

# Ashfield Nursery & ELC

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY217674
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Cathryn Parry
<b>Setting Address</b>	259 Stanhope Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 0PA
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<b>Registered person</b>	Ashfield Nursery and ELC Ltd.
<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?

Ashfield Nursery & Early Learning Centre is one of three nurseries owned and run by Ashfield Nursery and ELC plc. It was registered in 2002 and operates from three main rooms in purposefully converted premises. It is situated in the residential area of South Shields in Tyne and Wear. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:00 to 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 102 children from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The nursery employs 20 members of staff. All of these hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a further qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning appropriate personal hygiene practices through suitable routines and positive role modelling. They are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and to use individual tissues when blowing noses. Staff wear aprons and gloves when changing nappies, which helps reduce the chance of spreading germs. A daily cleaner is employed to keep the premises clean and staff wash toys and equipment as needed. This ensures children's health is maintained. Appropriate policies, suitable relationships with parents and relevant training ensure individual children are adequately cared for should they become ill. This reduces the risk of cross infection.

Children are well nourished as staff provide healthy meals and snacks. These include salmon and broccoli bake, homemade lentil soup with wholegrain bread and fresh raw vegetables. Children ask for drinks when they are thirsty, as well as having water and milk provided at meal and snack times. Older children have free access to fresh fruit and milk throughout the day, which encourages their self-help skills. The majority of children access regular opportunities for physical play, including playing in the garden. They explore, test and develop physical control, for instance, when playing musical statues. The nurseries reasonably flexible routine incorporates time for quiet play and rest, enhancing children's well-being. All relevant documentation with regard to health, including specific dietary needs and consent forms are in place and up to date. These positively safeguard children's well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are made welcoming and friendly to children and parents. The majority of the play areas have windows, which enables most children to benefit from some natural light whilst playing indoors. Children are appropriately safeguarded as the nursery is secure at all times. This is supplemented with effective procedures for adults collecting children, including the use of passwords and codes when needed. Children are able to explore safely using clean and well maintained resources. They are able to move freely as there is adequate space, which reduces the risk of accidents. Children participate in different activities as furniture and equipment are of an appropriate size. Their knowledge about personal safety is encouraged by gentle reminders from practitioners to pick up the toys so they do not trip, road safety activities and periodic fire drill practices. This positively contributes to children developing a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe.

Appropriate safety equipment is in place to ensure the risk of accidental injury is reduced. This includes smoke detectors and door restrictors to help prevent children trapping their fingers. Staff respond positively to hazards, such as sweeping up spilt sand to promote children's safety. Resources, which are not in use, are stored safely to safeguard children. Risk assessments both indoors and out, reduce the opportunity for accidental injury. Those who go on outings are kept safe as staff encourage appropriate routines, such as holding hands. Staff have attended relevant child protection training and demonstrate a reasonable understanding of associated issues. However, they are unsure who the designated officer is, who in turn is unsure of procedures to follow. This has a negative impact on safeguarding children. All required procedures and documentation are in place to ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

## Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and are happy to participate in the activities provided. These include playing with cars on a road mat, sharing books and using musical instruments. Their self-esteem and sense of belonging is encouraged as their paintings and photographs are displayed on the nursery walls. An appropriate balance of child-centred and adult-led experiences ensures suitable challenge for their age and stage of development. Use is made of the local area, giving children a breadth of opportunities. This includes trips to the park. Staff extend activities, for instance when they provide opportunities for children to collect leaves and use them in collage pictures. This inspires children to be creative and increases their knowledge of the natural world. They enjoy using their imagination as they line up chairs to make a vehicle, whilst singing 'The wheels on the bus' song.

Opportunities to explore resources in different ways are provided for children. An example of this is where an enclosed indoor area for sand play has been created for children aged 27 months to three years. This inspires them to investigate whilst having fun. Staff are currently reviewing the planning of activities and recording of children's progress in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They are endeavouring to act upon a range of advice in order to implement this positively with the younger children. Consequently, individual files do not show a true reflection of when achievements were made. Babies develop a sense of self as they see their mirror image. Their interest is encouraged through a variety of man-made and some natural resources. Staff have created a sensory area for children aged 20 months to 27 months. This enables children to enjoy sensory experiences as they play with a variety of textures and resources that have pleasant smells, such as bags of pot pourri.

### Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have not yet attended training on the Foundation Stage, which has a negative impact on the quality of education provided. However, they do show an adequate understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones. Plans, wall displays and photographs relate to the six areas of learning and most of the children's records show steady progress. However, they are not all up to date. Consequently, they can not be used as an effective tool for future planning. The learning environment is organised into different areas, which are currently being reviewed. Interactions between staff and children are generally good. Staff offer suggestions and ask questions which challenge children to think and develop their ideas. Children independently choose what to do and concentrate reasonably well on their chosen activities. An example of this is where three children sit together for some time building with magnetic blocks.

They gain confidence when using numbers, for instance when they count to ten together in a large group. Their mathematical thinking is encouraged as they weigh ingredients for baking and are measured for a height chart. A variety of creative activities including painting, cutting and sticking promote children's self-expression and coordination whilst having fun. Their communication skills are fostered as they participate in songs and rhymes and enjoy sharing books. Small manipulative skills are promoted, including threading activities and using small tools, such as rolling pins and cutters. Children are gaining a broader understanding of the natural world through planned experiences and spontaneous activities. These include trips to the beach and the park, as well as exploring the freshly fallen snow. An easily accessible computer gives children opportunities to practice their information and technology skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

A short induction period, generally including two visits, encourages children to settle into the new environment. Children are beginning to share and take turns with appropriate adult support, for instance, when they use the outdoor equipment. They show concern for each other, including giving each other a hug if they are upset. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The staff's appropriate approach to equal opportunities contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. This is complemented with a selection of resources, including dolls, books and posters reflecting different cultures. However, these are not effectively deployed throughout the nursery. Consequently, this has a negative impact on raising all children's understanding of difference. Celebrations of different festivals do take place, which encourages children to be aware of a range of traditions. There are currently no children with learning difficulties or disabilities attending the nursery. However, staff show a positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment. This includes attending relevant training and conferences. Appropriate behaviour management strategies are generally employed well throughout the nursery. Children are encouraged to consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. A notice board and regular newsletters provide information regarding forthcoming events and topical news. Information is shared with parents and carers on a daily basis, including written diary sheets for younger children. This ensures they are aware of their child's day at nursery and promotes continuity of care. Parents and carers views on the nursery are encouraged with the provision of a suggestions box. They are also invited to watch their children perform in a Christmas show and to be involved in events, such as the summer fair. A complaints procedure is in place but does not effectively state how such an incident is managed and has not been reviewed to include Ofsted's current contact details. Consequently, this hinders a parent or carer from making a complaint. Staff are friendly and approachable. This results in children's individual needs being discussed in a relaxed manner and specific requirements being met.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager shows a commitment to the ongoing improvement of care and education provided. She has some knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage, she is keen to increase her understanding to enable her to effectively support staff. She organises team meetings and annual appraisals for individual staff. This has a positive impact on building a committed team. The manager encourages staff to access a range of training to further their professional development. She talks to staff in each room on a daily basis. However, she does not effectively monitor children's progress and the curriculum offered to the pre school children. This has a detrimental effect on children meeting their full potential. The manager is aware of her conditions for registration and adheres to them. Consequently, children are safeguarded appropriately. A robust recruitment procedure is in place, which has a positive effect on keeping children safe. All staff are suitably vetted to protect children from harm. The manager ensures staff are deployed appropriately to meet staffing ratios within the nursery and on outings. All legally required documentation is in place and implemented appropriately. This positively contributes to children's overall well-being. Children's individual documentation is stored adequately to maintain confidentiality.

Children access a range of play opportunities through the appropriate organisation of space, time and resources. Rooms are arranged to accommodate different age groups of children to meet their varying needs. The nursery has a grassed garden and an area, which benefits from a soft safety surface. This enables most children to partake regularly in a variety of outdoor activities. The reasonably flexible routine incorporates time for visits to places of interest. These include a trip to a large department store at Christmas, to see a special window display of Gulliver's travels. Many resources are stored at the children's height to promote free choice and independence.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection the provider was asked to ensure the organisation of meal times encourages children's independence and enables them to make choices. They were requested to develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour and ensure that the behaviour management policy and procedures are implemented in the three to five-year room. They were also asked to develop the play opportunities for children over two years so that they are able to access creative activities freely and to ensure that the large grouping of children and set routines do not have a detrimental effect on children's behaviour in the three to under five-year room. The provider was also requested to increase the range of images and objects throughout the nursery that reflect non-stereotypical roles, cultural diversity and ability.

Staff are beginning to give children opportunities to serve themselves at meal times, which encourages their independence. Staff are aware of behaviour management strategies and implement these with all children, this results in children generally behaving well. Creative activities are more accessible to children and the routine is flexible to meet children's individual needs. The range of equal opportunities resources has been increased, which promotes children's awareness and understanding of difference. These all have a positive impact on children's overall well-being and development.

### **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 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):

- continue to develop the planning of activities and recording of younger children's progress
- ensure all staff are aware of the designated officer for child protection and that the designated officer reviews her knowledge and understanding of related procedures
- review the complaints procedure.

### **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):

- ensure individual files for pre-school children are up to date to show a true reflection of progress
- further develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- further develop monitoring systems within the nursery.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)