



Elmdon Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122556
Inspection date	15 January 2007
Inspector	Ann Moss
Setting Address	Elmcroft, Woodfield, Ashted, Surrey, KT21 2RL
Telephone number	01372 273854
E-mail	
Registered person	Hilary Wilkinson
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Elmdon Nursery School opened in 1987. It is located in a converted bungalow in a residential road in Ashted, Surrey. Children are cared for in three interconnecting rooms. There is a fully enclosed garden area at the rear for outdoor play. Local shops, parkland and a library are all within walking distance of the nursery school. A maximum of 22 children may attend the nursery at one time. The nursery school is open from 09:30 to 15:30 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from 09:30 until 12:30 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. The nursery is open during school term time and operates for three days a week during the summer holidays.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 27 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community and the surrounding areas. The nursery school currently supports children with special educational needs. Procedures are in place to accommodate children with English as an additional language. The nursery school

employs six members of staff. Three members of staff including the manager/owner have an appropriate early years qualification. One member of staff is currently researching a training programme.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Childcare Service

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's emotional needs are well supported by practitioners who create a warm and caring environment. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through well planned routines. They know, for example, that they need to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. Practitioners make good use of pictures and posters to remind children of the practical skills needed for good hand washing. Children are protected from cross infection because practitioners implement sickness procedures to minimise infection. All medical conditions are recorded and parents give the appropriate permission and consent to safeguard children's health. Children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident because practitioners are trained in first aid. Accidents are recorded but the system for parents to countersign the entry is inconsistent and confidentiality is not maintained. As a result, parents are not kept fully informed about their child's welfare.

Children learn about the importance of maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle because practitioners plan a wide variety of topics and activities, such as 'All about me'. They learn about different food groups and tastes through first hand experiences, such as cooking. Visits from a dietician and osteopath helps children to consolidate their thinking and understand that healthy eating promotes healthy bones and physical development. Children benefit from mostly healthy snacks. They choose from a choice of fresh fruit, such as apple and sweet biscuit. However, practitioners have responded to feedback from parents to increase healthier options. Drinks are freely accessible which ensures children remain hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle well. Displays of information, posters and children's work make the rooms welcoming for all. Practitioners organise space well to allow all children to move freely from one activity to another. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because practitioners are inducted into the setting's health and safety policy and are aware of their individual responsibilities. General security and safety, such as high door locks and double gates help to keep children safe. Regular fire drills ensure practitioners and children can evacuate the setting quickly in the event of an emergency. There are good procedures for departures which ensures only known or named adults can collect children. Practitioners help to keep children safe through their vigilance. Visitors to the setting, such as the police and fire officer, helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe.

Children use a good range of quality toys and equipment which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Practitioners organise resources well, so that children can easily and safely access them from low storage shelves. Children learn how to use equipment safely, such as scissors and tidy away floor activities for the safety of others.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because practitioners have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. Practitioners have attended training and know what to do if they are worried about a child. The setting's written child protection policy and procedures has been reviewed and updated and practitioners have access to documents such as the 'What to Do' summary to provide clear, readily accessible information. This helps to promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The vast majority of children enter the nursery happily and quickly settle to their self-chosen activity. Those who find separation difficult are quickly identified and reassured by practitioners with a gentle cuddle or a quiet story until they are ready to join. Children enjoy their free play and a range of well planned activities and themes that offer opportunities to extend all areas of learning and development. However, planning insufficiently takes account of the outside area. Children learn naturally because practitioners work well with young children to support their personal, social and emotional development. Story time is a popular feature of the daily routine and all children develop an interest in books. They spend time looking at illustrations and eagerly ask questions, such as 'how do aeroplanes fly in the dark?'. They enjoy many activities that stimulate their senses, such as dough and playing with musical instruments and feeling different textures. Practitioners use daily events to help children build their natural curiosity as learners. For example, as water is poured practitioners ask the children if they can identify similar sounds. Children begin to take responsibility as they hand out snacks, take messages or help to tidy away. This helps foster independence. Practitioners encourage children to play together and share. Lots of praise and encouragement develops children's self esteem. All children enjoy plenty of time to develop social skills. For example, they sit together and talk at snack time, negotiate and co-operate during role-play and learn to share while playing group games.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are knowledgeable and experienced practitioners. A well-balanced curriculum ensures children have a wide range of experiences to support their learning in all areas. Children learn through a programme of practical activities, which is delivered by a team of enthusiastic practitioners. Planning is sufficiently flexible to allow for events that capture children's imagination and interest. Practitioners use their knowledge of children to plan for differentiations, however, clear learning intentions are not recorded which means children's progress is insufficiently linked to a planned theme. Some focused activities are pre-prepared and have a pre-determined outcome. Most practitioners are open and alert to spontaneous opportunities for learning to occur, such as when children look out of the window they are encouraged to describe what they see. Practitioners spend their time working directly with the children to promote their self esteem through use of praise

and encouragement. There are clear systems in place to support children with identified needs. Practitioners make good use of resources available to them, organising the setting to offer a range of valuable learning experiences and opportunities. Practitioners use a calm and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. They have high expectations, as a result, children behave very well. Children are motivated and fully engaged in their play and learning. They have a good understanding of their own needs and are confident in meeting them, such as hanging up their coat and putting on their slippers. They greet their peers warmly and relate well to visitors. There are many opportunities throughout the session for children to develop their understanding of number, calculation and shape. For example, they sing songs and counting down five, four, three, two, one, develop an understanding of early calculation. They learn about the wider world from visitors such as fire fighters and policemen. They talk about the solar system and use their imagination well as they role play going to the moon. They know, for example, that telescopes 'help you to see things that are far away'. They show excitement and develop stories based on their knowledge during role play such as 'a moon walk'. Children express themselves creatively through a range of medium. They paint, draw and make models that represent their experiences and ideas. They use their senses to explore music and enjoy singing and playing musical instruments. Children participate in a wide range of physical activities, such as digging in sand, moving in different ways during games and action rhyme or riding wheeled toys. This develops muscles and improves co-ordination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Practitioners set good examples by showing respect for children and adults alike. Careful planning ensures that activities can actively include all children; their differences acknowledged and respected. Children benefit from having access to a suitable range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity and from participating in activities which raise awareness of different festivals and cultures. Children learn about the local community by going on planned outings. Children have good opportunity to learn about themselves, other people and the world around them through planned activities, stories and discussion. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are effective systems in place to support children who have identified needs. Practitioners are knowledgeable and close liaison with parents/carers and other professionals ensures all children's needs are well planned for and met. Children behave very well because practitioners have high expectations. They are well supported by practitioners who regularly use praise and encouragement to raise self esteem. Children learn about the importance of right or wrong through gentle reminders to care for their environment, the equipment and each other.

Children benefit from the positive partnerships developed between parents and practitioners. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting. They receive clear information about the setting's aims and the education provided through the parent prospectus, information board and regular news letters. The setting takes steps to ensure that policies and procedures are available on request. However, the procedure for complaints has yet to be developed. This means parents are not aware how their concerns will be handled. There are good opportunities for parents and practitioner to exchange information informally at the start and end of each session. The

home/school link book is a daily opportunity for parents to share any additional information about their child's care and learning.

Partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery education is good and contributes well towards children's learning. Parents are well informed about the six areas of learning through the setting's prospectus. Planning is displayed and this ensures that parents are always aware of the topic/theme their child is following. Practitioners value parents' contributions and involve them in their child's learning by incorporating their knowledge and skills into activities, such as music. Child profiles are made available by request and the twice yearly parent teacher meetings ensures that children's individual progress and learning is shared.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Practitioners organise space and resources well to ensure children gain fully from all activities. Practitioners are well deployed and ensure good supervision of children at all times. There are generally effective recruitment and induction procedures in place. This means that suitable, experienced and qualified persons look after children. The vast majority of policies and procedures are in place. They have recently been reviewed and updated although the procedures for complaints has yet to be developed. This is a breach in requirements and a warning letter has been sent. Policies and procedures are not always readily available to parents and staff.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. A team of qualified, enthusiastic and dedicated practitioners work with funded children. Generally clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well balanced programme of activities for the Foundation Stage. Teaching is generally well monitored through observation and discussion. Evaluations of activities identify strengths and areas for improvement. Management encourages training and development of all practitioners. This supports practitioners in their role and ensures they have the latest information. The setting meets the needs of the children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to meet recommendations regarding safety. The provider has given due consideration to children's safety, inside and outside. Daily visual risk assessments and good deployment of practitioners means children are well supervised and potential hazards are minimised. A record of fire evacuation practice is now in place and held on file. A record of children's attendance, including their times of arrival and departure is in place, although practice is inconstant and a further recommendation has been made. In addition, the provider was asked to ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing. Children learn about good hygiene practice because practitioners talk to them about the importance of personal hygiene. Practitioner vigilance ensures children maintain good hygiene practice.

The provider was also asked to develop additional opportunities for children to write for a purpose, for example, role play situations. Children now write for purpose in a variety of ways, for example, they have access to mark making materials in role play situations.

In addition, the provider was also asked to continue to develop the planning and record keeping system so that children's individual progress through the stepping stone towards the early learning goals is clearly identified. The provider has made some progress in this area. However, planning does not have clear learning intentions for children's differentiations.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- keep a record of accidents, signed by parents, and ensure confidentiality
- ensure planning takes account of the outside area
- ensure that policies and procedures, as required by Ofsted, and relating to the safe and effective management of children are available on site and accessible to parents and staff

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review procedures for planning and assessment to ensure the next steps in learning for all children are clearly identified and met

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk