

Ashdene Independent Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	304957
Inspection date	17/06/2009
Inspector	Graham Martin
Setting address	Ashdene Primary School, Thoresway Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 6LJ
Telephone number	01625 521794
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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 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

Ashdene Independent Pre-School opened in 1987. It operates from two main rooms in a large mobile building located in the grounds of Ashdene Primary School in Wilmslow, Cheshire and serves the local community. It is registered for 48 children on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Most of the children attending the pre-school go on to attend Ashdene Primary School. There are currently 98 children on roll aged between two and a half years and four years of age, of which 72 receive nursery funding. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and some who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.45 with younger children attending the afternoon sessions between 13.00 and 15.15. The pre-school also offers a lunchtime session where parents provide a packed lunch for their child. A total of 15 part-time staff work with the children. All the supervisors have a Diploma in Pre-school Practice, and one holds a teaching qualification. The pre-school receives support from an Early Years Foundation Stage specialist pedagogue through its links with Sure Start and the local Children's Centre.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The staff team provide an extremely rich learning environment with an extensive range of resources and activities that enable children to develop their independence very well, although not quite so well at snack times. The manager and staff are dedicated, caring and considerate, ensuring each child's individual needs are fully incorporated into day to day planning and routines, enabling every child to develop and progress appropriately throughout their time at the group. Inclusive practice is fully promoted throughout the pre-school and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported at all times. There is an exceptionally strong partnership with parents. The pre-school provider and staff team evaluate their provision very well, which ensures they sustain the quality of provision and continue to make improvements that promote high quality care for all the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve opportunities for children to develop their independence at snack times.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her staff team work extremely hard to ensure they are meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements at all times. They evaluate the

group's effectiveness very well, consulting on and sharing changes with parents and implementing them to the benefit of the children. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, ensuring they reflect updated legislation and meet current requirements. Staff have a clear understanding of the importance of keeping children safe and secure, providing a consistent approach for the children. Rigorous employment checks ensure all staff, support workers and volunteers are suitable to work with the children. Children are never left unsupervised with any persons who have not been properly security vetted. Ongoing risk assessments for the premises and outdoor areas ensure the children's safety is maintained at all times. Inclusion is fully promoted by the staff team, with some children who attend receiving excellent one to one care for their particular needs. Staff liaise fully with parents and other professionals, ensuring continuity of care and providing children with the opportunity to reach their full potential. Children's parents are particularly happy with the support their children receive and the rapid progress they make.

The manager and staff have developed excellent links with all parents and families. Parents make good use of the evaluation forms they are invited to complete; typical comments include 'the staff, the outdoor play space and the ethos are all outstanding' and 'staff are very informative when any changes are made'. Parents find the staff welcoming, friendly and approachable, making them and their children feel fully involved as part of the group. Parental involvement is fully promoted, with some parents organising family events, including fundraising barbecues and a social visit to a local golf club. The entrance area notice board is used well to inform parents about these events as well as about the essential work of the pre-school to promote the best possible learning opportunities. All policies and procedures are readily available to parents, ensuring they have a full awareness of the ethos and day to day operational practices of the pre-school.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff fully promote the children's learning and their understanding of the importance of keeping themselves healthy and safe. The children building a bridge outside made careful checks on its load bearing capabilities, strengthening it when they discovered it was wobbly. The children enjoy healthy snacks and know that as part of their birthday celebration they can bring fruit to share with their friends, but not sweets. Children learn how their body works and know that they need a waterproof when it rains, and notice that rain does not seem to go through their skin.

The staff team have, from extensive training, an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, effectively incorporating its content into the planned day to day activities. The programme of activities promotes children's independence as they make their own selection while offering some adult-led activities as a balance. However, children do not always have enough opportunity to make independent decisions about the daily snack menu. Staff ensure all areas of the curriculum are given equal weight, promoting all-round development for the children. All children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are careful to ensure activities are offered at a level to suit every child attending. For example, separate activity groups enable younger children and older

children to have relevant and meaningful experiences at their personal level of development.

Visitors give children lots of food for thought. For example, they enjoy learning about road safety from the Community Road Safety Officer and they asked a visiting sight impaired guest very intelligent questions about the importance of his guide dog. They enjoy visits to the school's gym, enthusiastically using the gym equipment or practising dance rhythms and movements. Innovative games and story telling, while using Ginger the bear to remind them about good listening, maintain every child's attention as they listen well as a whole group. Children particularly enjoy freely accessing the activity trolleys to mix their own play dough and change its shade using food colouring. They wonder where the rain goes, trying to predict the journey of the water they collect when they pour it down a drain. Staff develop the children's awareness of safety as they discuss how children must sit still and not move around when using tools on the 'fix it' table. Discussing how to repair a torch to make it work generates excellent language development when talking about putting batteries in the right way up. Opportunities to develop writing skills are fully available throughout the session, with children enjoying writing holiday post cards, sending, collecting and delivering them through a proper red post box. The children are developing a good understanding of phonics and counting through the innovative activities provided by the staff team. The children develop a good understanding of their local community through visitors attending the group, such as fire fighters. Children behave very well because all staff use a consistent approach when reminding children of the rules and reasons behind them. For example, children are reminded that giving help to someone who asks for it politely is a kind thing to do, unlike the wolf's neighbours in the story that they all listened to exceptionally well.

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?	1
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?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met