

Ashford Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	126981
Inspection date	11/03/2010
Inspector	Stacey Sangster
Setting address	43 Albert Road, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8NU
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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

Ashford Play Nursery opened in 1971 and is one of a chain of three privately owned nurseries. It is registered to provide care for 44 children from two years of age to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. Overnight care is not provided.

The setting operates from the ground floor of a large house in central Ashford. Downstairs, there are four main play rooms, cloakrooms, a kitchen and office/staff room. There is a large, level, well equipped garden available for outside play. Access is via two steps into the property and a set of steps to access the garden.

There are currently 66 children on roll in the early years age range, of which 35 receive nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and two children have English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am, by arrangement, or 8.30am to 5.30pm. Seven staff are employed to work directly with the children, excluding the owner and the co-ordinator who oversees all three day care settings in the chain. The co-ordinator holds a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 4, the supervisor and two other staff hold NVQ at Level 3 and are working towards Level 4 and all but one of the remaining staff hold a Level 2 NVQ with two of them working towards the Level 3. A volunteer with Qualified Teacher Status volunteers at the setting and a cook, who holds a food hygiene qualification at Level 2 is employed to plan and provide the meals and snacks. All staff are first aid trained and hold a current paediatric first aid qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good or very good progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points. They receive opportunities to develop skills in each of the six areas of learning. Arrangements for self evaluation are good, with all staff contributing. Parents views are canvassed and used to support the evaluation of what the setting do. The focus on improvements are appropriate and tackle the most important issues as priorities. As such the capacity for the setting to continuously improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- revise the arrangements for assessment so that they reflect the breadth of what staff and parents know that children can do

- extend the partnerships with parents in relation to children's education
- continue to explore ways of increasing children's privacy when using the toilets

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given high priority by the setting. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures, the supervision of unvetted persons and good security of the premises along with a password system for the collection of children all help to keep children protected and safe. Self-evaluation is contributed to by all staff and demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths of the setting along with the areas that they have identified as wanting to further develop and enhance. The focus of priorities for improvement consistently link to enhancing the experiences for children. One issue identified at the last inspection relating to children's privacy in one of the toilets has yet to be effectively addressed, despite advice having been sought to remedy the situation, no practical solution has yet been found.

Knowledge staff gain from training benefits the children. Worksheets and workbooks have been replaced with mark making tables and opportunities for more spontaneous writing. The regular training opportunities offered to staff are key to the setting's success, ensuring that ideas and practices which are regularly updated reflect current thinking and best practice. Good links exist with parents and there is a strong partnership in relation to care. The partnership in relation to education is less well established. The setting are exploring ways to include more detail of what parents observe that their children can do at home, within the assessment arrangements.

There are currently no children attending who are cared for by other Early Years Foundation Stage providers. The setting is aware that should this occur they need to share information and develop a strong partnership to jointly support the children's experience of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Resources are plentiful, well maintained and provide appropriate challenge and stimulation for the ages of children attending. They include a range of resources positively reflecting diversity. Children have good opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions. The setting ensures that parents who speak English as an additional language or who have limited English are supported by being able to access written materials translated in to their home language. A range of translated documents are already displayed, ensuring that these parents feel welcome and considered from their first visit. The setting obtains the latest guidance on how to support children learning two or more languages while in their early years.

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

Children are supported well in this setting and have their needs appropriately met both in relation to care and education. There are a range of policies and good practices in place to support children's health, protect them from cross infection

and ensure that their individual needs such as those relating to any special dietary needs are met. The arrangements for food hygiene in the setting have recently been awarded a five star rating by the local authority.

Staff are secure in their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and reflect this in discussions and their practices when organising children's learning through play. The setting has struggled to settle on one system for recording observations, assessment and planning and this has resulted in the current system being cumbersome and not used to efficiently support staff's work. Children receive a well balanced curriculum with equal weight given to each of the six areas of learning. Children respond with delight to the animated story telling, and squeal and laugh when acting out the story of the Gruffello with staff. They use numbers for reasoning and problem solving, often counting spontaneously in their play. They draw, paint, sing, giggle, skip happily as they move from room to room, chat openly and confidently about their ideas, views and feelings and show care for each other throughout the day. Children are busy, happy, well motivated to explore and have fun as they learn.

The planning is appropriately informed by both written and informal observations. These support key workers to develop an in depth knowledge of the individual children. The assessment records, however, are not reflective of the breadth of knowledge that key workers hold and do not fully reflect what key workers know each child can do. Staff and managers understood that they could not record a child had achieved something without having noted in writing a specific observation to illustrate it, this is not the case. Once aware the setting quickly identified that they can update and complete all of the children's files, quickly and accurately so that they represent a fuller and more up to date record of where the children are in their learning journey. The weakness in the records has limited impact on the children while they are at the setting as staff plan for the children based on the extent of what they know, not what they have recorded. However, the impact is significant if when children or a key worker leaves, the written assessment records are only partially completed.

Children learn about keeping themselves healthy. They develop good hygiene practices as part of the routines of the setting and are supported, for example, by learning 'The hand washing song' which reminds them of what they need to do and why. Children are encouraged to consider healthy options when choosing and discussing food. There are good opportunities to access physical play opportunities both inside and out and children observe the effects that exercise has on their bodies. They are encouraged to pour their own drinks and choose from a range of healthy snacks. Children's independence is supported well. Staff encourage children to look for their own Wellington boots and attempt fastenings on shoes and coats. Staff reassure children, speak kindly and calmly to them if they become upset and try to assist them to resolve issues with their friends by considering how their actions make each other feel. The high levels of good quality care and attentive interaction helps children to feel secure and safe.

Children behave well in the setting, staff provide them with gentle reminders about expected codes of behaviour and if they are behaving in an undesirable manner explanations are offered to help children develop an understanding of why they

should not do certain things. Relationships between children and staff are warm and caring, children listen to staff and staff to children, resulting in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

The children in this setting are developing skills which will assist them in the future, helping them to become inquisitive and active learners.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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