Ongoing interaction contributes to them feeling generally settled and reassured. Babies routines are followed and they go easily to sleep tucked in their cot. They smile in their play as they push a button on an activity toy and see a chicken, cow or horse head pop up. They enjoy sorting out some brightly coloured shapes. However, there are times when the choice of toys and activities is not sufficiently varied or challenging for all babies and they lose interest and become unsettled. Toddlers show a natural curiosity in their play and they explore shaving foam and corn flour mixtures with interest. They splash in water perfumed with peppermint or vanilla essence and experiment with colour in a floor painting activity. This helps them in becoming a 'competent learner'. Staff working with the younger children are starting to use the Birth to three matters framework to help them in planning some exciting activities to encourage their early developmental skills. However, although planning is being effectively implemented with the toddlers, it has not yet been fully established with the play experiences offered to babies.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff form effective relationships with children and are committed to helping them learn through their play. An interesting variety of themes are used to plan activities, such as, 'Fairy Tales, the Sea Side and Underground'. Staff become familiar with the Foundation Stage curriculum, using this to form suitable learning objectives for the planned activities. Overall, this gives an appropriate balance of play experiences to support children's development, although physical play opportunities are limited. Planning includes ways to modify and extend activities to meet children's individual learning needs. This helps children gain confidence in their play and learn at their own pace. Staff encourage children's development during some daily routines. For example, children wash their hands in the bathroom before lunch. This helps to develop their independence and self-care. However, staff do not give sufficient focus to everyday core activities, such as register and snack times. As a result, some opportunities to maximise children's learning are not fully promoted.

Children enjoy their play and become engaged in activities. They concentrate and listen well. For example, as they play a 'sound' guessing game and identify the noise of a triangle, bells, maracas and a tambourine. They spend time completing their jigsaws and fit brightly coloured shaped bricks together to make their models. This helps them learn about space, shape and size, while also using their imagination. Children use their sense of touch as they feel a wide variety of materials, such as fur, silk, net and velvet for their collage pictures. Their language skills are encouraged as they describe different textures, such as sandpaper as 'scratchy' and fur as 'fluffy'. Children listen well to a favourite story and talk about the pictures that they see, although opportunities to support them in linking sounds with letters are sometimes limited. They start to learn a simple sign language to 'sing' a Christmas song, and think about those who have difficulty in seeing and hearing. They learn positional language, such as 'behind, under and in front of' as they hear the story of the 'Princess and the Pea'. As a result, they start to develop effective communication skills and use language well to express their thoughts.

Children start to use scissors with confidence to cut out shapes and enjoy gluing these to make their pictures. They pour their own drink at snack time. These activities encourage the development of their hand eye co-ordination. Children's imagination is encouraged as they act out the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' or they dance to the music of 'Cinderella's ball'. They count out how many days left to Christmas on the group advent calendar and recognise shapes as they draw circles in the glitter and sand mixture with their fingers. This encourages their early mathematical and writing skills. They learn about more or less as they cook mince pies and weigh out the flour. They start to solve some simple calculations as they know only 'three' children can play in the home corner. Written number shapes are displayed around the play room, but are not always used in everyday routines, such as, snack time to extend children's understanding. Children help to make a wormery and talk about where they live. They see the autumn leaves changing colour and talk about the weather. They plant bulbs and see how they grow. As a result, they start to show an interest in their natural world. Children learn words have meaning as they hold up the 'days of the week' cards and decide which day it is. This also helps them develop a sense of time. Name cards are available for self registration on arrival, but these are not always used at other times during the day to consistently support children's recognition of familiar names and words.

Children are keen to play with the home corner toys and have fun with the cars and garage. They show an interest in how some things work as they turn the winch on a toy crane, but other

simple technological items are not always readily available to support their spontaneity and imagination in play. Children mix easily with their peers and chat comfortably together. They enjoy looking at a book together or playing a game of dinosaurs. This supports them in making early friendships. They develop their fine motor skills well through threading and creative activities. They willingly join in with a music and movement session where they move their arms and legs to the actions. However, overall, physical play is not so well promoted or planned for to support children in effectively developing their large muscle skills on a regular basis.

Staff are knowledgeable on children's developmental stages, and make observations on their progress. However, assessments are not effectively completed in all areas of children's learning and do not always clearly evidence their achievements. Therefore planned activities may not consistently be based on children's existing skills and abilities. As a consequence, children are not always being effectively helped to progress to the next stage in all areas of their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed and valued. They develop a sense of belonging as they see their photos displayed around the nursery. They identify with their peers in their play and learn about some differences within their world through use of some resources reflecting positive images of diversity, such as puzzles, books and dolls, although overall these are limited. Children's particular needs are discussed with parents and support given to help them reach their potential. They start to develop an awareness of their senses through topical activities and this helps them learn about those with disabilities. For example, as they hear a story about a blind man. Children's specific needs are identified, which supports staff in recognising their individuality, although their first language is not recorded. Friendly relationships are formed with parents. Daily records of younger children's sleep and eating patterns are completed and staff liaise with parents on arrival and collection of their child to maintain regular communication. Some registration paperwork is obtained in other languages to help parents who have English as a second language, but this does not cover all written documentation, such as the nursery prospectus.

Children are co-operative and play happily together. Staff provide suitable role models, talking calmly and thanking children for helping. Children are encouraged to start taking responsibility, such as in helping to tidy up. Appropriate boundaries are maintained by staff, who give positive direction and frequent praise. This helps children in developing their self-esteem. Careful explanations are given to help them develop their own understanding of right and wrong. For example, why it is dangerous to run across the floor. As a result, they generally feel secure within the setting and behave well.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are kept informed of termly topics and activities through newsletters and discussion. Some information on the early learning goals is included in the nursery prospectus and photos of activities relating to each area of learning are displayed. This encourages parents' involvement in their child's learning. Parents have access to their child's development folder and see their artwork on the walls of the pre-school play room. Children's progress is discussed at an annual parents' evening, but other opportunities for them to share in their child's ongoing development are limited.

Children listen well to their morning bible stories and take part in the related creative activities. They enjoy singing their group songs and prayers and sometimes visit the local church. They learn to care for others as they have a 'pyjama' day and raise money for 'Children in Need' day. This shows children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Daily procedures are established, which help children feel secure. For example, they know after breakfast they will have a story time and then go to play. However, although play rooms are comfortable and inviting for children and are effectively arranged to use space well, there is little natural light available. Daily routines are not clearly managed to enable children to regularly go outside to play and benefit from a change in environment. After lunch, children sit together in a large group to watch a favourite TV cartoon. While this gives them a quiet time to relax, most children are not sufficiently occupied and tend to start fidgeting and become unsettled. Staff ratios are sometimes minimal around the lunch period, which impacts on children's care. Most required records are in order and relevant policies in place, although there is no clear format for the recording of complaints. Documentation is stored safely and overall, used with regard to confidentiality.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Clear staff recruitment procedures are followed and management systems are in place to support staff in their role. All involved in the nursery are committed to caring for children and work very well together as a team. Staff are supported in their professional development through regular appraisals and training opportunities, and are encouraged to take responsibility for different nursery procedures. For example, an appointed member checks the smoke alarms regularly. Regular meetings are held by staff and management, which encourages open communication. However, the system for monitoring and reviewing issues arising does not effectively cover all aspects of the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of day care, recommendations were made relating to staff qualifications, eating equipment and documentation. Management staff have now completed relevant child care qualifications and all staff are encouraged to take on suitable training. As a result staff are suitably qualified to support children's developmental needs. Staff training records are regularly updated as ongoing appraisals are completed. Child size utensils are now available for children at meal times, which supports them in independent eating skills. The child protection and complaints policies have been updated to show clear procedures in place, although a system of recording complaints has not been established.

At the last inspection of Nursery Education, key issues were raised relating to information available for parents, the organisation of some large group sessions, physical play activities and the planning and assessment systems. Some progress has been made in addressing these issues, but others are ongoing and similar aspects have been identified in this inspection and consequently brought through as recommendations. Some information on the early learning goals is now provided for parents. For example, photos of children involved in activities are

displayed and are related to each of the six areas of learning. This helps parents to see the different ways in which play activities provided support their child's development. Further child care booklets have been obtained for parents' information. Parents are kept informed of current themes and activities through letters and discussion, which encourages their involvement and provides opportunities to share in their child's learning and play. However, children's assessments do not always show how they make their progress. As a result, parents are not fully supported in sharing all their child's achievements. Staff maintain suitable behaviour management strategies, which help children feel secure and generally more confident to take part in larger group activities. For example, children happily join in with some group action games and songs. However, physical play opportunities overall do not support children in effectively using up their energy. This means their gross motor development is not so well promoted through play. Planning now includes clear differentiation opportunities for those children who learn at different rates. This helps staff to aim activities at appropriate levels for each child. While planning is clearly linked to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum, it does not include everyday routine activities. Consequently, children's learning opportunities are not effectively maximised through all aspects of the daily provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of any complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain some complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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 children with regular physical play opportunities to help develop their large muscle skills, and to be in the fresh air, and ensure suitable hand hygiene procedures are consistently followed
- ensure children's attendance is accurately recorded at all times, and that clear access is maintained in all areas of the premises

- continue to establish and develop the Birth to three matters framework, to provide all younger children with a range of stimulating and exciting play activities
- review the organisation of the lunchtime period to ensure the needs of all children are sufficiently supported

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 children's assessments to clearly identify their achievements, to support the planning of activities based on their existing skills and abilities, and extend planning to maximise children's learning opportunities within everyday core activities
- continue to provide more opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning and to share in their developmental progress
- develop clear systems for reviewing and monitoring the overall effectiveness of the provision offered, to support the groups aims for continual improvement.

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