



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 143105

DfES Number: 515318

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 18/11/2004
Inspector Name Mary Daniel

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Elim Church Pre-School
Setting Address Larkhill Christian Centre
Larkhill Road
Yeovil
Somerset
BA21 3HW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Elim Church Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Elim Church Pre-School
Address Larkhill Christian Centre
Larkhill Road
Yeovil
Somerset
BA21 3HW

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Elim Church Pre-School operates from the Larkhill Christian Centre, Yeovil. It is a Christian-based group, which has a church management committee, and links are being developed with the nearby Elim Church Day Nursery. Children have use of three play rooms, and are accommodated according to age and ability. There is no outdoor play area available, although there is a ground floor room which is used to provide physical play activities. The pre-school also have use of a nearby allotment, where children can grow their own plants and vegetables.

Elim Church Pre-School is registered to provide full day care for 24 children aged between two and five years old, and there are currently 81 children on register. Overnight care is not included in the registration. The group is open on Monday to Friday, term-time only, from 09:00 - 15:30. During the autumn term the group finish on a Friday at 11:45. Children attend on a full or part time basis.

There are 11 staff employed, including an overall manager and two room supervisors. The majority of staff all have qualifications in early years child care, or are currently completing relevant training. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are welcomed. The group are in receipt of Government funding for children and there are currently 48 funded three-year old children on roll.

The group receive support from the Somerset Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Elim Church Pre-School is offering acceptable nursery education for children, but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses.

Teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff provide a caring, reassuring approach and support children well in settling into the group. Staff are keen to help children learn and have made positive changes to the planning and assessment system, which provides a range of purposeful play activities. Consequently children's progress is satisfactorily supported in communication, language and literacy, physical and creative development. Overall though, daily planning does not support all aspects of learning and this hinders children's progress in some areas. Staff promote children's learning well in a daily themed activity, such as in making their triangle shaped sandwiches, but the organisation of some activities provides insufficient challenge and there is not an effective balance of adult led and child initiated activities provided. Staff promote children's awareness of rhyming sounds successfully with good use of resources such as the 'big story' books. Staff develop good relationships with children and praise them often, but at times lack clear control which results in children becoming easily distracted.

Leadership and management has significant weaknesses. Overall, the pre-school has suitable aims for the children's care and learning, and staff are encouraged in working together as a team. However, there is no clear system in place to monitor and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision or support them in ongoing improvement.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are welcomed and valued at the pre-school. Their involvement with the group is encouraged through a daily rota, but limited opportunities are offered for sharing information on their child's developmental progress.

What is being done well?

- Good relationships are formed with parents. Staff are approachable and parents feel reassured in leaving their children. Parental involvement is encouraged and good support given in settling children into pre-school.
- Children have fun with their rhyming stories and games. They laugh as the giraffe finds his scarf, and the goat her coat. They are starting to spontaneously say rhyming words in their conversation.
- Children are developing good hand-eye co-ordination in a variety of activities. They pour their own drinks carefully at snack time and most children can successfully use knives to spread the butter on their sandwiches.

- Children join in with the 'café' style snack time and are beginning to develop awareness of healthy eating as they enjoy a bowl of fruit and raisins.

What needs to be improved?

- the systems to monitor and improve the provision offered
- the planning to support children's development in mathematical and personal, social and emotional development, and knowledge and understanding of the world and to provide an effective balance of adult led and child initiated activities
- the staff management of children's behaviour
- the organisation of the session to maximise learning opportunities for all children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made limited progress since the last inspection of nursery education when they were asked to review the planning system to indicate what children were intended to learn from activities, and to develop suitable strategies for managing the behaviour of children.

Staff have introduced a new planning system which now identifies the overall learning intention of activities over a week. This has had a positive impact on children's progress in some areas, although equal emphasis is not given to all areas of learning, which results in children making less progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.

Staff praise children frequently and encourage children in sharing, which results in most being kind to each other. However staff do not give clear expectations which results in children lacking good concentration and interest in parts of the session.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show pride in their achievements. They learn about their community as they meet the firemen and enjoy singing songs when the local pastor visits. Overall, children generally respond well to praise, but there are times when staff lack clear control and children do not show an understanding of suitable boundaries, resulting in many losing concentration and not showing a positive attitude to learning. Children join together with a group prayer and take part in the church nativity.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use language well to express their thoughts and ideas as they talk about family events. They realise print carries meaning as most easily find their name cards, but they see few clear labels around the play areas to further challenge their understanding. Children listen happily to a rhyming story and enjoy rhyming activities. Children are showing good control in their use of mark making tools but are not often encouraged to extend these skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children recognise shapes well and use shape names appropriately, for example, as a child informs staff that the cheese is square shaped. Some children are using positional language well, as they 'cut their sandwich in the middle to make a triangle'. Children show less interest in counting and have limited opportunities to do so. They sing songs such as '5 little elephants' but are not sufficiently encouraged to solve problems within everyday practical situations.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show interest in why things happen as they see what floats or sinks in water play. They discover change with enjoyment as they stir their pudding mixture. Children build a train track with purpose, but cannot independently access a good choice of further craft materials or technological resources to support their own ideas in design and play. Children celebrate festivals together, but there are few positive images displayed to promote their awareness of further aspects of diversity.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children enjoy moving their bodies to hop like bunnies and move like giants. Most children pedal their bikes easily around a given path, but are not sufficiently challenged in some physical play activities. Children have a good understanding of their own needs as they regularly wash their hands before cooking or eating. They develop a good awareness of healthy eating as they enjoy a bowl of fruit at snack time. Children use good hand-eye co-ordination as they carefully pour out their drinks.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children explore different colours and textures with enjoyment as they feel the autumn leaves and put their hands into the 'gloop' mixture. They respond to sound happily with their bodies as they dance with streamers. Children show imagination in some craft activities but cannot independently access a good variety of creative materials to extend their skills and ideas in art and design. Children are beginning to tap out a simple rhythm on the drum and show pleasure in musical activities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve systems of monitoring the overall provision to support staff in their roles and give clear direction in maintaining ongoing improvement for the pre-school
- improve the planning system to provide more opportunities to promote knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical and physical development, and to give an effective balance of adult led and child initiated activities
- improve upon the organisation of some parts of the session and improve the behaviour management strategies used to give children clear expectations, and effectively maximise the learning opportunities available.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.