

# Elmstead Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

650062

**Inspection date**

23/09/2011

**Inspector**

June Oliver

**Setting address**

Elmcroft, Holly Way, Elmstead Market, COLCHESTER, Essex,  
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**Telephone number**

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Elmstead Nursery is a registered charity. The nursery teacher is employed by the board of trustees to manage the day to day running of the nursery. It opened in 2000 and operates from a purpose built building in the grounds of Elmstead Primary School in the village of Elmstead Market, near Colchester. There is a large secure outdoor play area. The setting is open Monday to Friday during the school term time. Sessions are from 8.55am until 11.30am and 1pm to 3.30pm Monday to Friday with Wednesday and Friday 1pm to 3.30pm being for the younger children. There is an optional lunch club. Children attend for a variety of sessions and can stay all day.

A maximum of 26 children aged between two and a half and five years old may attend at any one time. Currently, there are 43 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The nursery is in receipt of funding for early education places for three- and four-years-olds and 29 children currently receive this funding. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are seven members of staff who work with the children and one administrator. Of these, one member of staff holds a degree qualification and is working towards a Masters and most others have relevant qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's learning and development are supported well during their time at this nursery and they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are happy and settled in their environment and enjoy participating in a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, embracing all areas of learning. The staff team are led by an enthusiastic and well qualified nursery teacher who is responsible for day to day management of practice. Overall, good use is made of resources and activities provided indoors and outdoors with children having opportunity to learn about information and communication technology. Very good partnerships with parents have been developed, as well as mostly good partnerships with the schools that children transfer onto. Excellent procedures to monitor and evaluate the setting are in place, including valued input from children, parents, staff and other trustee board members.

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

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

- develop further communication with all settings that children are transferring

to, so as to enable all children's needs to be met effectively.

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

Children's well-being is safeguarded as very good procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff who have completed all required suitability checks and training. A safeguarding policy is in place and staff have an excellent understanding of how to follow and support any concerns with regard to the children's welfare. Detailed risk assessments are completed daily to ensure children play in a safe environment. Good staff ratios and vigilant staff ensure children are supervised well. A comprehensive set of written policies and procedures support practice.

The nursery teacher manages the setting with support from the board of trustees and staff. The staff team is well established in their roles and efficient rotas ensure the smooth running of the setting. All staff take turns to lead the 'mat time' and structured physical activity sessions that take place in the school hall. The setting is welcoming and has posters, displays and art work, such as paper plate faces, to create a sense of belonging. Good quality resources and equipment that are appropriate for the children are easily accessible. They are well presented and support children's learning. Children are able to self-select activities and resources and can choose inside or outside play. Staff interact well with children ensuring good supervision and support.

Staff, parents, children and trustee board members contribute to the very effective self-evaluation process and ensure that all ideas are considered. Improvements are identified and actioned to raise outcomes for children. For example, the nature area is still being developed by using the expertise of a parent. Practise is regularly reviewed to ensure the needs of children and families are being met. For example, changing session times to coincide with the school hours after an enquiry from a parent. Staff have professional development meetings annually to discuss their development needs. All staff contributes to planning meetings to ensure the individual goals of their key children are provided for in the activities and resources offered on a day to day basis.

Excellent opportunities are available for parents and carers to contribute to their child's time at the setting, for example, using regular questionnaires to seek opinions. Regular meetings with children's key workers enable parents to be fully informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents verbal references suggest they are very happy with every aspect of care and learning opportunities offered to their children. The nursery has excellent relationships with the local school that most children move onto, including the use of their facilities, although, relationships with other schools are not so developed. This means that children's transitions may not be so effectively supported.

Staff offer sensitive support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Activities are adapted to ensure all children can access them and

individual needs are being met.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting as good relationships have been built between themselves and the staff. Well-planned activities ensure children's individual goals are provided for. Children are able to move around the setting safely because the environment is safe and children know their boundaries. For example, they can select from the selection of good quality resources and toys and know how to use them correctly. This encourages children to become independent learners.

Children's good health is very effectively promoted as children choose to play outside daily and use the school hall for regular structured physical activity sessions. For example, children use bikes and climb on the climbing frame in the setting and play games and move to music in the school hall. Children are learning about healthy food choices as they choose fruit and cheese for snack. Children are aware of foods that are healthy and those that are not, as they talk with staff at snack time. They learn to be independent as they are encouraged to pour their own drinks. Children understand about effective care routines, such as hand washing before snack and after using the toilet, as they independently perform these tasks.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because most activities are planned around children's interests and needs. Regular observations are linked to areas of learning and used for assessment. These are used to identify next steps and to ensure all areas of learning are provided for. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning at the initial meeting and at progress meetings to ensure their continuing involvement. Children are developing their language skills as staff ask relevant questions and allows time for responses. For example, they ask children what they had in their lunch boxes. Children have good opportunity to practise writing as resources are available in the outside area, the nature area and using white boards and markers. Mathematical skills are promoted, as children are helped to count in twos when lining up to go over to the school hall for their structured physical activity session. Children learn about information and communication technology as computers, cameras, programmable toys and microphones are available for their use. This ensures they develop excellent skills for the future. Children learn about the wider world by celebrating festivals and birthdays, using books, role play and being involved in special days in the adjoining school.

Children behave well in the setting. This is because of the clear and consistent boundaries with explanations for the rules discussed during 'mat time'. This ensures children feel settled and confident to explore the setting. Children learn about their own and others' cultures and beliefs, as books and puzzles showing positive images and diversity are used and festivals and birthdays are celebrated

and parents invited in to talk about their culture.

## 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>	2
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### 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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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