

Limes ABC Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140881
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Margaret Moffat
Setting Address	Limes Avenue, Baptist Church, Limes Avenue, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP21 7HE
Telephone number	01296 415 327 Last contact number
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Registered person	Limes ABC Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 good. 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?

Limes ABC Playgroup opened in 1980. It operates from the Baptist Church, Bedgrove in Aylesbury. The playgroup have the use of an upstairs room, main hall, toilets and kitchen area. There is a fully enclosed outdoor area. A maximum of 23 children may attend the setting at any one time. The playgroup opens four days a week, Monday to Thursday. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11.45 and 12.45 until 15.15.

There are currently 57 children from two to five years on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate relevant childcare qualifications. There are also two volunteers who help out on a weekly basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop an understanding of a healthy lifestyle through effective daily routines and support from staff. They wash hands at appropriate times and are encouraged to be involved in wiping the tables before snack time; they are aware of why they are doing this as they inform visitors that this is to make the tables clean for snack and drinks. There are good nappy changing procedures in place, which includes maintaining children's privacy.

All relevant policies are in place to promote the health of the children. Staff hold first aid certificates and there are appropriate procedures in place for the recording of accidents and medication administered. However, parents are not asked to countersign the medication records to acknowledge it has been given. Staff discuss children's individual dietary needs and allergies thoroughly with parents and effective steps are taken to share this information with staff promoting children's well-being. Children receive a range of healthy snacks including cheese, fruit and raisins and topics such as keeping healthy and looking after our teeth encourage them to develop healthy eating practices.

Children's physical development is progressing well as they have regular opportunities to experience physical play in the fresh air throughout the year. They enjoy running around in the garden and following the story of 'We're Going On a Bear Hunt' as they recite and act out the actions and find the bear. Children have opportunities to develop their coordination and skills as they crawl through tunnels, climb and slide, balance on stepping stones as they follow the obstacle course in the hall. Children access a good range of tools and equipment to develop their fine motor skills including pencils, scissors and cutters and rolling pins.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Security of the premises is good and protects children from unwanted visitors. The main door to the building is locked during session times and visitors ring the doorbell to gain entry. All visitors to the playgroup are recorded and staff are vigilant as they bolt the door when others leave the room. The use of safety features, such as stair gate, socket covers and corner protectors, help to minimise the risks to children. Daily checks and risk assessments are in place. However, the computer station is not set up appropriately and compromises children's health and safety. Children develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe as staff remind them to sit at the table when using scissors and not to put them near their faces. They are fully aware of the procedure for walking up and down stairs to the playgroup room. Children inform staff they have to hold on to the railings to stop them falling down and they must not run indoors. Through newsletters parents are reminded of children's safety in the car park and are asked to be vigilant and ensure children remain close to them when walking in the this area.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment. They are confident in their surroundings and move around comfortably as they choose the activities they wish to be involved in. There is a good range of toys and resources which are age appropriate and cover all areas of learning.

Children's well-being and safety is protected because staff have a good understanding of the child protection policy and procedures. Relevant checks have been carried out on staff, committee members and volunteers, and persons who have not been vetted are not left alone

with children. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms to look out for and what they would do if they had concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a caring, stimulating environment where they learn through a variety of activities. Most children settle quickly on arrival and are well occupied as they choose which activities they wish to play with. Staff are available to help comfort children who become upset when their parents leave the setting. They engage the children in conversations and play with them at activities, helping to distract the children and make their time enjoyable. Good relationships are evident and children have fun and enjoy themselves as they remain occupied and lots of chattering can be heard as they interact with each other and staff. Children readily approach staff to read stories or for help. Children's confidence and independent skills are developing well. Staff use the Birth to Three matters framework to plan activities for the under threes and use observations of the children during activities to update their records. The initial focus is to ensure children are happy, settled and gain confidence in the playgroup.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the foundation stage. They provide a stimulating environment and well planned activities making good use of resources. The key worker system is effective. Staff observe the children during free and focussed activities and use their notes to assess children's achievements and update their records. This helps to identify children's stage of learning and allows staff to plan the next steps. However, the evaluations of activities are general and therefore do not provide staff with information to support this.

Children have daily opportunities to mark make as they draw with pencils and paint. Staff sit with the children and use worksheets to encourage the children to hold the pencils properly and to follow patterns on the sheets. Children are encouraged to write their names or marks representing their names on cards and some children write their full names and use recognisable letters. Children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning as they recognise their own names from the nameplates they collect from the table when they arrive at the setting. Children thoroughly enjoy group singing time; they join in enthusiastically with familiar songs and their actions such as 'The Wheels on the Bus' and 'Five Currant Buns'. Staff read group stories with enthusiasm and children listen intently answering questions and making comments. Children have fun and laugh out loud as staff give a puppet show telling the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' and children join in with the repeated sayings and parts of the story which they can retell. Children have many opportunities to count and make simple calculations in everyday play. They recognise and use numbers one to nine in familiar context and are beginning to recognise shapes through planned activities and the shape of the week. Children have opportunities to express themselves freely through painting and drawing activities, however, they do not have the same opportunities in adult led creative activities as staff produce a template for children. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and express their ideas in a variety of ways. For example, the home corner is changed into different scenarios, such as a continental market and workshop. Children dress up with hard hats and tabards pretending to be builders, they use the resources as they pretend to be sawing, drilling and fixing the car with the screw driver. They use clip boards and pencils as they walk round the room pretending to find building work that needs doing. Children enjoy using their senses as they play with shaving foam, they talk about it being squishy and how they enjoy playing with it. Staff are

effective in their use of questioning, encouraging children to talk about what it feels like, smells like, if it is hot or cold. Children describe it as being cold like an iceberg. They enjoy hiding the polar bears in the shaving foam and finding them, watching the shaving foam go between their fingers as they clasp their hands together and making a fist and placing shaving foam on top saying it is like an ice-cream cone. Children are happy and content within their environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The staff introduce topics such as weddings around the world to teach children about other cultures. Themed activities, together with a very good range of resources, help children develop a positive attitude to others. Children see older members of the church community, who prepare their snacks and drinks, which promotes their understanding of the wider world and people who help in the community. Parents are invited into the setting to talk to the children about their occupations and different cultures, further developing children's understanding of the world around them. All children's individual needs are valued. Staff take time to get to know the children in their care and enjoy excellent relationships with them. There are very good procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties, disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. This includes close liaison and support for parents, children's individual learning plans and working with outside agencies. This contributes to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being fostered.

Children are well behaved. Rules and boundaries are clear and children know what is expected of them. For example, children line up sensibly as they are going downstairs and respond to tidy up when they hear the music being played. Children are involved in making up the playgroup rules, helping them to gain an understanding of right from wrong. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff and this helps develop their self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's sense of belonging and ensures their confidence within the setting. Staff ensure all parents know how their children are progressing and developing as they meet with them regularly, and children's records are given to parents to take home to read through every term. Parents receive lots of information about the playgroup through policies and procedures, regular newsletters and information on the notice boards. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents, they help out during sessions and families are invited termly to the playgroup lunch, further developing a sense of belonging within the playgroup community. Parents report they are very happy with setting and highly praise the staff for their involvement in their children's care and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space within the playgroup is well organised to maximise the play opportunities for the children. Staff are deployed effectively and high ratios ensure children receive appropriate support and remain safe and comfortable in the environment. Policies and procedures and all required documentation to support children's health, safety and well-being are in place. Staff have a friendly, business-like approach to parents and share all information with them. This two way flow of information ensures continuity of care for the children.

Leadership and management is good. The manager provides efficient leadership and there is a high level of commitment from staff and they work well as a team. The appraisal system

identifies staff individual training and development needs and the manager regularly considers ways to improve the setting. For example, they are currently completing the Buckinghamshire Quality Assurance award to consolidate their good practice. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation and confidently apply this to support children's learning and development. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the setting was asked to ensure that all essential elements of the safety procedure is discussed with staff at induction. Staff have a good awareness of safety procedures within the setting and they all have copies of the policies and procedures. An induction pack is available for new staff and volunteers and this includes discussions with the manager about safety within the setting. This promotes the safety of children within the setting.

They were also asked to plan activities to develop children's skills in number operation and provide more opportunities to extend children's knowledge of the culture and beliefs of others. Children's number skills are developing well through planned and everyday practical activities and their knowledge of other cultures and beliefs is increasing through learning about other cultures through topics and celebrating different festivals and the good range of resources which represent positive images of the wider world.

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):

- ensure parents countersign the medication records to acknowledge entry
- review risk assessments to further identify potential hazards to children's health and safety.

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 the delivery of adult led creative activities to allow children to express themselves freely
- demonstrate how evaluations of activities are used to plan children's next step in learning.

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