

Ashford Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 126983
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Inspector Jenny Kane

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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 1984 and is one of a chain of three privately owned nurseries. It is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm all year round. The nursery operates from premises near to the town centre of Ashford. There are two main play areas and staff facilities upstairs. One of the play areas is accessed down two steps which makes this area challenging for wheelchair users. Children have access to a large enclosed garden which is accessed via a path alongside the nursery which is shared with another nursery in the chain. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is not registered to provide overnight care. There are currently 83 children attending in the early years age group, some in part-time places. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year olds. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and several children who speak English as an additional language. There are nine members of staff including the nursery supervisor. Of these, two are qualified to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 4, four to NVQ at level 2 and 3 and two are working towards a qualification. They are very well supported by the general manager and the owner. They also receive support from the local authority's early years advisor.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy positive relationships with staff who support them well during play enabling them to make good progress in their learning. Overall, staff have a good understanding of how to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, know children's starting points and effectively plan activities to meet their individual needs. Most documentation is effectively maintained. Established partnerships with parents and other providers ensure good continuity of care. Staff are committed to inclusion for all children and their families. The nursery's capacity to improve is good because senior staff work with their team to identify areas for improvement and build on existing strengths.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the sharing of the children's next steps with parents so they can support their children's learning at home
- support children's knowledge and understanding of the world by offering opportunities for them to partake in outings in the local community

- maintain the regular two-way flow of information with parents, for example, by further developing the information currently provided for them regarding the service provided.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are well supported, are enthusiastic and have clear aims and ideals. Senior staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and reporting procedures. The child protection policy is fully implemented to ensure children's safety. Staff carry out regular risk assessments of the equipment and all areas used by children to assess and eliminate risks. Robust systems are in place to ensure all adults having contact with the children are suitable and all staff hold current first aid certificates. Children are cared for in premises which are safe, secure, bright and welcoming. Staff make good use of the resources, space is laid out to encourage self-selection, there are posters and work at eye level and the environment is conducive to learning.

Staff have established good relationships with parents and carers. When parents drop off their children they chat to staff and share information, the supervisor has an open door policy and is available at any time. Consequently, parents happily share information with staff and key workers and this helps continuity of care. Parents are happy with the service and make positive comments. They particularly like the staff's friendliness and good communication, they know who their child's key worker is, they feel they can talk to staff about all issues and that staff listen to their views. Daily verbal communication is good concerning children's activities and routines and annual parents' evenings, a suggestion box and regular questionnaires help staff find out parental opinions. All the necessary mandatory records and documents are in place, kept confidently and securely. However, some of the information available to parents does not fully reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage or the service provided.

The nursery has established good links with many of the local schools and some other providers. Senior staff have a commitment to working with others and understand the benefits to the children. Any child who needs additional support is quickly identified and their needs addressed because links with other professionals are well established. There is very good liaison with the other nurseries in the chain. The staff team is well established and demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement. This is achieved through regular team meetings, discussion and sharing information. As a team, they are beginning to identify their strengths and weaknesses and the senior team have worked hard to make some significant changes to the provision. They have worked hard to address the recommendations raised at the last inspection, which has improved the outcomes for children.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Several have attended recent training in the subject. Each key person plans on a weekly basis for their group of children, bearing in mind their abilities and interests. When children first start, parents are involved in helping to ascertain starting points and working with the key person by sharing information about what their child can do. Observations inform the planning and help staff to provide a balance of interesting and appropriate activities. Key persons make notes about the children during play which they transfer into children's individual development folders to monitor progress. However, some parents are not involved in the sharing of the children's next steps, which means they are not able to fully support their children's learning at home. Children are achieving and progressing well towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points and clearly enjoy their time at the nursery.

Children demonstrate good social skills, they are confident in their surroundings, move about choosing activities and deciding who they play with. They share and cooperate well during play, understand the clear boundaries and this is reflected in their behaviour which is very good. Children are clear communicators and make conversation with staff, visitors and other children. When they arrive they self-register by finding their name card and putting it on the table. Several easily identify their names and one child tells others her name starts with 'T' and goes round the room finding other words with the same letter. Books are in good supply, well displayed and children use these areas frequently either on their own or with staff. Children enjoy mark making and confidently use the resources to create drawings and then ask staff to help them write their name on the finished work. Children use their imaginations well and make good use of the props to act out scenarios. They enjoy art and craft on a daily basis and their work is displayed on the walls. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes each day and staff introduce some signing. At various times during their play children spontaneously break into song. There is a varied supply of musical instruments.

Children use mathematics during play, at lunch and in the garden. There are good quality resources, number signs and posters on the walls. A group of children sort animals into shape and colour groups, others bounce about on the foam shapes identifying various colours and one child using the binoculars states 'Wow, you look big'. Children gain an understanding of the wider world through a good range of resources which promote equality and diversity, activities and celebrations. Staff invite others in the community, for example health workers and police officers, into the nursery to visit the children and share their skills and knowledge. However, children do not have opportunities to discover for themselves about their local community because they do not go out of the nursery for walks. A group of children share the computer taking turns to share the mouse and the keyboard. They know how to access the programs and the more competent show the others. There are good supplies of gadgets and items to help children understand how things work. A group of children have a wonderful time using the various rain sticks, watching the movement and listening to the sounds they make.

There are good opportunities for promoting children's physical development and health. When asked, children all want to go in the garden. They are independent in putting on coats and changing into their outdoor shoes. When ready, children walk safely together along the pathway to the shared garden. They enjoy a good selection of activities. Children kick footballs, wave brightly coloured pompoms, hold ribbon sticks in the wind watching the shapes they make. Others safely climb the ladder up into the playhouse. Three children sit on rocker but find it will not rock. They use their problem-solving skills to work out that if the child in the middle gets off it rocks well. Children enjoy outdoor play all year round. They know that in hot weather they need to wear sun hats and cream, and in wet weather they have waterproof suits.

Children have a clear understanding of good personal hygiene practices and making healthy choices in regard to food. They automatically go and wash their hands in the bathrooms before snack, find their own tissues and help at snack time. There is a rolling snack bar during the morning and children choose when to eat. They enjoy healthy snacks of toast and fruit, pour their own drinks and talk about their favourite foods. All children enjoy a hot meal which is prepared in the kitchen of the adjoining nursery. Lunch is a social occasion with children and staff sitting together in groups. Children use the forks and spoons competently, chat to their friends while they are eating their meal and their manners are good. Throughout the day children can access drinks from the water dispenser.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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