

Ashmore Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135013
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Inspector	Martha Naa Ahimah Darkwah
Setting Address	St. Lukes Church Centre, Fernhead Road, London, W9 3EH
Telephone number	0208 968 6225
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Registered person	The Trustees of Ashmore Pre-School
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?

Ashmore Pre-school is run by a parent committee. It opened in 1992 and operates from a twin room with access to a hall, on church premises in North Westminster. It serves families within the local community.

There are currently 16 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week for 38 weeks in the year. The sessions are from 09:30 until 15:15.

The setting employs four staff members who work with the children. All of the staff, including the manager, have early year's qualifications. The setting receives support from the Westminster Pre-school Learning Alliance and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as the premises are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness. They gain an effective understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children spend time washing their hands after the toilet or before lunch. Staff members are available to support the younger children helping them to gain practical skills to turn off the taps without wasting the water. Children's health is protected because staff members are well informed about their medical conditions. Some staff members hold valid first aid qualifications. Procedures are in place for recording accidents and the administering of medication, for maintaining good health. Parents are informed of any accidents. Parent's signature is obtained to acknowledge the entry in the accident book for the wellbeing of children.

Although the parents supply their child's lunch each day, the school provides their snacks. Children help themselves to easily accessible, enjoyable and healthy snacks at a time suitable to them ensuring children's concentration and learning is not disturbed. They independently help themselves to snack, pour their drinks and staff members encourage conversations on the benefits of healthy eating. Parents are encouraged to provide a healthy packed meal and these are suitably stored in a refrigerator until lunch time.

Children are developing well physically as they have the opportunity to run around and generally benefit from outdoor play within a secure environment. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and co-ordination. Children enjoy running and balancing and they are beginning to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when active. Indoors, they use a range of equipment and resources to develop competent small motor control. Children use scissors skilfully, pour small quantities of water accurately, tidy up after activities and use appropriate tools with play dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child-friendly environment. They benefit from the meaningful organisation of resources that are safe, well made and of good quality. Children have good opportunities to exercise their independence by being able to self-select the resources available for them from the open-fronted shelves. Play resources are stored and displayed attractively and appealingly for children

Children are safe and secure on the premises because the policies and procedures in place are followed by staff members to promote children's safety and welfare. The safety of children is important to staff, and any potential dangers are identified and quickly reduced. High priority is also given to making sure children will be safe in an emergency. The fire drill is practised regularly to ensure that all children are taken to safety quickly in an emergency. Staff members work directly with the children in the different areas of the room and in the garden. Therefore, they are well supervised at all times.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe. They learn to tidy up after activities safely and staff members ensure children understand how to use scissors with care. They learn to push their chairs safely in for safety in the environment when they get up. Staff members ensure

children understand how to use scissors with care and provide suitable scissors for left handed children. Staff members ensure that the setting is well secured and that anyone wishing to gain entry is suitably identified before gaining access. All visitors are asked to sign in and record their arrival and departure times to further promote the children's safety and welfare. Risk assessments are regularly carried out, however, the record is not in sufficient detail to help staff to ensure that the facilities remain suitable for use by the children.

Children's well-being is also well protected because staff members have a clear understanding of their role in relation to child protection issues. They know the indicators of abuse and the procedure to be followed for reporting concerns. There are procedures in place to ensure that staff members who are going through checks are never left alone with children. There are clear procedures in place if an allegation is made against a member of staff. However, this is not in sufficient detail to help protect children further.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy their time at school. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the daily routine. They are supported by kind and caring staff members who are able to respond to their individual care, learning and welfare needs. Children laugh and have fun as they relate well to the staff and their peers. Consequently, they become confident to express their needs and wishes. New children are gently introduced to the routine and eagerly participate once established, as older children are good role models for them. Younger children play enthusiastically with a good variety of stimulating toys and resources.

Children are motivated and engrossed in a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. They are enthusiastic as they make choices about their activities. Children enjoy exploring different mediums, such as play dough, paint, sand and water. They use a wide range of appropriately sized tools.

The younger children's care and wellbeing is promoted, as the staff have a good understanding of how to meet their needs. A range of activities are planned to encourage development in all areas. The nursery incorporates the Birth to three matters framework into the planning of activities and this supports children's learning. Children are participating in activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. They are developing their imagination as they play in the shop and doctors surgery. Learning in all areas is meaningful as the props and resources readily accessible to encourage children to gain fully from the activities. For example, children dressed as police officers and fire people whilst using walkie-talkies to communicate.

Children enjoy quiet and relaxing times as they listen to stories. They enjoy taking part in computer games with action songs where they giggle and laugh as they control their bodies. They mimic the sounds from the computer game and copy the movements they see on the screen. Children respond positively to songs and stories, and they are beginning to listen attentively. Their vocabulary is developing as the staff members ask open ended questions to encourage them to think and talk. For example, the staff members ask 'How many pigs are there? Let's count them'.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children's written records of assessment clearly identify the progress children are making through the early learning goals. Assessment is thorough and the information gained used effectively to guide planning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations. Records of children's achievements are presented and shared with parents. However, the systems in place to sufficiently challenge and support more able children are not fully effective.

Staff skilfully observe children's efforts and respond appropriately to them. For example, they sit with children on a one to one basis ensuring they can complete the tasks successfully. Children have appropriate chances to reflect on their play and staff members support this learning in a positive manner, intervening only when necessary. Staff members have high expectations, explain clearly and encourage children to think. They are purposely involved with activities holding their attention.

For example, children play shop and set up the till as they wait for customers. Other children have a great time pretending to drive the bus to the park. Staff members encourage other children to become involved and they talk about the things that are in their shopping basket. Staff members use their interaction with children to extend their learning. For example, children know by counting that 'six is more than four'. Staff members praise children's efforts which help to boost their self esteem and confidence.

Children enjoy being in each other's company and demonstrate this by playing cooperatively together for extended periods. They are learning about taking turns and sharing. Children are curious to explore newly set out activities, and to show their handiwork to others with pride. They enjoy the social experience of eating together and sharing personal experiences with each other while they have snack and lunch.

Children are developing an extensive understanding of number, reading and writing through activities and equipment which are designed to build on what they know and challenge them to explore further. They have good opportunities for developing writing skills, and are beginning to understand that writing has meaning. Good use is made in the learning environment of labelling and children's individual name labels are used positively in their daily routine. Consequently, several children write their own name and recognise the names of their peers. Children recognise their names and display them on their art work. They count regularly in a variety of practical activities and routines.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. Children have the opportunity to use information and communication technology by operating simple programmable resources. For example, they use calculators, mobile phones and typewriters. Their knowledge and understanding of the wider world is developed through a number of activities covering the main festivals from other countries. Children manipulate pencils, scissors and glue spreaders with skill, as well as developing large motor movement through balancing games both indoors and outdoors. Children are offered variety and challenge in their physical play, as they skilfully use obstacle courses and wheeled toys to develop their large muscles.

Children benefit from good opportunities for creative play. They explore colour and texture and they particularly enjoy and benefit from the free access to the creative resources. They use paper, scissors and paint and other materials to express themselves and make creative art and design. Children's work is respected as staff members display their work positively in the setting and store samples of their work in folders.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others. They respect each other and have formed strong relationships with staff and their peers. Children's behaviour is of a consistently high standard. They are confident, self assured and can work and play well on their own or with others. They freely discuss their emotions with an adult and each other. Staff members are well deployed and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are treated as individuals by being allowed time to progress at their own pace, for example, finishing their meal without being hurried. They are also valued and respected by staff, and given appropriate praise and encouragement to enhance self-esteem and confidence. Children with English as an additional language are supported within the setting. They settle well because staff members ensure that they find out some basic words in the child's first language.

Children are learning about the world in which they live by having access to resources that promote positive images of different cultures and varying needs. They learn about festivals and traditions celebrated in the local and wider community. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcome in the setting. Staff members have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare. The manager is aware of her responsibility as a service provider to act in the best interest of a child. Staff, parents and external agencies work together to meet each child's requirements. There is a secure system to quickly identify children's needs and ensure they receive appropriate support strategies.

Children benefit from the friendly interaction between staff and parents. Detailed information about the setting and the service it provides is available for parents. This includes the policies and procedures. Parents serve on the management committee and are fully involved in decision making and the running of the setting. Good verbal information is exchanged daily with parents. Parents benefit from regular coffee mornings where discussions take place about the care and education of their children. Relevant information about the running of the setting and curriculum is provided on the notice board.

The partnership with parents and carers in relation to nursery education is good. They are provided with information which explains the care and education that is provided for their children. In addition, parents are informed about the activities the setting is working on to enable them to reinforce the learning intentions at home. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. The key worker scheme ensures parents are kept informed about their child's progress. However, when they have discussions about their child's progress they do not contribute to their developmental records.

Parents are very pleased with the service provided at the setting. They comment that they are very happy with the care, education and the progress that their children are making. Particularly, they talk about the benefits of the good relationships that children have with staff and the strong friendships with their peers. Parents are involved in the running of the setting by serving on the management committee and taking turns on a rota system.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. The provider and manager are committed to the promotion of high quality childcare through encouraging staff to attend relevant courses to improve their knowledge and skills. For example, staff members go on regular training to help enhance children's care by the effective organisation in the setting. Staff members are well deployed in the setting to allow children to receive appropriate adult attention. They ensure that all children are happily engaged in purposeful activities.

The manager has regular meetings with the staff to discuss the care and education being provided to ensure it meets children's individual needs. There are clear systems to support encourage and motivate staff to ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and focus on the needs of the children. These include good systems in place to identify and support training needs and working effectively as a team. They also meet regularly to discuss strengths and areas they wish to improve, which greatly helps benefit the children.

Most of the required documentation is in place to support children's health, safety and wellbeing. However, the child protection policy and the risk assessment systems are not in sufficient detail. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, thus ensuring that children are protected and cared for by staff members who have knowledge and understanding of child development. Children benefit from the positive and proactive approach of the staff as they have a strong commitment to the setting. Children's individual records are maintained and shared with parents, which ensures the appropriate care is provided. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last child care inspection, the provider agreed to ensure there are adequate fire procedures, registration systems for children, staff and visitors, and develop policies on administration of medication and the steps to be taken in the event of a missing child.

The manager has set in place good fire safety measures and effective systems for the accurate recording of staff and children's attendance, and that of visitors, and a comprehensive policy on what steps will be followed in the event of child going missing. Consequently, children's individual safety and wellbeing in the setting is fully assured.

At the last education inspection, the provider agreed to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered and that developmental records are used effectively to plan the next steps of children's learning with practical suggestions to parents so that they can be involved in their child's learning.

There are effective systems in place to ensure that all aspects of the areas of learning are covered and the observation and assessment systems are comprehensive to meet children's needs and identify the next steps of their learning process. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their children's learning. All these systems help to support children in their learning and development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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 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):

- improve the child protection policy to ensure it includes the guidelines to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- improve the risk assessment systems to ensure consistency and keep a record in sufficient detail

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 information to parents to give suggestions as to how they can be involved in their child's learning and contribute to their developmental records
- improve the system for planning activities to sufficiently challenge more able children

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