

Ashurst Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY273607
Inspection date 03/06/2009
Inspector Kevin Wright

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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

Ashurst Pre-School opened in 1970. It operates from a nursery unit, with disabled access, in the grounds of Foxhills School in the Ashurst area of Hampshire. It serves the local area. A maximum of 90 children between the ages of two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 86 children from two years nine months to five years on roll. Of those, 75 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:30 and 12:30 until 15:00. Ten staff work with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Ashurst Pre-School is registered on the Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register and Voluntary Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The well-established key worker system and good partnerships with parents mean that the staff know the children well and are able to meet their individual needs effectively. Children are happy and confident learners in this secure and supportive environment so that they make good progress in their learning and development. Children move freely between outdoor and indoor play areas and are able to initiate activities and select resources for themselves from the wide range available. In this well run provision, the procedures to ensure the health and safety of children and their well-being are properly in place and effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review the balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for focused activities that introduce new skills and challenges to children and that allow adults to make assessments of a child's range of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework
- review the recording of children's progress so that it relates to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is an inclusive approach that meets the diverse needs of all children. The setting is well managed and runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. The setting supervisor and deputy supervisor motivate staff well and set good models of practice. All staff work well together as a team with commonly shared approaches

that help children towards their early learning goals. There is a strong commitment to professional development so that staff have steadily improved their levels of early years qualifications and kept updated with areas that impinge upon their responsibilities. Participation in a network of similar providers has also helped inform practice. The setting works well with other agencies and providers to ensure the individual needs of children are met. For example, language and communication support is provided on site for children by an external provider. The quality of the provision is reviewed by supervisors and staff to ascertain where it may further meet the developmental needs of the children. There is clear direction to develop as a provider and to meet the demands of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and this vision is understood and well supported by the committee. The progress of each child is monitored efficiently and recorded carefully by their key worker and evidence is gathered from actual work and from photographs of key points of progress. A fuller picture is needed of children's development in relation to all six areas of development by reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework within the monitoring process. Information is shared productively with parents and also between staff so that a good picture of the child's all round progress is formed. The setting does not currently use the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework effectively to track and analyse the progress of individual children and groups of children so that adjustments in provision can be made where needed. Parents report that staff are very approachable and that communication with their children's key workers and all staff generally is good. As well as regular conversations, the daily use of the communication book carried in each child's book bag ensures a good flow of information to and fro between parents and the setting's staff. All parents have the opportunity to attend sessions to observe the work of the children and there is a high take up of this offer. There are regular opportunities for activities to be extended into the home setting of children and to encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, the growing of plants from seed at the pre-school was continued by each child taking a small plant home to look after, observe and record. Where a child attends several settings during the week, there is good communication between Ashurst Pre-School and the other settings to ensure that information about the child's needs and development is shared. The procedures to ensure the health and safety of children are properly in place and effective. All staff in sole contact with children are vetted fully and all necessary checks carried out.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

There is a broad-ranging and freely flowing provision that enables each child to make choices about their activities and to choose from the wide variety of equipment and resources available. However, there is currently an imbalance between children making purposeful choices about their activities and staff providing sufficiently focused opportunities for introducing new skills and challenges to each child. As yet, adults do not make detailed or rigorous assessments of each child's progress in the full range of learning and development within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Consequently, the adults miss opportunities to help the children move on in their learning. Adults encourage the children to develop their independence and the caring and supportive environment

allows each child to thrive. Parents report that children are happy and enthusiastic about coming to the pre-school and that there has been marked progress in levels of the children's confidence and social awareness after a short time of attending the setting. In this supportive environment children become confident learners. They move freely between activities, both indoors and outside, and are developing their levels of concentration. They are keen to take on responsibilities, for example, pouring themselves drinking water from a jug, washing their hands after messy activities, placing their name plates onto magnetic lists in order to reserve a turn with a particular piece of equipment or resources, and tidying up at intervals during the sessions. Good use is made of opportunities for learning during tidying up. For example the tricycles are parked numerically in bays matching each bike's number. Children play together well. In an extended child-initiated role play about home life in which eight children eventually participated, some children played the roles of parents and 'read' story books to other children who played the roles of children; other children carried on other activities related to the home, but all contributed and integrated their creative ideas and activities into the common theme in a successful way. In this activity children showed strong evidence of good, developing communication skills relevant to their age. Children engage in a range of learning opportunities to extend all six areas of learning. There are opportunities for physical development, climbing and balancing using outdoor equipment and toys and a number of children spent time moving around on the climbing frames and swinging from the hand rails.

There are satisfactory opportunities for children to learn about the world around them. Two boys spent time with watering cans tending to the plants grown in pots around the play areas. The staff also take children on nature rambles through the trails adjacent to the setting. Children enjoy working on the computer and show a good level of competence in accessing programmes and completing space and shape activities. They usefully ration their time on it by use of a sand timer. By doing so they learn about sharing and recognise that other children may need these resources too. Children enjoy the creative activity of painting and drawing and there is good evidence of rich exploratory use of paint and other materials by some children who produce work of a high standard. Staff work well with children, supporting their activities by introducing further challenge to extend their thinking and language. For example, one child who showed a marked interest in making models of vehicles and machines from recycled resources was well supported by his key worker who had a clear appreciation of the child's interests and achievements and who, because of that, was able to extend the level of challenge for him in a relevant way.

Children behave well generally because staff work effectively to develop a child's understanding about the need to think of others. In a group singing session at the end of a period, children enthusiastically joined in yet were able to listen quietly between verses whilst each child in turn was selected for an action role within the song. Staff monitor the environment continually for safety and demonstrate a strong regard for the statutory requirements that ensure children's health, safety and well-being. Parents report that staff create a welcoming atmosphere so that children settle well and quickly feel at home. The regular cycle of assessment evident in the children's profiles shows that staff monitor the children's development well and in a close partnership with the parents and carers. The staff

help children to appreciate one another and celebrate achievements and differences. Overall, staff engender in the children a positive attitude to learning and a confident approach to new challenges.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
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

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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