

Plume Avenue Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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09/07/2010

Inspector

Lynn Amelia Hartigan

Setting address

Plume Avenue United Reformed Church, 18 Plume Avenue,
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Telephone number

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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

Plume Avenue Nursery was registered in 1971 and operates from the United Reformed Church in Colchester, Essex. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 50 children in the early years age range may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 112 children aged from two to under five years on roll.

The nursery opens each weekday during school term times from 9.00am until 12.30pm on a Monday and 9.00am until 3.30pm Tuesday to Friday. There are strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

There are 22 members of staff including the manager, who work directly with the children. Fourteen of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Five members of staff are currently training.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting is effective in ensuring children progress well through the Early Years Foundation Stage and provision for their emotional well-being is good. Children are settled and happy as the dedicated staff team ensure their individual needs are mostly supported. Some good opportunities for communication and partnership with parents enhances the children's time at the setting. Staff members are committed with regard to inclusion and endeavour to support each child's individual needs. Effective systems for self-evaluation are now in place to ensure continuous improvement of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation and planning of the indoor and outdoor learning environment to provide children with opportunities to initiate their own play and follow their own interests without interruption, this refers to the organisation of snack times
- provide further opportunities for children to self-select toys and activities that motivate and interest them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The managers and the team of staff are dedicated and motivated to develop the nursery and provide a high standard of childcare and education. The provision of good policies which underpin the settings practices are offered to the parents to

ensure they are informed with regard to the nursery procedures. Staff show a commitment to working in partnership with parents and carers as they understand the importance and benefits of partnership working. Parents have many opportunities and are encouraged to contribute and support their children's learning. Written and spoken references indicate their satisfaction with the care offered to their children. The friendly, approachable staff are on hand daily to give verbal feedback, in addition, parents can view their children's file and development records on request. Some strategies are in place to encourage parental involvement to support their children's learning at home and at the initial assessment process.

Good procedures are in place for recruitment, induction, appraisals and training. Staff attending training ensures that children are cared for by an experienced staff team, who strive for excellence. A very good, informative safeguarding policy is understood by all staff members and ensures the children's well-being is not compromised. Ongoing training with regard to safeguarding ensures staff are fully up-to-date with recent legislation. Security procedures, such as, staff monitoring exists, a visitor's book and fire evacuation procedures ensures children's safety is paramount. Meaningful risk assessments are regularly completed to ensure the environment and activities both indoors and outdoors remain safe for children. Children are secure within their environment and are learning about keeping themselves safe. For example, topic work around 'road safety' and 'people who help us', such as, the police and fireman.

Evaluation of the provision enables the staff to identify areas for improvement and detailed self-evaluation and action plans are now in place. Managers are keen to improve on their practices and seek support and advice wherever available. For example, visiting other settings to observe good practices and introducing these into the setting. The introduction of parental questionnaire ensures parents have an opportunity to express their views with regard to all aspects of the setting.

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

Children are able to play and learn in a bright child-friendly and welcoming environment. Staff are caring and intuitive of the children attending. Most staff have a good understanding of child development and how children learn. Children are provided with a good range of play and learning opportunities as staff use their knowledge to support the children's interests. For example, children engrossed in imaginary role play at the seaside, are provided with trays of sand and shells on request. It is a delight to see children dressed up in flippers, swimming goggles and swim hats. Math development is encouraged throughout all activities and is a strength of this nursery. It is delightful to watch as children listen with fascination to stories told by staff about the naughty pheasant that had eaten the beetroot in her garden. Or the explanations about dinosaurs dietary needs.

Children are fascinated by the rain and giggle under their umbrella listening to the raindrops. They excitedly find snails outdoors and walk around the room holding them gently, and show their friends. Staff find reference books on snails and the

children are able to compare their find to the picture book and extend their learning. Free play enables the children to make choices and direct their own learning and development. Storage is an issue and the staff have to pack away daily but children confidently ask staff for resources if they cannot reach the toys of their choice. There is a book of photographs of the toys, that help children identify and request resources available, however, this is not consistent throughout the nursery. The children are respectful of the toys, happily packing away after themselves. However, some sessions are more structured and restrictive and some children do not have as much opportunity to initiate their own play.

Most staff are committed to providing a fun, happy environment for the children and all staff are attentive, respectful and listen to the children. As a result, children do appear confident and are developing good self-esteem. The children's behaviour throughout the nursery is very good. A good process is in place to ensure assessment, observation and planning for the next steps of learning. Very good strategies are in place to involve parents with and support their children's learning. Parents are provided with a prospectus, policies and procedures and regular newsletters informing them of the activities and the terms' themes.

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment. Defined areas, such as, a well-stocked book corner and imaginative play areas are available. Children are able to independently use the bathroom and use a visual prompt to inform staff that they are in the bathroom. Some good opportunities are available to the children outdoors as they enjoy playing with the ride-on toys, climbing apparatus sandpit or digging the compost. Children excitedly run outdoors and delight in their time in the garden, even in the rain. They grow potatoes, blow bubbles, use the sand and paint with water. They have great fun searching for bugs and squeal with delight when finding snails and ants. Raincoats and Wellington boots are encouraged enabling children to play outdoors comfortably in all weathers. The manager's vision of extending the opportunities for children outdoors, will greatly enhance their learning. Some opportunities are available to the children to explore within the outdoor environment, such as, visiting the local school and shop. However, activities and opportunities within the outdoor environment that cover all six areas of learning, are not always included within the daily plans.

Children's health and welfare is promoted well. They are able to access drinking water throughout the day and enjoy a selection of tasty nutritious snacks. Children are encouraged to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink. They sit together to share snacks, such as, pre-prepared fruit or vegetables. They are unable to take responsibility for themselves as staff lay the tables and snacks are mostly prepared for them. Accommodating snack time greatly impacts on the children's learning as they have to pack away, some children are engrossed in their play and do not want to stop. The trial introduction of a rolling breakfast and snack bar in the kitchen, although in its infancy, has a very positive outcome for children. They are able to choose when to have a snack, they are encouraged to serve and choose for themselves. It is regarded as a social occasion, where staff members sit with the children. Children chatter happily whilst eating and clear away after themselves before going back to their work and play.

All equipment is of good quality and maintained. Children are greeted by smiling

staff and happily come into the setting and engage in an activity. There is a happy and calm atmosphere throughout the sessions. Children are able to learn about and celebrate some different cultures and traditional days as these are incorporated within the planning. This enables the children to have an understanding of the world around them and embrace differences. They have regular opportunities to learn about the wider world as they play with some toys and resources that are representative of diversity. All staff are dedicated and are consistently polite and respectful toward the children.

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