

Avenue Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507870
Inspection date	15/01/2009
Inspector	Claire Sheldrake
Setting address	2 Hyde Park Avenue, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 6SL
Telephone number	01278 663040
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Avenue Nursery School opened in September 1992 and is privately owned. It is a small nursery situated in a residential dwelling, close to the centre of North Petherton near Bridgwater in Somerset. The nursery is set up in two playrooms and has a downstairs bathroom and a large secure outside play area. The nursery has easy access and is all on one level.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time and offers holiday care for four weeks in the summer holidays. The times of opening depend upon the time of year, and parent demand. Currently the nursery is open from 08:30 until 17:00, however, most children attend from 09:00 until 15:30. They are registered to care for a maximum of 10 children under eight years, of these a maximum of 10 children may be in the early years age group. No children may attend under the age of two years. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

At present there are 29 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery has close links with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. There are four staff working with the children, one is a qualified teacher, and two are qualified to Level 3 NVQ.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are making excellent progress in their learning; staff ensure learning opportunities meet children's individual needs to keep them engaged, settled and active learners.

All aspects of children's welfare are met to a very high standard, and staff ensure that children are safeguarded.

Exceptional partnerships with parents and strong links made with local schools support children to help them reach their full potential.

Highly effective systems are in place to support the staff's reflective practice, which is continuously being reviewed and improvements implemented, enhancing their vision for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop and evaluate the assessment records to show children's progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery owner provides strong leadership to her small team of staff, who are experienced and enthusiastic about providing a high quality environment for children to play, learn and develop. Staff regularly evaluate their practice and have introduced 'individual learning plans' to meet the needs of the all of the children. These are displayed in the play room for easy reference, and are a focus for written observations of children. The evaluation of these observations and the link with the aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are, however, still in their infancy.

The staff organise the session to allow a mixture of free play and adult initiated activities to provide a structure to the day, however, these plans are always flexible and move with the children's interests and preferences. There are regular opportunities for children to be outside and trips are organised into the village to meet the people who live and work in the community. For example, photographs show children meeting with the vicar and buying meat from the butcher.

Very high ratios of staff to children provide the children with almost individual attention which is tailored to meeting their needs. The staff deploy themselves effectively and know each of the children very well. They are instinctive in their response to helping new children settle and helping others to communicate.

There are robust procedures in place to ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted and there is a record to show training events attended and future plans, for example, staff have shown interest in training in Safeguarding Children.

Regular appraisals are used effectively to provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on their own practice using a confidential grading system. These help staff to focus on their achievements and recognise improvement contributing to their ongoing professional development. Documentation, which includes policies, procedures, risk assessments and accident and medication records, is completed in detail and known by all the staff. This secures a level of consistency which ensures that children are safeguarded.

Staff have developed strong links with parents, and they are highly regarded as partners. They exchange information as children join the nursery, which details their routines and preferences and identifies their starting points. This is then used as a base to record the children's progress through the Foundation Stage. The nursery also works closely with the local school, inviting teachers to meet the children and completing transfer documents to show the children's progress so far.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The nursery provides a safe, secure environment where children are encouraged to participate in challenging and well planned activities which contribute to their learning and development.

Staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn and pay great attention to

observe children's play, tailoring activities to support their development.

The children arrive with confidence and self register themselves using name cards on their chairs. They are quick to become actively engaged in activities, such as the threading, and the small world dolls, where they extend their dexterity and co-ordination skills through play.

Staff sit closely with the children, supporting those who need reassurance. The children enjoy their interaction and involve them in their games. Children are familiar with the daily routines and listen for the music which signals tidy up time. They bounce along excitedly to their favourite songs before settling to a story and songs at circle time.

Children are able to play with an excellent selection of resources, they use natural materials to experience shape and texture and talk about the shells and pine cones using descriptive language such as 'shiny' and 'spiky', extending their vocabulary. They weigh and compare these items using a set of scales, which introduces them to problem solving and early mathematical reasoning. The children are having fun, they use their imagination and engage in many role play activities to encourage their personal and social development.

Children are very well behaved and staff are good role models. The group is small in number, and staff deploy themselves well to ensure children are focused and busy. This promotes an environment where the children cooperate and share, and turn taking is encouraged.

The children are learning about their own health and safety. They use established hygiene routines with confidence and talk about why they need to wash their hands, 'to keep us healthy inside'. They are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and special dietary requirements are recognised and supported in partnership with parents.

The children are actively involved in fire evacuation procedures to help them stay safe and are reminded not to run in the nursery in case they slip. Staff are vigilant to support this too, and quickly clear up the spilt sand from the sand tray to avoid an accident.

Children have a good sense of belonging. They can see photographs of themselves on the computer screen and wall boards are adorned with children's art work, photos and creative expressions. The children are confident about routines such as tidying up and lining up to come indoors from the garden.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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.