

The Avenue Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333723
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Inspector	Susan Mary Deadman
Setting Address	The Avenue Methodist Church, Rutland Avenue, High Wycombe, HP12 3XA
Telephone number	07764 272217
E-mail	david.sparks@talk21.com
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 satisfactory.

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 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. There are currently 23 children on roll and of these 20 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports a high proportion of children with English as an additional language. They support children who have learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs four staff, of whom the manager holds the relevant qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff care for children in a clean environment with effective hygiene procedures in place, which promotes their welfare. Children have a good understanding of the ways to keep themselves healthy. They are familiar with the routine of washing their hands before snack time.

Children have a very clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the effects this has on their body. For example, they know that eating breakfast is good for you, that carrots are healthy and water cools them down if they are hot and sweaty. Children enjoy nutritious snacks, which are in plentiful supply. They select from carrot sticks, cucumber, apple and raisins. Children supply their own drinks, which are available to them throughout the session. Staff also offer milk and water at snack time. Staff sit with children whilst they eat their snack and children very much enjoy this social occasion.

Staff are well organised to respond to minor accidents. They promote children's welfare, as there is effective communication with parents relating to accidents.

Staff gain parents' prior written permission for emergency medical treatment. However, they did not gain written permission on the occasion they administered medication. This is a breach of regulations.

Children enjoy indoor activities to support the physical health. They show much excitement when taking part in parachute games. They use the various balancing equipment well and have fun crawling through the tunnel.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a safe environment. Staff safeguard children's welfare as they follow suitable procedures to ensure the play area is safe and well maintained.

The staff promote children's welfare as they ensure they have a clear understanding of the fire evacuation procedures. Children practise these on a regular basis and staff record the outcome and act on any issues as necessary. Effective procedures promote children's safety and welfare.

Appropriate items are in place to meet children's individual needs. For example, the nappy changing facilities are suitable and maintain children's privacy. Staff maintain play equipment to a good standard. For example, programmable keyboards have batteries in place and are in good working order. There is now a very attractive book corner with many colourful cushions. Children enjoy sitting here with friends, sharing books or just relaxing. Improvements made to the home corner result in children using this area fully as they cook and share their culinary delights with friends.

Staff promote children's welfare as they have a generally good understanding of current child protection procedures. Staff continue to keep records of any pre-existing injuries to children and they now record the explanation from parents. Staff have a suitable understanding of the need to monitor any concerns and are aware of the systems to refer any issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and generally settle well at the pre-school. They enjoy a suitable range of activities, which are organised for their arrival. They make good use of areas such as the home corner and book corner. The daily routine provides children with reasonable variety. For example, after a lengthy free-play session children come together for group-time. They welcome each other in different languages, and talk about relevant issues, such as how many children are present and the weather outside. Staff give children the opportunity to share their news should they wish to do so. Children retain interest for an appropriate length of time and then enjoy snack time. Activities generally interest the children who spend a suitable amount of time in particular areas, for example, with the interactive gorilla game, home corner and train set.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching methods are adequate although not always inspiring. However, the level of challenge is sufficient to interest most children in the activities and, given their capabilities and starting points, to enable them to make satisfactory progress.

Staff regularly record observations relating to children's development at the time the activities take place. This provides them with an accurate recording system and allows them to gain an understanding of children's stage of development.

Children have the opportunity to practise their writing skills as they have easy access to notepads, diaries and pencils. Children gain an understanding that print carries meaning as they see various labels around the room. For example, areas, such as toilets, book corner and sand play, display labels in English and Urdu. Children link sounds to letters as during circle time staff ask them which day of the week begins with a W and children respond accurately with Wednesday.

Children now learn about the environment through topics that introduce them to the natural world. They plant seeds and then plant the growing shoots into a soil bag. During this activity, they learn new words, such as soil, stem, root and shoot. Children enjoy this activity and show a good amount of interest. During snack time, children eagerly show off their understanding of where certain foods originate. For example, they know milk comes from cows and yoghurt contains milk.

Children enjoy using the computer and have proficient mouse control. However, staff do not always support children in this area. As a result, children do not know the purpose of each computer game, which restricts learning opportunities. Staff have increased children's access to programmable toys. Children use battery operated phonic writing desks and phones. Hi-fi equipment is in easy access.

There are basic opportunities to support children's understanding of numbers. Staff ask children to count during circle time. Children eagerly participate in number rhymes. There are few opportunities for children to develop their understanding of mathematic concepts, such as sequencing, estimating and calculating.

Children explore various textures as they filter dry sand and roll dough. The sand tray contains dry sand with tiny stones, which make it more interesting. Staff support children at this activity and talk to them in their first language, which promotes their development as it enables progression of general conversation from the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the world around them through planned topics. For example, during Chinese New Year they create lanterns during art activities. Children benefit from the fact that one staff member speaks Urdu. This meets the needs of several children and parents who attend the setting.

The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs and the coordinator for this has now completed relevant training. Outside agencies attend the setting to support children's development. Effective partnership between staff, parents and other professionals promotes children's development.

Children play cooperatively together and have generally good social skills. They are beginning to learn and understand the need to share. Reorganisation has improved the quality of group time. Children sit for a short period, talking and listening to each other.

Staff generally manage minor disputes sensitively; however, they will sometimes call over to children, telling them not to do something. Staff do not always provide children with an explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable or the consequences of their actions. This does not support children's understanding of right and wrong.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are clear about the contents of the previous report and understand why the outcome for nursery education was inadequate. They are happy with the care their child receives and are confident that the setting has made several improvements. There are currently no written developmental reports, however, parents are invited into the setting on a regular basis for one-to-one feedback with staff. Parents now have good opportunity to contribute information, which supports staff's knowledge of the children's general developmental progress.

Effective procedures in place provide parents with easy access to a good range of relevant information. For example, staff display certificates gained during training courses, planning sheets, which include the Early Years Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters, the registration and public liability insurance certificates.

Parents have access to policies and procedures, some of which are also contained in the basic prospectus. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children generally enter confidently into the setting, which has a welcoming atmosphere. Staff offer gentle support to children who are new or upset. Children go straight to the equipment and settle well at their chosen activity.

Currently only the manager has the required level of qualification. However, the deputy is working towards the Level 2 childcare qualification and aims to complete this within the next few months.

Staff support the care of children as they generally follow a suitable range of policies and procedures. There is now an effective complaints policy and procedure. Staff have a clear

understanding of how to record parental concerns. Stringent systems are in place to support the recording of complaints, which includes the outcome.

Leadership and management of the nursery are satisfactory. However, the implementation of some previous actions has been hindered by staff changes. Staff are still required to improve their understanding of the Foundation Stage of Nursery Education, although training is due to take place at the beginning of the next term. Senior staff devise adequate plans to provide children with an adequate range of experiences. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the provider gained an outcome of satisfactory relating to the care of children. The outcome of inadequate was given for the nursery education.

Following the previous inspection the provider was asked to address several recommendations in relation to the care of children. These related to development of staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour; to show how the appointed special educational needs coordinator will undertake the appropriate training; to share the record of pre-existing injuries with parents and update the complaints procedure.

Staff generally manage children's behaviour appropriately. However, on some occasions they do not explain to children why behaviour is unacceptable. The provider is working to improve this area and staff are booked on relevant training.

The staff member responsible for supporting children who have special educational needs has undertaken the required training. Effective working relationships with parents and outside agencies support children's development.

There are effective systems in place to record pre-existing injuries and share this record with parents. The complaints procedure has been updated and complies with the relevant legislation.

In relation to nursery education the provider was required to take action to address the areas of weakness. It was a requirement to provide an action plan to show a more effective system of planning and evaluating the nursery education; an action plan to show how the quality of teaching and staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum will be improved; a plan to show how an effective system for assessing and monitoring children's progress will be produced and to show how parents will contribute to these records and provide an action plan to show how staff will plan and manage whole group activities more effectively to promote children's learning and development.

The provider submitted detailed action plans in relation to all the above. Prior to a child joining the setting parents are asked to complete an all about me form which provides staff with relevant information about each child. A baseline assessment form is completed by the child's key worker shortly after entry. Each child has their own diary profile as well as a Foundation Stage record of achievement. Activities are devised in relation to the Early Learning Goals. Relevant observations allow staff to plan future activities to promote children's learning requirements.

Parents are encouraged to add any information or work that the child has undertaken outside the setting and have the opportunity to speak to key workers at the end of each session. They are invited to regular open days at the pre-school.

Staff have a very basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage of Nursery Education. They have individual training plans and are booked on the next available relevant course. This is an on-going issue as new staff have been employed since the previous inspection. However, staff demonstrate and eagerness to complete required training and a representative from the Local Authority is supporting the setting in their development. Training is booked for the first day after their return from the Easter half term break.

The reorganisation of group time works well and offers the children enough time to join in and share their news. Children enjoy this session and have an appropriate level of participation.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the previous 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 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):

- gain parents' written permission prior to administering any medicinal product
- improve behaviour management strategies to support children's understanding of right and wrong and the consequences of their actions

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):

- improve the quality of teaching and provide a range of activities that stimulate and excite children
- improve children's understanding of mathematical concepts.

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