

# Ashleigh Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 309217  
**Inspection date** 14/06/2011  
**Inspector** Ferroza Saiyed

**Setting address** Marsh Lane, Longton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 5ZJ

**Telephone number** 01772 617 532

**Email**

**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

Ashleigh Nursery School opened in 1990. It is a privately owned provision. It operates from three rooms within the church hall adjacent to Longton Methodist church on the outskirts of Preston. The setting primarily serves families living in and around the local community.

The pre-school children access the main playroom, with toilet and hand washing facilities located close by. The toddlers have access to a room on the first floor and they have their own kitchen for preparation of snacks, and an area for nappy changing facilities. The babies use the room to the rear, which is self-contained with its own nappy changing facilities and food preparation area. All areas of the nursery are divided into different areas of learning. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. There is also a kitchen, an office and separate facilities for staff.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. It is registered to care for no more than 72 children under five years at any one time. The nursery may care for no more than 36 under three, of whom 12 maybe under two years. The nursery operates five days a week Monday to Friday all year round, excluding Bank Holidays. Opening hours are between 7.45am to 5.30pm. There are currently 122 children on roll. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 20 members of staff including the manager, who is also the registered provider, who work directly with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The deputy holds a BA (Hons) in Children, Schools and Families and is working towards Early Years Practitioner status. The manager and the deputy are experienced in childcare and they oversee the provisions. A part-time cook and two auxiliary staff are also employed.

The setting receives support from the local authority. The nursery has recently been awarded the Step into Quality Award and the 5 Star Food Award from the Borough Council. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare and learning needs are effectively promoted due to the excellent knowledge of the highly motivated staff. They provide an excellent range of innovative learning experiences and play opportunities based on children's individual interests. This means that children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals, given their age, ability and starting points. The exemplary partnership with parents and others underpins shared care, and communication systems are excellent. The registered provider and staff have a commitment to excellence and are constantly self-evaluating their practice to maintain continuous improvements to an already superb nursery.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to further develop the outdoor area.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff have excellent knowledge of the indicators of abuse and the procedure to follow should they have a concern about a child. All staff are trained in safeguarding and their knowledge is updated regularly. A comprehensive detailed record of risk assessments have been produced for the premises and for outings, eliminating risks to children. Staff use a variety of ways to teach children about keeping safe, for example, fire safety by undertaking regular emergency evacuation practices, having the firefighters and the police visit the nursery and on outings by teaching them how to stay safe near roads and making them aware of stranger danger.

Children benefit immensely from the strong leadership and management established in this innovative nursery setting. Children's care, learning and development are significantly enhanced through a cooperative, highly motivated management team who are extremely enthusiastic and proactive in their commitment to improve the outcomes for all children. They share a clear vision for the future development of the setting to provide excellent facilities for children and their families. For example, they have identified the outdoor to be further developed and to include climbing apparatus and a sensory garden.

The special relationship between the registered provider and staff enthuses equality and inclusion that ensures all members actively contribute to the consistently high standards within the setting. Training is very well attended and this is evident from the staff's knowledge and skills in offering a highly innovative learning environment which significantly enhances and extends children's development and progress. All records, documents, policies and procedures are meticulously maintained and updated regularly, which ensures they reflect changes to legislation. The robust recruitment, induction and appraisal system ensures the staff's ongoing suitability. These strong leadership skills are effective in maintaining a dedicated and committed team who work exceptionally well together to ensure children's individual needs are met.

A wealth of information is available for parents, including a detailed prospectus, newsletters and daily diaries. Staff obtain information from parents in order to gain a greater insight into children's individual needs and how best to support the children and enable them to reach their full potential. Staff and parents work together with other professionals to ensure that this takes place where concerns in their child's development are identified. Parents are encouraged to become

involved in their child's learning. Parents are extremely complimentary about the operation of the nursery, expressing a high regard for the staff, the welcoming and secure environment and dedicated service provided. They have complete trust in the staff and are impressed by their attention to detail and individual knowledge of their children's needs.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported by enthusiastic staff. Partnerships with other professionals, such as health visitors, teachers and speech therapists, are extremely well developed and are highly effective in supporting children and their families. Exceptionally close links with local schools also help with the smooth transition of the children when it is time for them to move on. Staff organise the setting effectively, allowing children to move around freely and select from suitable toys and equipment independently. These include resources that reflect positive images of diversity which encourage children to respect each other's similarities and differences. Equality and diversity are completely promoted and embraced by the staff.

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

Children are thriving and making exceptional progress in their learning and development due to the highly skilled and motivated staff. They have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are extremely effective in planning imaginative and exciting activities for children. Planning is clearly based on children's individual needs and interests, and detailed observations are completed to inform assessments. The children are grouped carefully to ensure that care can be tailored to effectively to meet their individual and changing needs, taking into account children's ages and stage of development. Children's achievements are documented in individual files which include colourful photographs and examples of their work. Observation sheets are clearly linked to the areas of learning and identify next steps in learning. Staff use observations and discussion with parents to find out children's starting points. A rich learning environment enables children to make excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development.

Children are thrilled to be involved in the activities provided for them, and they are inquisitive and motivated to learn. Children gain independence, feel safe and grow in confidence as they are empowered to make their own decisions, experiment, and take appropriate risks knowing that staff are always on hand to support them. For example, children at meal time confidently pour their own water knowing that they can easily wipe up any spillages. They decide to make a pirate ship with the cardboard boxes and use materials for their flags. Staff promote their imagination and bring out the dressing up box. Children are excited and staff too become involved in the activity. Children dress up as pirates and draw maps to find the hidden treasure. This is further developed with staff hiding some treasure in the outdoor play area for children to find.

Babies and toddlers enjoy abundant sensory experiences, such as playing with treasure baskets, coloured bottles and textured materials. They develop walking

skills as they pull themselves to a standing position. Children play with alternative materials, such as cellophane and foil, they squeal in delight as they scrunch the material. Staff are exceptionally proactive in their interactions with children, but also skilfully step back when they recognise that children need space for self-discovery and contemplation. Children move freely and confidently around each individual room.

Children develop an exceptional understanding of the importance of healthy living. They eat a balanced diet of freshly prepared meals and enjoy a selection of healthy snacks. Children enjoy outdoor activities in all weather conditions. They show excellent control of their movements as they run, jump, wave their arms in the air, starting and changing direction. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to access large apparatus to develop their large motor skills. Children look forward to the 'music lady' as they sing, dance and do actions to their favourite songs and rhymes. All children thoroughly enjoy the extensive range of outdoor play activities and experiences, such as planting fruits and vegetables and outings in the local area, enhance their opportunities to explore and investigate their surroundings. These all offer children inspiring and challenging opportunities to develop social and intellectual skills.

Children use their developing language skills confidently and become animated when talking to each other and expressing their ideas. They ask how, what and why questions of the staff and actively seek information regarding their play. Children choose a word for the week, and this week they chose 'extinct' and try to use this in their activities; they know the meaning of this as a child is eager to inform the inspector of its meaning. They are developing an understanding of calculation because staff provide opportunities by incorporating these in various activities. They are confident in naming colours and shapes and use mathematical language during their play, such as under and over, big and small. Children use a range of tools to mark make with, which are provided throughout the nursery, such as, chinks, notepads, brushes, pens, crayons and pencils. Stories and the use of story sacks are well used and enjoyed by the children, who contribute and add their interpretation. The learning environment is wonderful, providing a rich, inspiring and thoughtful range of activities and quality resources in all areas of learning. These reflect the children's own interest, so they are continually challenged, which contributes to their motivation to learn and growing confidence and independence.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well integrated into the setting. Children learn about similarities, differences and diversity through books, resources, displays, discussion and experiences, such as looking at weddings in different cultures, enabling them to develop understanding and respect. Children are well mannered and courteous to other children and staff. They share and take turns, for example, when using the computer. Children are developing a wealth of skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. For example, they are eager to use programmable toys and they become increasingly confident in using interactive resources throughout the nursery. Children develop a high degree of self-esteem as their sense of belonging is expertly nurtured through the warm, welcoming, stimulating environment.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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