

Ashford Play Nursery (Willesborough)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126982
Inspection date	08 October 2007
Inspector	Mary Van De Peer
Setting Address	The Old Chapel, Red Year Court, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0NS
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Registered person	Valerie Webb
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?

Ashford Play Nursery opened in 1995 and is one of a chain of three privately owned nurseries and crèche in Ashford. It operates from a converted chapel with one main room, it has its own cloakroom, kitchen and office area. The nursery serves the local area. There are currently 42 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as a first language. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 09:00-16:00. There are five staff who work with the children, four of whom hold Early Years qualifications. They receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All the children are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. They are aware of the need to develop effective personal hygiene procedures. The nursery has a sick children policy and ill children do not normally attend the setting. As a result, there is minimal risk of cross-infection to children. Most of the staff have attended first aid training and there is a first aid kit within easy reach. If children sustain any minor injuries, they can be dealt with quickly and effectively. An accident book is in place but the information is not recorded in a confidential way. Medication records are kept, although the individual parental consent forms do not always provide precise medication details. Each child's health needs are also obtained and recorded. Overall, children's health and well-being is protected.

Physical development is satisfactory. Children are able to use a range of physical activities that help contribute to a healthy lifestyle. For instance, climbing frames, balls, construction and mark-making. They develop self-confidence in both fine and gross motor skills, as they play with suitable indoor and outdoor toys and equipment. Additional opportunities mean that children have been able to grow different plants in a garden area outside. Children really enjoy their physical play and activities and are able to benefit from fresh air and exercise all year round.

Children are offered generally healthy foods at snack time. They are able to choose from a selection of fruit and crackers with different spreads and drinks, such as milk, shakes and water. They use individual cups and plates to help avoid cross-contamination. Parents provide packed lunches for their children and are encouraged to keep the contents healthy. Children are able to help themselves to water, which is readily available, throughout the group sessions. Children's individual dietary needs are catered for. They are beginning to have an awareness of healthy eating issues.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, clean and safe environment. For instance, there are safety gates and socket covers in place. The layout of the nursery's play area is generally child-friendly. For example, there are low level tables and chairs, large soft cushions and walls decorated with children's work. There are several storage units and trolleys available, enabling children to self-select resources, however, some of them are not very accessible to children and are either too high or inappropriately placed. Although children are able to use the toilets and wash-basin independently, there is currently only one hand basin and the positioning of the toilets does not ensure children's privacy. The planned organisation of activities and equipment means children can move around safely and freely. Toys and resources children use are appropriate to their ages, safe, clean and checked regularly for breakages. The outside play area is secure and safe. The risk of accidental injury to children is minimised, because staff use effective risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, a high fence surrounds the outdoor area and children playing on the climbing frames are supervised. Staff have developed an understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and the setting's safety limits. There is a well practised emergency evacuation procedure in place. This results in children learning some sense of danger and gain knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm

and keep safe. Staff have an adequate understanding of child protection policies and procedures, giving high priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They are happy in their play and eager to participate. Staff have attended various training sessions on the Birth to three matters framework and Foundation Stage. They are enthusiastic and caring, therefore meeting the needs of individual children. This results in children starting to achieve well. The adults inter-act positively with children, which helps to encourage and support early communication skills. Children begin to make sense of the world as they join in with exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, there is photographic evidence of children preparing their garden plot for growing different plants. Staff provide activities with varying levels of difficulty, such as puzzles and construction, to meet the development needs of both very young children and the more able ones. The book area is inviting and comfortable, children love relaxing here, looking at books or being read stories by adults. Mark-making areas and role play are constantly available for children to use and develop their imagination skills.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are able to use a range of stimulating activities relating to their needs. They have access to appropriate resources, which support them in all the learning areas. However, there are limitations in the provision of information and technology activities, such as a computer. There are missed opportunities for children to be appropriately challenged and for their play to be extended. The children are keen to learn and show confidence, for example when they discuss the day, date and weather. Older children are able to listen intently to stories and enjoy giving their interpretation of the pictures. Children are able to mark-make to represent their ideas, for instance, in paintings and on chalk-boards. They make sense of the world around them in the role play area and are creating colourful art work, which is displayed. Children are gaining confidence in using numbers in their play and can count well. Nonetheless, there are some missed opportunities for children to learn more about problem-solving and measuring in every-day activities. Children's physical skills are developing and improving through using a variety of different equipment. Information about children's starting points, skills and needs are obtained when children enter the nursery. A new planning system enables staff to observe and monitor children, helping ensure they are achieving as much as they can. This is also starting to be used to influence and plan activities that will help children take the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children, their parents and carers are welcomed warmly into the nursery. Staff ensure they have an adequate knowledge and understanding of children's needs. Children new to the nursery are helped to settle in by staff who are sensitive towards their needs. Staff help and support the children, for example, in learning to share, take turns and respect each other. The staff have appropriate expectations and set consistent boundaries for all the children. This is helping them learn to negotiate with others and increase their understanding of right and wrong. Children respond to gentle reminders to care for each other and the nursery's resources and equipment. Appropriate staff awareness and respect for the children, help increase children's

sense of trust. This results in children developing a good sense of self. Children's behaviour is generally good. There is an appropriate range of play resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and gender and some showing disability. The staff have a positive attitude towards the care children with learning difficulties or disabilities need. They have recently improved and developed their arrangements for children who need extra help and individual educational plans are now starting to be used more effectively. Children are developing a positive attitude to others. They are gaining an understanding about the wider world and community through looking at how people live in other countries. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered.

The nursery's partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff have built up positive relationships with parents. This helps to contribute to children's well-being in the nursery. As the child starts at the setting, staff obtain information from parents about their children's needs and interests. Although children's folders are readily available for parents to look at freely, they expressed a wish for written information about their child's progress and development to take home. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning. Details about Birth to three and the Foundation Stage is provided for parents. Other relevant nursery news is available through the policies and procedures, verbal feedback with key persons and notice boards. This helps staff and parents work together to aid children's progress and development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery is privately owned. There are also two other nurseries and a crèche in the company. The Ofsted registration certificate is displayed, along with other nursery information on a notice board. There is a recruitment and vetting procedure in place to help ensure staff are suitable to work with the children. Staff performance is supervised and annual appraisals provide some support for staff personal development and their training needs. The nursery's operational plan, including policies and procedures are reviewed periodically and up-dated, to help meet the needs of the children, their parents, carers and staff. Staff working with the children have qualifications ranging from NVQ Level two to three. The person-in-charge is qualified to Level three. The majority of staff have a current paediatric first aid course certificate. Children and staff individual records are stored securely, with main files at the head office. The required paperwork and documentation is in place, although the current registration and accident recording systems for children lacks some confidentiality. The nursery has adequate regard for children's welfare and well-being. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The owner is very experienced and has processes in place to support quality care for all the children attending the nursery. The person-in-charge and her temporary deputy are enthusiastic child-carers, this positive attitude helps motivate the staff. They are introducing effective ways to develop and improve the nursery in all areas, especially in the delivery of the Foundation Stage. This has resulted in a review of the planning system which are now beginning to identify the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. Resulting in a positive attitude which will help improve the learning experiences for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two actions and three recommendations arising from the last inspection. Satisfactory improvement has been made by the nursery to meet these.

The first action was for the registered person to ensure correct adult to child ratios are met at all times.

Action taken: The supervisor and deputy recognise their responsibility as persons directly in charge of the children, to ensure correct adult to child ratios are met at all times. Staff have adequate knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and Regulations. This means that children are appropriately supervised.

The last action was for the registered person to ensure staff are fully informed and kept up-to-date with changes to regulations and requirements of the National Standards.

Action taken: Copies of the relevant National Standards, Guidance and Revisions are available for all staff. All show an adequate knowledge of these. Children's welfare and well-being is being promoted.

The first recommendation was for staff to ensure that observations on children's development clearly informs the planning.

Action taken: Staff now carry out observations on children development and evaluate activities. The observations are recorded and then linked in with the six learning areas. Planning sheets are also completed for different activities, recording the aim, resources used, procedure followed and evaluation. Staff meet weekly and using these records, establish children's next steps and include them in the current weekly plans. This helps ensure children's progress is monitored and their next steps are planned for.

A second recommendation was for staff to ensure children have constant access to writing implements during free play.

Action taken: Children have constant use of a mark-making area, with resources such as pencils, crayons, and different sizes and types of paper. This helps encourage children to mark-make during every day play.

The final recommendation was for staff to ensure children have daily access to resources that promote imaginary play.

Action taken: The role play area, with various pieces of play equipment, such as dressing-up and kitchen is now always available for children to use, both in and out of doors.

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):

- ensure children's privacy and dignity is respected
- ensure there is an additional wash hand basin for children to use
- consider re-locating storage of some toys and activities, so that children can access them more easily and increase the opportunities for self-selection

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to problem solve and learn about measuring in everyday activities and play
- ensure children are provided with the opportunities to extend their play and provide appropriate challenges

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