

# Plume Avenue Nursery

Plume Avenue United Reformed Church, 18 Plume Avenue, Colchester, ESSEX, CO3 4PQ

## Inspection date

11/02/2014

Previous inspection date

09/07/2010

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

3

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Children are confident and happy at nursery. This is because practitioners take time getting to know them and have formed close attachments.
- Children's physical development is supported well as they have regular opportunities to participate in fun and exciting music and movement sessions. Children also enjoy fresh air and exercise daily.
- Positive relationships have been established with parents to ensure continuity of care. As a result children settle quickly.

### It is not yet good because

- Not all practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding on how children learn. There is inconsistency amongst staff practice and therefore some children are not sufficiently challenged.
- Activities and resources are not consistently well presented throughout the nursery or changed regularly to ensure they interest children to learn.
- Staff are not always deployed effectively, nor the rooms organised sufficiently well, in order to ensure that children are given time and opportunity to think critically, problem solve and answer questions.
- There is scope to develop further opportunities for parents to support their children's learning at home.

## **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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## **Inspection activities**

- The inspector observed children's activities, both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspection held discussions with the manager and talked to the children and staff throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documents, including policies and procedures, children's records, evidence of suitability of staff and recruitment procedures.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

## **Inspector**

Lynn A Hartigan

## **Full report**

### **Information about the setting**

Plume Avenue Nursery was registered in 1971 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in The United Reformed Church in Colchester, Essex and is managed by a manager. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three rooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 26 members of childcare staff. Of these, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The nursery opens Monday 9am until 12.30pm and Tuesday to Friday 9am until 3.30pm, Term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 115 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery 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 meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- improve practitioners knowledge of the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, so that children are best supported to be engaged and motivated in their learning and to sustain their interest in tasks
- review the deployment of staff across the sessions and the organisation of the rooms, to ensure that children receive high levels of appropriate challenge and are guided in their independent play, so that they can make the most of all the learning opportunities and good progress.

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

- ensure activities and resources are consistently well presented and offer sufficient challenge across all areas of learning for children, particularly in the pre-school room and changed more frequently within the creche
- enhance opportunities for parents to support their children's learning at home.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and settled and are developing their independence. They are inquisitive and engage visitors in conversation and ask lots of questions. They help one another and play well together. For example, they sit for some time concentrating while completing a floor puzzle together. Practitioners recognise children's progress and make plans for their next steps in learning. Children make satisfactory progress across the areas of learning, but better progress in personal, social and emotional development. This is because the delivery of some activities lacks appeal or fails to sustain children's interest. For example, a hairdresser role play activity is uninspiring because practitioners' understanding of how to extend learning is not consistent. For example, the provision of money, appointment books, magazines and other props to enhance the children's play in all areas is missing. Limited activities within the creche are not changed frequently enough to ensure children remain interested and sufficiently challenged.

Children excitedly learn about the 'Grand old Duke of York' they learn the song, play with castles and make life-size soldiers, as they draw around their friends. However, some adult-led craft activities are not explained and often pre-determined. This is because some practitioners lack understanding of how children learn. For example, children make soldier hats or Valentine Day cards and the outcome has been decided by the practitioners. Therefore, children's creativity is not fully supported. Opportunities for children to think critically and problem solve are often missed. For example, children make good attempts at fixing a play garage. Offers to help by practitioners, do not involve the children in the decision making by asking skilful questions to prompt their thinking. However, some practitioners do have a very good understanding of how children learn and how best to support this. For example, children are able to join dance and music sessions daily. These are well planned and are exciting and challenging. Children's ideas are fully supported and these sessions promote children's learning well in all seven areas.

The nursery work over ratios with more than the required practitioners. While children do receive good care and attention, the organisation and deployment of staff within the main playroom is not maximised to secure a positive impact on children's learning. Children have opportunities to practice their writing skills. For example, they enjoy making marks and patterns in the sand using chopsticks. They are encouraged to dress themselves when using the outdoor play space. They listen carefully to stories in a group and follow instructions at tidy-up time. Consequently, children are acquiring the skills they need to be ready for school. The children's 'learning journal' records are well documented. Photographs are used to support the observations made. Initial assessments are made with the parents and progress checks for children aged from two to three years also invite parental comments. Progress in all areas of learning is now being tracked using the 'Early Years Outcomes' document. Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery and have some opportunities to support their child's progress. However, there is scope to develop this further to provide more continuity of learning at home and nursery.

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

Children have formed secure relationships with practitioners who know the children well. Children's personal, social and emotional development is effectively supported within the nursery and they are happy and confident. A key person system is in place and a buddy support. This means in the absence of the child's key person there is another member of staff that knows the child well. As a result, children are comfortable and show a sense of belonging. Children happily arrive and parents comment that their children settle quickly and 'cannot wait to get to nursery'. Practitioners now consistently follow the nursery's behaviour management policy. This has recently been reviewed following a concern raised from an external agency and a notification from the provider to Ofsted. Children's behaviour is good overall. Practitioners deal sensitively and calmly with any situation that may arise. For example, if a child becomes too boisterous, children listen and respond well to instructions. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves safe, as this is discussed through everyday routines and activities. However, this is not consistently reinforced throughout the nursery. For example, children remind visitors to the nursery that scissors are sharp and to be careful. Meanwhile, other children are reminded to sit on chairs properly but no explanation is given as to why this is important.

The nursery staff have to pack away all the toys and equipment at the end of every session. Practitioners work hard to create a welcoming environment for children within the restrictions of the premises. For example, children's art work is displayed using drapes and screens. Children are supported well to develop good hygiene practices and they know to wash hands before eating or when using the toilet. They are provided with healthy snacks that are prepared for them. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks. Drinking water is freely available throughout the day to ensure they are not thirsty. Children bring a packed lunch from home and parents are encouraged to follow healthy eating guidelines. Children benefit from outdoor play in all weathers. They have daily opportunities to spontaneously run around and exercise in the fresh air.

Important information regarding children's care, needs and interests is in place. Practitioners work with parents to ensure continuity of care. Daily information is shared and a day book is used to discuss children's needs. For example, supporting children while potty training. Parents are positively encouraged to settle children when they first start nursery which effectively supports children's emotional well-being. Children are familiar with the three playrooms and practitioners as they move around the nursery and visit the different rooms. Their key person visits with them when it is time to move up a group helping them settle. Links have been established with local schools to ensure children's transitions are smooth and they are emotionally prepared for their next stage in learning.

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

Appropriate checks on practitioners have been completed to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. The manager follows clear recruitment procedures and retains staff who are experienced and qualified. However, there is inconsistency among practitioners and the quality of learning and development opportunities provided for children, which prevents

them from making good progress. Written policies and procedures are understood by practitioners. The nursery's written safeguarding policy meets with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. The designated lead for safeguarding has completed appropriate training and now understands their role should there be any concerns about a child. For example, they understand about notifying Ofsted and appropriate agencies. As a result of a recent incident that was notified to Ofsted by the provider, most practitioners have now completed further safeguarding training to ensure they are fully updated with current practices.

Following a recent visit by Ofsted following concerns raised by an outside agency, the nursery received a notice to improve to ensure all staff have appropriate qualifications and training, skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles. The nursery were also required to improve and implement effective staff supervision and ensure children are adequately supervised. The manager has partly addressed some of these concerns. The majority of practitioners have appropriate early years qualifications. However, there has been a lack of strong and consistent leadership and monitoring in the playrooms. This means some practitioners' understanding of how to deliver a consistently good educational programme and implement highly effective teaching strategies, has not been quickly addressed and requires improvement. Some children in the creche and the pre-school room are not consistently offered sufficient learning opportunities or challenges. The manager has developed some clear improvement plans for future development. The manager shows commitment and capacity to improve. For example, changes have been implemented to monitor and support practitioners to consistently deliver effective learning opportunities. However, this is not yet fully embedded in practice. Practitioners' performance is monitored through an appraisal system. More frequent team meetings have been introduced and all staff now have supervision meetings with the manager. In addition, the manager now works at supporting practitioners within the playrooms.

Discussions with parents available on the day of inspection indicate they are highly satisfied with the service provided at nursery. They comment that the practitioners are 'caring, friendly and approachable'. They discuss their children's development and are happy with the progress they make. Parents are kept informed about the activities at nursery through the daily conversations with friendly practitioners. Newsletters, notice boards and the nursery website also provides parents with useful information. Information can be shared as a day book is used and the nursery invites comments from parents about their child's achievements at home. Partnerships with feeder schools have been established and are effective. For example, teachers are invited to observe children in nursery. Children are confident and supported as they prepare for their next stage in learning.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	404856
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	953966
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	50
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	115
<b>Name of provider</b>	Jean Catley
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	09/07/2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 579458

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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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