

Ashford Play Nursery (Creche)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY284642
Inspection date 13/09/2010
Inspector Liz Caluori

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Ashford Play Nursery (Crèche) has been registered since 2004. It is one of four privately run nurseries with the same ownership. It operates from the ground floor of a private house in Ashford. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 14 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is registered to take babies and toddlers from birth to three years with children moving on to one of the other three nurseries when they are ready. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 25 children on roll attending both full and part time hours. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm all year round. The nursery is able to provide care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those with English as an additional language.

There are generally four staff working full time with the children, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications, and an area manager who oversees all four of the provisions. There is a facility for staff to cover from different settings should the need arise. In addition to the general manager, the nursery employs five staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are extremely happy and are progressing well in all areas of their development as a result of the high quality of support and careful organisation to meet their individual needs. Effective partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals support staff to ensure that they are offering care which is coordinated and consistent and, as a result, children settle easily. A strong commitment to self-evaluation enables staff to identify and address areas for improvement and robust safety procedures ensure that children are protected.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the arrangements for identifying children's next steps to link more closely with the Early Years Foundation Stage and offer greater encouragement for parents and carers to become involved in setting goals for their child
- ensure that unfamiliar adults are introduced to children to support them to develop a sense of security

- increase the range of toys and resources aimed at promoting positive images of people from the local community and wider world in order to support children to learn about diversity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected by a range of well thought out safety precautions within the setting. Regular assessments are undertaken and daily inspections are carried out in all areas used by children. Clear health and safety policies are in place including the procedure to be followed in case of any child protection concerns. Staff are trained to identify the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and one member of staff takes responsibility for coordinating investigations.

The area manager and nursery manager work closely together to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and effectively prioritise areas for improvement. Regular staff meetings and a strong focus on training and development ensures that staff are confident, motivated and clear on the aims and objectives of the nursery.

Parents and carers are offered a good range of written information about the nursery. A notice board in the entrance hall displays certificates and general information such as the complaints procedure. In addition, contact books are used to share information between parents and carers and their child's key person; this includes specific information about the child's care and development including the activities they have taken part in, their toileting, sleep patterns and what they have eaten. Staff are experienced at working with a range of professionals to meet the needs of the children including health specialists and advisors. There are also good arrangements in place to share information with other childcare providers involved in delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to the children.

Children are provided with a good range of toys and resources which are invitingly displayed at a low level so that they can access them independently. Staffing is organised to meet the needs of the children. Each child has a designated key person who takes lead responsibility for liaising with their parents and carers and ensuring that their care needs are recognised and addressed. This ensures that children are treated as individuals and, as a result, are developing good self-esteem. They are also encouraged to respect other people and have access to a range of toys and books which feature images of diversity. However, this area is not given as much focus as other elements of the care provided and this has been recognised as an area for improvement within the setting.

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

Children are happy and settled in the nursery. They are making good progress in all areas, enjoying a good mix of free play and adult-led activities. Staff

demonstrate a good knowledge of each child's developmental levels and skillfully extend their learning either by supporting their freely chosen play or through a range of adult-led activities. This good practice is not always reflected in the quality of written records. Whilst details of observations undertaken on each child are recorded in their learning journals, the next steps identified do not always clearly relate to the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This does not support staff to easily share information with parents and carers or to involve them in the setting of future goals.

Children are grouped by age for parts of the day. The babies and youngest toddlers are based in one room and the older children in another. There are also times when they mix together, offering them access to a wider range of resources as well as promoting their social skills. Those who are learning to walk have a good deal of clear floor space in which to practise their mobility. In addition, all children have access to an outdoor play area where they can use equipment such as bikes, balls and hoops or simply run around and have fun. There is also a very good range of toys and activities available to promote children's fine motor skills and hand to eye coordination. These include bead racks, musical instruments and toys with a variety of knobs and buttons.

Regular opportunities exist for children to express themselves creatively. Their excitement is visible as the paints are taken out of the cupboard and older children are confident in naming the different colours. Children also enjoy singing and making music. There are toys to encourage imaginative role play, such as a cooker and a selection of dolls, however, this area of development is not promoted as successfully as others with the nursery. The presentation of the baby dolls does not inspire children's interest and they tend to select these less readily than, for example, the very well presented construction resources.

Staff support children to learn about the routines of the nursery by involving them in setting up activities and encouraging them to predict what is to happen next, for example, by asking, 'What do we need to do first?' Older children are given responsibilities such as carrying paint brushes or paper through to the art table. In addition, all children become involved in tidying up the toys in between activities; this helps them to develop a sense of belonging as well as learning skills that they will need as they move up through the nursery and eventually go to school. Children are developing extremely good social skills, learning to share, take turns and be kind to others through effective role modeling by staff and a good level of adult input. Similar attention is given to encouraging children in their language and their problem solving and numeracy. They enjoy singing and have an impressive repertoire of songs committed to memory. They are also developing confidence in their counting.

Safety gates are used to restrict children's access around the nursery. They are well behaved and generally move calmly and sensible within their rooms. Staff offer advice and reminders to children in order to help them learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, ensuring that they sit properly on their chairs. Whilst staff appropriately supervise visitors they do not always remember to ensure that children are introduced to all unfamiliar adults. Therefore, while children are safe, they are not always supported to develop their sense of security.

Children are cared for in a very tidy, clean environment. They learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and routinely wash their hands before sitting down to eat. Nappy changing procedures are entirely appropriate and older children are well supported to develop their self-care skills. Children enjoy nutritious snacks which are prepared on site and have hot lunches which are cooked at the sister nursery located in the same street and collected each day. Children's individual dietary requirements are well understood and addressed, for example, dairy free alternatives are available for those with milk intolerances.

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	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	3
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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