

Ashford Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126983
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Clare Stone
Setting Address	1 Wall Road, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8NZ
Telephone number	01233 638960
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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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ashford Play Nursery opened in 1984 and is one of a chain of three privately owned nurseries. It is registered to provide care for 44 children from two years of age. It is not registered to provide overnight care. It operates from a premises in central Ashford. Upstairs the staff have use of a kitchen, bathroom and office/staff room. Downstairs the children have two large play rooms and two cloakrooms. A large enclosed well equipped garden is accessed via a path alongside the nursery which belongs to another nursery in the chain.

There are currently 58 children from two to five years on roll. At the present time only 32 are in receipt of Nursery education funding. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. Seven staff work with the children, four of whom work full time and all staff hold Early Years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well organised activities and routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Children can help themselves to drinks of water whenever they are thirsty. This helps promote independence and self help skills. Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff are well informed about children's health and provide good support for each child. All staff at the setting hold first aid certificates and information on their qualifications is displayed.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy a cafeteria style snack and confidently choose when they want a drink and help themselves to a healthy snack. The staff offer the children fruit, raw vegetables, toast and bread sticks. Staff take account of the wishes of parents when providing fresh cooked meals and foods for the children, and encourage children to try new foods. This is always with permission from parents.

Children enjoy a good range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they use a wide range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment. The setting plan outside activities to ensure the children get an all round choice to extend their physical skills. At the time of the inspection children enjoyed practising their forward rolls and climbing through tunnels collecting coloured bean bags.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have the use of two large rooms which are used daily. They have plenty of space to move around freely and make good use of the activities available. As the building is purpose built, it is bright and colourful with displays of the children's work. This helps children feel a sense of belonging and that their work is valued by the staff.

Children play with toys which are checked regularly for hygiene and safety, broken equipment is thrown away if it cannot be repaired. Toys are stored in clear plastic boxes so the children can see at a glance what they would like to play with. The furniture and equipment used helps to promote an environment which is stimulating; toys are easily accessible and are age appropriate.

Children's welfare is promoted through the emergency evacuation procedures which are carried out on a regular basis. Safe arrival and departure procedures are in place. A written risk assessment is carried out by a member of staff who is responsible for Health and Safety, any issues are addressed. Fire blankets are in place to keep the children safe, but there are no smoke alarms in the building. Any hazardous materials or substances are kept locked away from the children.

Children's welfare is paramount and the child protection policy is up to date. A record of existing injuries and concerns is in place and this is signed by the parents. Staff have the understanding that they must also keep themselves safe. The procedures to be followed in event of allegations against staff, students or volunteers are in place. However, a few staff are unclear on certain child protection issues. This is a recommendation for the setting to revisit this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children who attend the setting are very confident and secure. Staff have been trained with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and Birth to three matters framework which they implement effectively. All children benefit from a carefully thought out programme of activities which also incorporates the children's freedom of choice. Staff are very caring of the children and constantly talk to them, asking them questions which helps them organise their thoughts. All children are friendly and show real affection to each other and the staff. The staff support the children well when they are playing, but understand the children's need for space to work things out for themselves and explore their surroundings.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children who receive funding for nursery education are making good progress towards the Early Learning goals. This is made clear by the staff understanding of the stepping stones and that they move children forward at their own pace. Planning and documentation is displayed for parents to read and regular evaluation of these activities ensure that children do not become bored and under stimulated, which in turn can lead to poor behaviour. Planning also includes any changes that the children have asked for and the evaluation of these activities gives staff a better understanding of what the children really enjoy doing.

Children are well motivated and enjoy new challenges. They concentrate well at self-chosen activities. Children are very independent and they see to their personal needs such as dressing and undressing, visiting the toilet and washing hands, deciding when to have their drink and snack. Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers and adults. They understand the need to share and take turns when playing together. Children help tidy up and are aware of the daily routine.

Children's listening skills are very good. They listen and take turns when speaking in large and small groups. They negotiate well during role-play. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully. They spend time 'reading' and sharing books with friends and adults and can relate well-known stories by looking at the pictures. Some children recognise simple words on labels around the room.

Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs. They can recognise a group of three objects without counting. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing well. They recognise the properties of simple shapes and make patterns using beads and pegs. They also use appropriate mathematical language during free play activities.

Children use a range of tools and equipment to explore their surroundings. They look at mini-beasts through magnifying glasses. They explore objects using magnets and discover which objects float and sink. There is a nature table for the children to explore and an interest table. Although children have access to tape recorders, telephones and calculators they do not have access to a computer. Therefore children are not being given the opportunity to keep up to date with new technology.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences. Children use their imagination and express their ideas

in a variety of ways. They act out well-known scenarios and stories during role-play. Children enjoyed playing police people and princesses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through celebrating festivals and having access to a good range of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Staff also know signs of Makaton and have pictures around the setting to help all children feel included.

The individual needs of all children who attend are acknowledged and met. The nursery has developed effective arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties, gathering advice from specialists and working with outside agencies. Children behave very well. They are beginning to understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods staff use to manage behaviour including explanation, distraction and positive expectations. Staff are enthusiastic and good role models and encourage children to learn to take turns and share. This is clear when the children talk amongst themselves about sharing and finding their own solutions.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning. Clear and helpful information on the Foundation Stage Curriculum and effective communication through newsletters, consultations and daily chats. This enables staff and parents to work together to help children develop in all areas of the curriculum. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is well organised. There are comprehensive policies and procedures available for parents to read and take home if they wish. The recruitment procedure is robust and all staff are checked by the criminal records bureau. All staff working with children hold a childcare and first aid qualification. Staff who deliver the Foundation Stage have good knowledge of the curriculum and work hard to ensure children's needs are fully met. Observations and evaluations are regularly used to monitor the effect of changes and the effect on the children. All mandatory documentation is in place and staff are aware of confidentiality and store their records accordingly.

The leadership and management are good. The staff work very well as a team and there is a harmonious feel within the setting. There is a staff appraisal system that identifies training needs and all staff are encouraged to update their knowledge regularly. Staff also fill in questionnaires to help the management team know how to move the staff forward and improve on good outcomes for children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the following recommendations were made:-

- 1) Ensure children with special needs have an individual education plan, if appropriate. All children who need an Individual education plan have one in place.
- 2) Ensure parents sign existing injuries records. The existing injury record is up to date and signed by all parents.
- 3) Ensure register shows accurately how many children are present at any one time. This is completed correctly and clearly shows how many children are present in the setting,
- 4) Ensure steps to climbing frame and stair carpet are made safe. The carpet on the stairs has been replaced and the setting no longer have a climbing frame.
- 5) Ensure strategies are in place to help children who have English as an additional language. The staff have stories for children with English as additional language. They are also aware of where to seek support for the children in their care.
- 6) Ensure the statement on special needs is written in line with the Code of Practice. This is now up to date with current practice.
- 7) Implement a system of planned risk assessment. Risk assessments are now in place.
- 8) Review child protection policy to include the recording of existing injuries and the procedures to follow where there are allegations against staff. This policy is now up to date.

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 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):

- revisit child protection procedures and possible signs of abuse on a regular basis
- check with the fire safety officer regarding smoke detectors

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 children have regular access to information technology

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