



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 119474

DfES Number: 511551

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/12/2003
Inspector Name Anita Bartram

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Elim Church Day Nursery
Setting Address Windermere Road
Southend on Sea
Essex
SS1 2RF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Elim Church Governing Body 251549

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Elim Church Governing Body
Address Windermere Road
Southend-on-Sea
Essex
SS1 2RF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Day Nursery opened in 1990. It operates from four rooms within Elim Church in Southend on Sea. The nursery serves the local and wider area.

There are currently 51 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 13 funded three year olds and two funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group also operate an Out of School club for children from the local school. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs or who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 13.00 and 13.00 until 18.00. Children may also stay all day.

Four part time and 12 full time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Four staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)

How good is the Day Care?

Elim Church Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

The environment is warm and welcoming and space is used appropriately to provide children with varied play opportunities. Children go outside daily, weather permitting, as part of their routine. Most documentation is in place and up-to-date.

The children are provided with a safe environment in which to play. Most records are maintained appropriately to ensure that children's medical details are recorded and the necessary consent forms are requested. Most staff have current first aid certificates. Hygiene routines are implemented as part of the children's everyday routines although there is no hot water in either the staff or children's toilets. The staff are aware of meeting children's individual needs. There is a varied menu of foods provided and children have some choice in what they eat for lunch. Staff are

appropriately aware of their child protection responsibilities.

Children are able to select from a range of resources and can choose between different play activities. Staff follow good working practices to meet the specific needs of children with special educational needs and work closely with parents and other agencies. There is a satisfactory range of resources to promote positive images of diversity to children. Overall children's behaviour is good.

Staff are readily available to speak with parents at either end of the day. Parents are welcomed into the group at any time and are invited to special days in the group's calendar such as Christmas celebrations.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- Younger children's activities are planned around new guidance from Sure Start. Staff are aware of the Birth to Three framework and what this means to the children they care for. For example, activities are arranged to help children under three become healthy, competent, skilful and strong.
- Children are able to have daily access to valuable core activities such as sand, water, large physical equipment and the use of outdoors.
- Children are encouraged to be independent at lunchtime according to their age and stage of development. Many children attempt to cut up food, and show preferences for what they like and dislike.
- Staff support children with special educational needs very well. They are aware of the code of practice for Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and liaise with parents and other professionals appropriately. They adapt activities to accommodate children's specific needs and incorporate different practices into all children's routines so that all children benefit.
- There are many good relationships between parents and staff. Parents voice positive comments about the welcoming family atmosphere of the group and feel that children and families are supported individually. Parents are aware of the group's activities and their christian ethos.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of snack and meal times to encourage children to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables
- the policy and procedures for administering medication
- the accessibility of the complaints procedure, that includes Ofsted's contact details, to parents

- the provision of appropriate hot water in the hand basins to ensure that children and staff can follow good hygiene practices.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
7	Ensure the written record of medicines given to children is accurate and includes the dosage to be given. Ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding handwashing with reference to the provision of hot water in hand basins.
8	Encourage the children to eat more fresh foods such as fruit and vegetables.
12	Make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Provision for nursery education at Elim Church Day Nursery offers acceptable provision for children but has significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by the quality of teaching, although children's physical and personal, social and emotional development is generally good.

The quality of teaching is acceptable. Staff are beginning to refer to early learning goals and stepping stones. There are valuable core activities used to support children's learning. However, teaching is very adult directed and staff do not fully understand how children learn. They have limited appreciation of the value of play and how intervention and interaction is crucial to the quality of children's learning experiences. Children sometimes play passively rather than taking active roles in their learning.

Outdoor play space is limited, however staff take children out frequently for walks to notice their environment. Senior staff have developed good children's assessment records that are well presented, give examples of attainment and link to the six areas of learning. However, short-term plans are not fully informed by these. Specific learning outcomes are not planned including challenge for older or more able children. Staff cannot therefore extend children's knowledge and understanding.

Leadership and management is acceptable. The joint managers work well together and have clear roles. They carry out appraisals and observations on staff. However, many staff have not had recent foundation stage training and do not have sufficient understanding of its principles to effectively implement it during their everyday working practices.

Partnership with parents is very good. Staff have good relationships with parents and share information to keep parents informed about children's experiences. Parents value the group's family atmosphere and appreciate the year book that children get on their birthday.

What is being done well?

- The children are developing good attitudes and skills in independence. For example, many younger children use cutlery very skilfully and protest loudly either through verbal or body language if staff attempt to cut up their food. Children very assertively voice their preferences at meal-times.
- The children use movement very well. For example, they move freely within the large hall on soft play equipment and can organise themselves to line up behind each other to go outside. They jump up and down or skip to show their excitement.

- The children's development records are well presented and thought out. They give examples of how each child has met a stepping stone and the date the child achieved it. This gives meaning to the records to reflect the child's personality and the context in which they were recorded.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to initiate and extend their creative, ICT and calculation skills through both planned and child led activities
- the short term planning so that staff can identify what children should learn from the activity and plan for the differing abilities of children in the group
- the staff's understanding of the foundation stage and how they can be more proactive in extending the children's learning in both adult and child led activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the one key issue identified at the previous inspection, resulting in some improvements being made to the educational programme. Children now play with materials such as play dough on a frequent basis. They are competent in their use of tools and enjoy rolling it out, cutting or shaping it. Some children use opportunities to make balls and worms with biscuit mix. Staff are not fully active in helping children develop their own skills to make 3D models as they readily make objects for the children whilst they watch, instead of talking through the properties and structures to guide children to have a go themselves. There is some provision in place for children to examine manufactured objects to discover how they work although this is not a frequent part of the planned curriculum.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Many children enjoy being independent. They purposefully cut up their food at lunch-time and get cross if staff try to help. Generally they control their behaviour well. They know right from wrong and confidently stand up for themselves. Children are not very aware that others have different views and experiences. Staff are not alert to challenge and discuss children's remarks particularly traditional stereotypical gender statements or help children appreciate cultural and religious differences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Older children are beginning to use complex sentences using speech to talk confidently to friends and adults. Although children enjoy large group stories they do not readily use books or stories independently. The organisation of resources means older children have few opportunities to initiate story lines in play or use books as reference tools. Older children are not fully aware of linking sounds to letters. For example, they don't comment on rhyming words in stories or make up silly songs.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children enjoy counting in both adult directed activities or spontaneously whilst sitting with friends. They can rote count to 20. They have an emerging understanding of 2D shapes. Many children name both simple and complex shapes such as oval and crescent. There are few opportunities for children to try calculation in either child or adult led activities. Staff do not ask children questions during play to encourage them to use words such as bigger, smallest, less, more, full, empty.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children use tools such as scissors and glue spreaders competently and know that scissors must be used safely. Older children try out simple experiments whilst playing with water to investigate floating and sinking. Children are not learning to use technology independently in everyday situations. Staff plan activities for, but do not use purposeful interaction, to help children express feelings about significant events or become more aware of cultures and beliefs of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move freely and have a good sense of space. They move around the large hall appropriately and negotiate themselves into smaller spaces or whilst on the floor playing with wooden bricks. Older children use knives and forks well and use scissors effectively to cut up cards and magazines. Children have a limited understanding of healthy eating. Staff do not use snack and mealtimes to encourage children's awareness of good foods and drinks.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children use movement to express feelings such as excitement. They keenly join in actions during familiar songs. Children talk about what they feel, smell and see. For example, whilst making biscuits they say flour is soft and dough is smelly. Children infrequently draw and mark make freely because of staff expectations that children use colouring sheets. Children's access to role-play is limited and so they do not extend imaginary play to incorporate stories based on first hand experiences.

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 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

- expand the short term planning so that staff can identify what children should specifically learn from an activity and so that staff can plan for the differing abilities of children in the group
- improve the staff's understanding of the principles of the foundation stage and how they can be more proactive in extending the children's learning through more purposeful play experiences that cover all six areas of learning
- raise all the staff's awareness and understanding of how to actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.