

Elim Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	143105
Inspection date	07/11/2008
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt
Setting address	Larkhill Christian Centre, Larkhill Road, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 3HW
Telephone number	01935 424816
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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).

Description of the setting

Elim Church Pre-School was registered in 1992. It operates from the Larkhill Christian Centre in Yeovil, Somerset. It is a Christian-based group, which has a church management committee who are also responsible for Elim Church Nursery based in the town centre. Accommodation consists of two main activity rooms, where children are grouped according to their age and ability. The pre-school has access to kitchen and toilet facilities and an extra room for physical activities. The pre-school children are based in a ground floor room with the younger children based on the first floor. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday during term time, sessions run from 09.00 to 15.30. Children attend either full or part time and generally come from the local area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 48 children from the age of two to the end of the early years age group may attend at any one time. There are currently 53 children on roll. Of these, 28 receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are eight members of staff employed to work with the children. Each room has a qualified room supervisor, and the committee are currently recruiting an overall manager. The majority of staff hold, or are studying towards, relevant qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are happy, settled and confident and cared for by a team of staff who know them generally well as individuals. They participate in a suitable range of activities, both inside and out, which help them make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Children develop a good sense of belonging to a community and an awareness of the wider world, through discussion and planned activities. There are appropriate systems in place to support children with additional needs, which includes liaising with parents and connected professionals to ensure all children are included. Although staff are developing some systems for evaluating practice, there is a lack of effective management procedures in place for self-evaluation and to monitor staff effectiveness.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment system to include planning for each child's next steps and to promote learning with activities linked to their individual interests
- develop self-evaluation and monitoring systems to identify areas for improvement and monitor staff effectiveness

- include parents' knowledge of their child's development in the ongoing assessment of their progress.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There are some clear policies and procedures implemented by staff to safeguard children and promote their ongoing welfare. The management committee seek advice to ensure that the recruitment procedures are carried out effectively so that new staff are suitable to work with children. Staff carry out comprehensive risk assessments and daily checks, which means that children play in a safe environment, and the clear security measures ensure that children are protected from uninvited visitors. Overall, staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children and the procedures to follow with concerns.

Partnership with parents is suitably promoted. Parents receive generally good information about the setting by way of a prospectus and notice boards which outline areas of children's learning and development. The written policies are made readily accessible, and key workers are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of each session to share information to meet children's individual needs. The new assessment system asks parents to complete details about children's preferences and development at the beginning of the record, however, parents' knowledge is not regularly included in the ongoing assessment of their child's progress.

The setting has made some improvements since the last inspection as the recommendations have been partially addressed. Children's safety has been further promoted by keeping a log of the regular fire practises. The re-organisation of the activity rooms and staff deployment helps to meet children's needs. However, staff are still developing their understanding of appropriate planning to maximise children's learning, and the systems for self-evaluation and monitoring are an ongoing area for improvement. Although staff are developing links with schools to gain feedback about the provision and share good practice, the management committee have limited input to self-evaluation and monitoring staff effectiveness.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment, where they establish good relationships with staff and each other. Children have access to a good range of play equipment and resources which are in good condition and organised well to allow children to choose for themselves. A balance of adult-led and self-chosen activities are offered which help children develop, however, staff are not consistent in setting challenges to fully support children's progress in all areas of learning. The new assessment record contains observations of children's achievements and samples of work but the system does not include identifying children's next steps or planning to their individual interests. Although most children join in group times such as circle-time where they like to talk about events in their lives and sing familiar songs, some adult-led activities restrict children's choice. For example, some cooking activities carried out as a whole group mean

that children have to wait for a significant time for their turn to 'stir' or 'spoon' ingredients which results in some losing interest.

All children explore a good range of materials through messy play, using their skills to pour and transfer dry pasta, beans, sand or water between containers as well as painting and making collage pictures. Most children are confident in using language to communicate, initiating conversations with adults and their peers. They learn sign language during group times which promotes inclusion for all children as they demonstrate to each other the actions which represent words such as 'careful', 'stop' and 'hungry'. Children use their imagination well as they act out real life situations in the role play area, but are not always encouraged in their own creativity during adult-led art work. Children learn aspects of a healthy lifestyle through good personal hygiene routines, daily fresh air and exercise and some planned activities such as making vegetable soup. Children develop an awareness of their local community and the wider world as they take part in events such as a nativity play, which they present to parents and members of the church, and fundraising for 'Children in Need'.

Children behave well, they know what is expected through familiar routines such as lining up to move to a different area of the building. From a young age children are willing to help tidy up and pack away equipment, they receive praise and encouragement from staff for effort and achievement, which helps build their self-esteem and confidence. They learn about keeping safe in an emergency as they are involved in regular fire drills, and get to know about road safety when they are out and about, through good example and discussion.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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