

Elim Church Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 119474
Inspection date 16/12/2009
Inspector Patricia Mary Champion

Setting address Windermere Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2RF

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

Elim Church Day Nursery is run by the Governing Body of the Elim Church. It opened in 1990 and operates from four playrooms within the church premises in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. This is situated within walking distance of local schools and the railway station at Southend East. All children share access to two secure, enclosed, outdoor play areas. A maximum of 55 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Operating times are from 7.30am until 6.00pm.

There are currently 113 children aged from eight months to seven years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions, full day care or out of school care. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 14 staff, of whom 13 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The nursery also employs two administrators, a cook and there are three long-term students working with the children. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure, welcoming and generally safe environment where they are valued as individuals. They are involved in a reasonable range of activities, which are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and generally planned according to the children's interests. Ongoing communication with parents, together with the appropriate support they receive in their activities, contributes towards children making steady progress in their learning and development. There are suitable methods in place for evaluating the provision and the staff show commitment to continually improving children's learning experiences.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review routines and how resources are presented to children to ensure that there is time and space for children to concentrate on activities and experiences, develop their own interests and comfortably access play equipment such as the computer

- use observations and assessments consistently to identify learning priorities and plan more relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child within the EYFS
- encourage parents to contribute to their children's developmental profiles
- enhance safeguarding arrangements by reviewing and updating the policy for student placements
- maintain accurate records (this relates to staff attendance sheets and including children's full names in accident records).

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are appropriate staffing levels and clear policies and procedures are implemented to promote children's welfare and safety. Staff carry out visual checks each day. Risk assessments are conducted and recorded to ensure that children play and learn in a safe environment, both inside and out. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding children, which includes recognising signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow if there are concerns. Staff keep their knowledge up-to-date by attending training, and existing injuries are recorded as routine. This all helps to protect children from harm. There are effective recruitment procedures to check that all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff ensure that any person who has not been vetted is never left alone with children. However, the student placement policy does not determine who is to take responsibility for the students' background checks. Most of the essential documentation is well-organised with priority given to maintaining children's confidentiality. However, there is potential for misunderstandings as the register of staff's attendance is not always accurately maintained and the staff are not consistently recording children's full names in the accident records.

Staff know the children well as individuals and support their learning appropriately. Children with identified special educational needs are offered fully inclusive care and learning. The special educational needs coordinator knows where to access support for particular needs and takes an active role in enhancing children's communication and language skills. The Nursery works productively with a number of external agencies and often takes a leading role in collaborative action to support individual families. Children learn to have a positive attitude towards other people's similarities and differences through the good example set by the staff, learning simple words in other languages and playing with various resources that reflect positive images of diversity. They develop a strong sense of belonging to a community as they see photographs of themselves and the church congregation. Special activities are also organised, for example, when the children bake and deliver cakes to their neighbours or when parents introduce and share food relating to their cultural heritage. A particular strength of the setting is the strong link established with the nearby primary schools which means children's transition from nursery to school is supported well.

The long-serving staff team are committed to continually improve the outcomes for the children by attending training to increase their childcare knowledge. The nursery manager delegates important roles and responsibilities to her team leaders

and regular meetings are held to discuss and evaluate the provision. A self-evaluation document has been completed, which has helped the staff identify areas for improvement. The nursery has satisfactorily addressed the recommendations set at the last inspection, which has improved aspects of children's health and enjoyment of activities. The manager of the nursery has also been proactive in gaining a grant to improve the premises; the toilet facilities have been renovated and one of the outdoor areas has now had a roof installed so that it can be used in all weathers.

Good partnerships are established with parents and carers and the regular two-way exchange of information supports staff in meeting children's needs. Parents are kept well-informed about the provision through the nursery prospectus, notice boards and regular newsletters. Their views and suggestions are valued as questionnaires are routinely distributed. Story resource packs are being developed for parents to take home to share with their children. Parents receive details about their children's progress and development through informal discussion, daily diary sheets and focussed observations which are sent home on a regular basis. Parents provide information about children's likes and dislikes when they first join the nursery. However, opportunities to maximise parents involvement in their children's learning have not been fully explored as they are not yet contributing to the children's learning journals.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff practice is sensitive and supportive and they work hard to ensure that children settle and feel secure. Babies have an individualised settling-in programme and sleep, eat and are changed according to their individual needs. While relevant activities are usually planned for children of all ages, the staff are only just starting to plan appropriate learning experiences for the children in the EYFS that attend the out of school club. Throughout the nursery key persons make detailed and informed observations that are collated into learning journals. However, these observations and assessments are not consistently used to identify learning priorities so that every child has motivating and challenging learning experiences.

Children are satisfactorily developing problem solving, numeracy and literacy skills to enhance their future economic well-being. Comfortable areas have been provided so that children can look at books for pleasure, resources have been developed in each room to promote language skills and the staff ensure that children learn how sounds link to letters. Number rhymes are used so that children learn about calculation and they independently access resources that develop their knowledge of technology. Children adeptly use a mouse to click and drag the cursor on the computer screen. However, they have to stand or kneel on chairs because the computer is not comfortably sited at a suitable child height.

The older nursery children have allocated times to move around the playrooms in the nursery. Sometimes these nursery routines do not meet the needs of the children, for example, when they have to spend time waiting to move into another room. Consequently, they become distracted and do not fully cooperate as they

have insufficient motivating activities to hold their interest. Sometimes children are unable to concentrate on activities for extended periods or develop their own interests, particularly when they have limited access to role play or creative areas.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They learn about what is healthy to eat as they choose from a range of freshly prepared fruit at snack time or independently serve their own meals at lunch time. Suitable hygiene routines have been established and children are learning about the importance of regularly washing their hands. Children play outdoors in the fresh air as often as possible. Visits are also made to nearby parks, playgrounds or the beach to enhance their physical skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children learn about keeping themselves safe in their play through the gentle reminders by staff and when they practise emergency evacuation procedures.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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