



Elim Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	143105
Inspection date	01 December 2005
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt
Setting Address	Larkhill Christian Centre, Larkhill Road, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 3HW
Telephone number	01935 424816
E-mail	
Registered person	Elim Church 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Elim Church Pre-School was registered in 1995. It is a committee run, Christian based group which operates from the Larkhill Christian Centre, in Yeovil, Somerset. The accommodation consists of three play rooms. The group have access to kitchen and toilet facilities. There is no outdoor play area available, although there is a ground floor room which is used to provide physical activities. The group have access

to a nearby allotment, which is used for children to grow plants and vegetables. The pre-school is open from 09.00 to 15.30, Monday to Thursday, and 09.00 to 12.00 on Fridays, during term time. Children attend either morning or afternoon sessions or a full day, and come from the town of Yeovil and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 48 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 58 children on roll. Of these, 36 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school employs 10 staff, including the manager, most of whom hold an early years qualification to level 3. The supervisory staff are studying towards a Foundation Degree in Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's healthy lifestyle is well promoted. They learn good practices and develop independence in managing their own personal hygiene through discussion, stories and daily routine. For example, children independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are protected from the spread of infection through clear policies and procedures carried out by staff. These include cleaning tables thoroughly before snack time, hygienic nappy changing routines and by excluding children who have infectious illnesses. All the staff are first aid trained, which contributes towards children's accidents and injuries being treated appropriately.

Children have constant access to drinks throughout the day. They serve themselves water from the dispenser when they are thirsty, and enjoy daily nutritious snacks that include fruit or vegetables. Children make choices from lunches provided by parents, and any dietary requirements are recorded and respected. Although there is no outdoor area available, children are involved in daily exercise that includes a variety of activities to promote their physical development. These include pedalling bikes, parachute games and obstacle courses. For example, children competently climb, slide and balance as they take turns to use the large equipment in a ground floor room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where most risks and hazards are identified and minimised. However, there are times when children are exposed to hazards, such as open electrical sockets, and the sharp knife used at snack time. The generally effective security system means children cannot leave the premises and they are protected from uninvited visitors. Children use a good range of well maintained furniture and equipment which is suitable for their stage of development, and helps them access their activities safely.

Children are involved in regular practices to leave the building in an emergency. They learn what is expected through discussion, which contributes towards their safety in a real situation. The outings policy includes an increased adult to child ratio, and constant contact with the pre-school. However, staff are not clear about the procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost. This compromises children's safety if a child goes missing.

The staff's satisfactory knowledge of child protection issues and Area Child Protection Committee procedures contributes towards children's safety and welfare. Some staff have recently attended training and are aware of their responsibilities, however the child protection policy does not clearly cover all the required procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children throughout the pre-school are happy, settled and secure. They are cared for in a welcoming environment where staff are approachable and caring. Children make good relationships with the staff and each other. They develop confidence in making their needs known and are developing skills in independence. For example, children choose when to have a snack, they select appropriate equipment and pour their own drinks.

Children are involved in a suitable range of activities that help them learn in all areas of development. They enjoy an appropriate balance of adult-led and self chosen activities. The younger children enjoy a calm atmosphere and a spacious, well organised physical environment as they take part in activities and prepare for transition to the pre-school room. Staff have started to implement the Birth to three matters framework effectively. They plan activities clearly linked to the areas of development, and record observations of children's achievements, which contributes towards identifying each child's stage of progress.

Nursery Education.

Quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Overall, staff have a adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They are all involved in developing a new planning system which is effective in making sure that each area of learning is given equal focus over the term. However, it does not identify how activities are extended or supported to suit children's different stages of development.

Children are keen to come into pre-school and take part in most of the activities offered. They use language well to communicate and organise their play. They initiate conversations with adults and peers. Most children recognise their written name on arrival and at snack time; more able children do not extend this skill further, for example, by linking the sounds with the letters. Children enjoy giving meaning to marks through drawing and painting but do not regularly write for a purpose, such as naming their own work. Children are developing a secure sense of using numbers as labels. Many children recognise numerals up to nine and refer to them in their play, for example, on price labels in the role play shop, and when playing hop-scotch. They learn about calculating, shapes and measure through planned activities, but do not

practise what they learn during every day activities.

Children explore and investigate using their senses through a variety of activities and experiences such as, sand, water, whisking foam, art and craft, and cooking. They start to show an interest in their local environment by visiting the allotment and becoming involved in planting and growing. They learn about caring for animals as visitors bring pets in. This contributes to children's understanding of the world of nature. Children move around with confidence, showing an awareness of others as they choose their activities. They develop co-ordination as they dance to 'sticky kids' or kick a football into a goal. They develop skills using a range of tools and equipment during a variety of activities. These include construction, craft, cooking, and at snack time when they pour their own drinks from a jug and spoon raisins from a large bowl to their individual dish.

Children learn about colours through topic work and during activities like art and craft. However, some adult led activities do not effectively encourage children to express their own ideas, or extend the task for more able children such as, cutting out shapes and materials for themselves. Children enjoy singing familiar songs, and use their imagination well in role play when they enjoy acting out real life situations like shopping and dressing up.

Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals which is monitored and recorded by their key worker. However, staff do not make the most of opportunities to encourage children to solve problems or to compound and extend their understanding and skills through every day activities. This means, that some children are not challenged fully to help them reach their full potential.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children with additional needs are supported well. There are two members of staff who have attended training. Staff work well with parents, and connected professionals, to effectively support children in their individual needs. Children develop an awareness of a diverse society through planned activities, and by using play equipment that reflects positive images of diversity.

Children generally behave well. They learn what is expected through daily routine such as lining up to move between rooms, and helping to put away toys. They respond well to staff's praise and encouragement for effort and achievement, and the 'Superstar' system, where they receive a star for being helpful, kind or brave. Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the staff's good relationships with parents. The staff make themselves available to exchange information on a daily basis which contributes towards meeting individual needs. Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive comprehensive information about the setting in the form of a clear prospectus, displays on notice boards and regular news letters. Parents are well informed about their child's progress and how they can promote children's learning at home. They receive progress reports each term and are invited to discuss these with key workers.

Parents are welcomed into the pre-school to be involved in sessions and share their skills.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are cared for by a well qualified staff team who have a sound knowledge of child development, some of whom are developing their roles through further training. The organisation of premises, staff deployment and resources is appropriate in supporting children's care, learning and play.

The staff recruitment procedure is unclear, the management committee are not fully aware of the change in responsibilities and there is no record system to evidence that staff have been vetted. The staff induction procedure is not yet clear to ensure that new staff are adequately prepared and supported to carry out their responsibilities.

Legally required records are in place and completed appropriately. However, the regulation requiring clear procedures for lost or uncollected children is not met. There is no formal system to monitor the quality of care. Some policies and procedures are not detailed, therefore do not fully support the safety and welfare of the children. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff meet regularly to plan activities and discuss various aspects of the provision. The manager meets with the committee to raise any issues and make requests for support in implementing improvement. The setting welcomes support from the Local Authority to help them make improvements. However, there is no formal system to identify training needs or monitor the effectiveness of staff and the nursery education provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that cleaning materials were stored appropriately and low level glass was made safe; that disabled access was improved and resources which reflect disability were extended; that the use of the ground floor space was improved; and that outcomes of staff induction were recorded.

Children's safety has improved because risks have been reduced, the low level glass is now inaccessible to children, and cleaning materials are stored out of children's reach. Equal opportunities are promoted in that children see positive images of disability within their play, and a ramp has been installed to improve access for people with physical disabilities. The ground floor space is used appropriately to meet the children's needs. The younger children enjoy a spacious environment, and all children benefit from physical activities in the adjoining room. The staff induction procedure is still not clear, which means that staff are not fully aware of all policies and procedures that contribute towards children's safety and welfare.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that the planning system was improved to provide more opportunities in all areas of learning, and a balance of

adult led and child initiated activities; that organisation of some parts of the session, and behaviour management strategies were improved; and that systems to monitor the overall provision and the support for staff were improved.

The staff are developing a new system for planning that clearly identifies each area of learning and shows that each one is given equal focus. Children are therefore involved in a suitable range of activities that promote learning in all areas, which includes initiating some activities for themselves. The staff have improved the organisation of the room which sections off areas for various types of play. They use a system that includes a warning, a choice and an action to manage unwanted behaviour, which helps the children understand what is expected. This has resulted in children being less boisterous and focusing more on their activities. There are still no clear systems to monitor the overall provision and the support for staff.

Complaints since the last inspection

In May 2004 a concern was raised under Standard 1: Suitable Person, regarding a child alleged to have been in the play leader's car and house. Ofsted wrote to the provider and from the response received, Ofsted judged that National Standards are being met and the provider remains registered.

In September 2004, a concern was raised under Standard 8: Food and Drink and Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers, regarding the availability of drinks to children; parents' wishes about the care of their child not being listened to; and staff's vigilance in supporting children who have had a personal hygiene accident. The provider was asked to investigate and from the report received, Ofsted judged that National Standards are being met and the provider remains registered.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- produce and implement clearly defined procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected
- develop the staff recruitment procedure to clearly show that systems are rigorous enough to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children
- implement systems to monitor the provision for quality of care and the support of staff in their roles.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- develop planning further to include extension and support for different stages of development; and ensure that children are sufficiently challenged through every day activities
- develop the systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education and support for staff in their roles.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk