



## Ashford Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126981
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Mary Van De Peer
<b>Setting Address</b>	43 Albert Road, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8NU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Valerie Webb
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Ashford Play Nursery is one of four nurseries run by Mrs Valerie Webb. It opened in 1971 and operates from the ground floor of a large residential house, in Ashford, Kent. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 17:30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 68 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 51 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with educational needs and also those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 13 staff. There are seven staff, including the manager and supervisor, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one

member of staff who is working towards a qualification. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

The areas children play in are kept clean by staff. As well as toilets and hand basins indoors, there is an outside cubicle for when children are playing outdoors. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. There are suitable nappy changing facilities for the younger children. Children are learning about the importance of good personal care routines. Accident, incident and medication administration records are in place. Many staff have attained a recognised first aid certificate and there is a first aid kit for indoors and outside. If children hurt themselves, staff are able to treat them efficiently. The nursery has sleep mats and comfortable sofas, if children need to rest. Physical development is satisfactory. Inside, children are able to play with resources such as construction activities, puzzles and mark-making resources. These help further develop children's fine motor skills. There is a large garden where children are able to run around and climb, using large equipment. They are also able to plant flowers and vegetables and watch them grow. Children get regular fresh air and exercise.

The nursery provides all children with snacks and meals. These are prepared on the premises. Food from other cultures as well as traditional meals are offered, for example pasta and apple sponge. Fruit is always provided mid-morning and at tea time. A menu is on display for parents to view. If children have particular dietary needs, these are always taken into account. Although there is a water cooler dispenser, this is not made readily available for children to use throughout the day, keeping them hydrated.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery operates on the ground floor of a residential property. The areas children play in are safe and risk assessed on a regular basis, for example there is a safety gate at the base of the stairs and the front door is locked. The garden area is fully fenced with bolted gates to ensure the children's security and safety. An outside toilet allows children appropriate and quick access when playing outdoors. Although there are three toilets available for children to use, two of them are in the same room and lack privacy. Many toys and activities are stored in units and boxes kept at children's height. Tables and chairs are of a suitable size for children to comfortably use. There are registers for staff and children, however they lack some detail. There is a visitor's book. Parents provide relevant information for staff to ensure the safe collection of their children. These procedures help with safeguarding children. Staff and children practise an emergency evacuation procedure every term, this is appropriately recorded. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. There is a written child protection procedure which is shared with parents, however it lacks clarity in some areas.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Activities are presented to children on tables and on the floor where appropriate. Stacking and inter-locking pieces help with hand-eye coordination. Role play areas have resources for imaginary play, such as dressing up, telephones and keyboards. The creative area provides painting, play-dough and sand and water play. However, these are not made available to the children all the time. Mark-making resources are provided but are often limited in choice. Topics are chosen by staff and plans show how these are incorporated into children's every-day play. Children's play is largely adult-directed, meaning that they are not able to decide for themselves what they want to do. For example, an adult prepares a sticking activity and chooses which children need to take part. They are unable to create their own designs as all the shapes are already cut out and children just need to stick them on a pre-determined template. Treasure baskets have been introduced to children recently and these have proved popular with all the children, especially the younger ones. The staff deploy themselves within the nursery quite effectively, for example they sit at the tables at snack and meal times, talking and listening with the children. The staff also play with the children, either helping them or participating in activities such as number and object matching games.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The planning system implemented by staff, uses the Foundation Stage and early learning goals as a guide to what activities are decided upon. However, the observations made on children's progress do not seem to influence how these activities are actually presented to the children, to meet their individual learning needs and next steps. The plans are not always flexible enough to enable children to extend the play situations. For example, when the children are singing rhymes, musical instruments are not used. The adult-led activities do not always allow children's independence and confidence in their abilities to develop further. Children are communicating with each other appropriately as well as with adults. Most of the children are able to recognise the shape of their name. More able children are beginning to write the letters of their name. There are books for children to look at and they enjoy listening to stories read by staff. Some activities give children the opportunities to look at numbers and learn simple addition and subtraction. There are a few resources, such as small world figures and books that reflect positive images of cultures and disabilities. Children are beginning to learn about the differences in people. A computer is not available to help children's understanding of information and technology, but there are programmable toys. Although there are creative resources and materials in the nursery these are not always presented to the children in a consistent way to help further develop and improve their creativity skills. However, children are making satisfactory progress in the early learning goals.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff make sure they know the children well and liaise with parents to ensure they are kept up dated with relevant information. Children's record forms provide important details so the nursery staff can provide appropriate care. Children's progress and achievements in both Birth

to three matters and the Foundation Stage is recorded. All staff refer to these records to inform them of the stage children are at. However, there is no key worker scheme, so staff knowledge of individual children's next steps is often inconsistent. The monitoring system is not followed in an organised way which benefits the children. There is an educational needs coordinator within the nursery, she helps with individual play plans where required. Multi-cultural resources and positive images of different disabilities are limited, however there are books, dolls and dressing-up helping children understand about other people's lives.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. A newsletter is given to parents on a regular basis. This keeps them updated with operational news and dates regarding the nursery. Although there is a policies and procedures folder available for parents to look at, the parent information pack does not contain details on them. Parents confirm that they have some knowledge and understanding about the Foundation Stage. They are complimentary about the parents' evenings organised by the nursery owner and staff, saying they find them very useful. As there is no key worker for individual children, parents talk to available members of staff or the supervisor about their children's day. A contact book is also used to help ensure parents have a consistent communication process in place. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most staff have a child care qualification and hold a recognised first aid certificate. Staff are also able to attend various short courses and workshops as they become available. This helps to keep them updated in some of the current child care practises. An effective recruitment procedure helps to ensure staff appointed are suitable to work with children. The required adult to child ratio is observed. The nursery has five rooms where children play. Activities are spread between these areas, with the majority of resources available in the main play area. This results in children having limited choices in their play when they are confined to a particular area, for example when staff are tidying up after lunchtime. The space is not organised effectively to benefit all the children all the time. The setting has the required records, documentation and paperwork in place but more attention to detail is needed to further improve the quality of care provided for children. Leadership and management is satisfactory. Regular team meetings and annual appraisals help to enable staff work well as a team. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The provider has followed eight previous recommendations.

The first recommendation was for the nursery to ensure children have access to hand drying facilities that do not present a risk of cross infection. The setting now has hand towel dispensers in each toilet area. Children use these after they have washed their hands and dispose of the paper towels in a waste bin, reducing the risk of cross infection.

A second recommendation was for the staff to ensure children with special needs have an individual education plan and the statement on special needs is written in line with the Code

of Practice. The staff have received support and advice from child care organisations, to enable them to develop an appropriate system to support children with educational needs. There is now a written policy on the care of children, which refers to the Code of Practice.

Another recommendation was to ensure existing injury records are confidential and are signed by parents. Staff have developed a way of making sure no other entries are visible to parents signing incidents. This means the information kept is confidential.

There was also a recommendation for the nursery to ensure strategies are in place to help children who have English as an additional language. The nursery has formed links with outside agencies to help children and their families in the speaking and understanding of the English language. This enables these children to settle and feel more secure at the nursery.

A further recommendation was for the staff to ensure the register shows accurately how many children are present at any one time. There is now a colour coded system to show which children are in attendance at morning, lunchtime, afternoon and teatime sessions.

A recommendation requested that the staff implement a system of formal risk assessment. Allocated staff check the premises before children arrive each morning. There is a written record kept to help ensure the areas children use are safe.

The final recommendation was for the nursery to review the child protection policy to include the recording of existing injuries and the procedures to follow where there are allegations against staff. Children's existing injury information is now recorded in a separate book and is shared with parents. The procedure for allegations made against staff is in place but is too brief and not clear enough.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

## 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):

- ensure that the dignity and privacy of children are respected when they are using the toilets
- provide parents with more written information they can refer to, about the operation, policies and procedures of the nursery
- re-evaluate the use of the play areas, ensure they are used more effectively to the benefit of all the children

### **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):

- review and increase opportunities for children to be more independent, helping to improve their self-esteem and confidence
- provide a wider range of resources and activities, ensuring children are challenged appropriately and able to extend their play

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