

Avenue Playgroup

Avenue Baptist Church, Milton Road, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA, Essex, SS0 7JX

Inspection date	08/10/2013
Previous inspection date	27/09/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff provide a good variety of interesting and stimulating activities, indoors and outside to promote children's progress in all areas of learning.
- Children joining the playgroup quickly develop secure emotional bonds due to the effective settling-in procedures and a well-embedded key person system. This means children feel safe and secure and enjoy their learning experiences.
- Partnership with parents is strong. Staff and parents communicate effectively, which helps children's continuity of learning and care.
- The management monitor the playgroup effectively and support the staff team's professional development, which in turn, benefits all children.
- Children are safeguarded through robust policies and procedures, which are understood and implemented efficiently by an enthusiastic and caring staff team.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to enhance children's access to books, so that children independently look at literature for pleasure. In addition, the opportunities for children to extend their early writing skills are not fully explored.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments, this included a joint observation with a member of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of children's development records.
- The inspector saw evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff, risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full Report

Information about the setting

Avenue Playgroup was established in 1988 and registered under the current management in 2010. It is on the Early Years Register and is run and managed by the Avenue Baptist Church Committee. The playgroup operates from four halls in the Avenue Baptist Church building in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed courtyard and playground available for outdoor play.

The playgroup employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. There are two staff working towards qualifications at level 3. There are also nine volunteers and students working in the pre-school

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday in school term times. Sessions are from 9.25am until 12 noon. There are currently 26 children attending, who are within the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance the opportunities for children to develop their literacy skills, for example, by creating a more appealing and cosy area to inspire children to independently access books and by providing children with a choice of writing materials in their role play.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are confident and happy at this friendly and stimulating playgroup. Staff have a secure understanding of the learning and development requirements and competently put them into practice. They understand how children learn and the quality of teaching is good. Staff understand children's individual needs because they talk to parents at children's settling-in times and find out about each child's preferences, characteristics and capabilities. The key persons use this information efficiently along with their own initial observations to form children's starting points. This enables them to plan activities that interest children when they first join the playgroup. Staff continue to skilfully teach,

observe and assess children while they play and analyse the information gathered efficiently to identify the next steps in children's learning and inform planning. Consequently, staff provide challenging activities to meet each child's learning needs.

Each child's key person is knowledgeable about their key children and in particular children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables them to ensure their specific needs are met, so that they are included in the life of the playgroup. Practitioners give good priority to the prime areas of learning with children aged under three years. They use a summary form to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage progress check at age two and include parents in the discussion of children's strengths and any concerns. This means that staff are able to identify when early intervention may be needed to ensure that children receive the appropriate support. Staff adapt their interactions to support children who speak English as an additional language. Visual timetables and displays of pictures contribute to their inclusion and ongoing progress. As a result, all children make good progress towards the early learning goals, given their starting points.

Children are individually supported and prepared as they make progress in readiness for starting school. They confidently follow their interests and relish taking part in problem solving activities that develop their mathematical skills. For example, they use large construction blocks to build, count, discuss and compare height, length and shapes. Children learn to recognise their name cards at self-registration and circle time and have suitable opportunities to develop their literacy skills by accessing materials on the writing table. Although they develop strong pencil control, children do not consistently have opportunities to experiment with writing for different purposes, for example, by writing lists during role play. Children are starting to develop a love of literature as they listen to stories and access books at circle time. However, staff have not extended children's appreciation of books by creating an appealing cosy area where children can relax and independently look at books for pleasure, throughout the session.

Children are active learners and independently explore their learning environment, while actively making choices and taking decisions about whether to play inside or outdoors, for much of each session. There is a good level of interaction between staff and children. Staff use activities linked to the 'Every Child A Talker' programme to support children's language development. They participate in children's play, taking a genuine interest in what they have to say. Staff are good at extending children's learning by asking pertinent questions, which stimulate children's thinking and actively capture their attention. For example, when children find snails and insects in the courtyard staff ask children to think about what the mini-beasts need to survive. As a result, children discuss and look for natural resources to help make the small creatures feel at home. Children are encouraged to play imaginatively. For example, staff are involved when children act out what happens on a train journey and talk about buying tickets and discuss the stations they pass through on their route to London.

Parents become involved in their children's learning in meaningful ways. They join story sessions and attend fundraising events, such as coffee mornings and special lunches. In addition, parents collect supermarket vouchers to extend the range of physical play equipment in the playgroup. The key persons regularly meet with parents to keep them updated on their child's progress and achievements. Parents are encouraged to contribute

their own thoughts on their child's development and individual achievements in the development records. This shows sound partnership working and consistency is achieved for children.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are happy and quickly settle because of the friendly and supportive staff members, the effective key person system and efficient staff deployment. Children form secure attachments with their key persons, which promotes their confidence and independence. Staff work closely with parents right from the start to obtain detailed information about each child's care needs. This ensures that the transfer from home into the setting is a smooth process and promotes children's physical and emotional well-being. The regular flow of information between home and the setting continues to ensure that warm bonds are formed between staff and the families. As a result, children approach staff readily to share their thoughts and ideas, or for reassurance and help.

Staff are good role models to children and are respectful and kind towards them at all times. They have an extremely calm and consistent manner with children, which results in them showing children the best way to behave. This means that children work well independently as well as collaborating and cooperating within a group. They are encouraged by staff and enjoy taking responsibility for tasks within the playgroup to increase their self-esteem and independence. As a result, they are helpful and well behaved as staff give them plenty of praise and encouragement.

Children learn to keep themselves safe during physical play sessions. Staff supervise children well as they play on bicycles and wheeled toys. They encourage them to think about risks and promote physical challenge. As a result, children quickly learn how to steer carefully to avoid bumping into their friends and work out that it is safer for everyone to ride in the same direction. Emergency evacuation procedures are discussed and practised, to further enhance children's awareness of safety.

Children show a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy healthy foods and gain useful independence skills at snack time. For example, they distribute the cartons of milk and serve nourishing snacks to their friends. Staff are knowledgeable about any special dietary or medical requirements and liaise with parents to ensure that all needs are catered for. Children are very enthusiastic about their outdoor play experiences and demonstrate very positive attitudes towards active, healthy play in the fresh air. As a result, they have good opportunities to participate in active games and extend their physical skills. Children develop good self-care skills as they attempt to put on and take off their own jackets and learn about the need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snacks.

Staff have established very positive relationships with local schools. They invite the teachers into the playgroup and children visit a local school to use the computers. This helps children to be prepared for the move to school, when the time comes. Children also have regular opportunities to explore the local community when they go on walks. They visit local shops and parks and observe the nearby trains and the beach. These outings

help children to develop confidence and independence in situations away from the playgroup.

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

The manager and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All the essential documentation that promotes the welfare and safety of children is readily accessible for inspection. The procedures for safeguarding children are implemented effectively. Staff have a sound knowledge of the local safeguarding procedures and clear understanding of signs and symptoms that would concern them. Therefore, they are committed to keeping children safe from harm and neglect. Robust procedures help ensure the safe recruitment of suitable adults to care for children. Security is given high importance and children's arrival and departure is always supervised by staff to keep them safe. Risk assessment and daily checks are carried out to ensure the premises, play equipment and activities are safe for all children attending. Staff hold first aid certificates, which means children receive appropriate treatment in the event of an accident.

An effective system is in place for regularly monitoring practice and this ensures the playgroup is always evolving and improving. Professional development of the staff team is supported well through regular supervisions and appraisals. This gives staff and the manager a good opportunity to discuss any concerns about performance and any training and development needs. Staff are qualified or working towards qualifications, in order to further enhance the service they provide. Systems for self-evaluation highlight the playgroup's strengths and weaknesses and clear action plans are used to prioritise areas for development. The playgroup has successfully addressed the action and recommendations from the last inspection. There is now a more detailed record of the hours of attendance of children. The observation and assessment records now include more information about children's next steps to ensure that progress is ongoing in all areas of learning. Self-evaluation has now been extended to include the views and thoughts of parents and children.

The partnerships with parents are very successful. Parents say staff are welcoming and friendly and take time to update them on their children's activities and routines. The entrance hall displays plenty of useful information for parents, such as suggestions to support children's learning at home or at events within the community. Parents are offered frequent meetings with staff to discuss their children's progress and have access to the individual development records. As a result, they feel well informed about their children's progress and development. Good links are made with the schools children will attend to ensure continuity of care and learning. Staff also work closely with other agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which has a positive effect on children's well-being.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY419401
Local authority	Southend on Sea
Inspection number	913563
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Avenue Baptist Church Committee
Date of previous inspection	27/09/2011
Telephone number	01702331024

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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