

# Limes ABC Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 140881  
**Inspection date** 04/10/2011  
**Inspector** Sonjia Nicholson

**Setting address** Limes Avenue, Baptist Church, Limes Avenue, Aylesbury,  
Buckinghamshire, HP21 7HE

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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*.

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## Description of the setting

Limes ABC Playgroup opened in 1980. It is managed by a committee of church members and operates from Limes Avenue Baptist Church in the Bedgrove area of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire. Children have use of an upstairs room, main hall and toilets. Further facilities, such as an accessible toilet, enclosed garden and kitchen are also available. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 23 children in the early years age group. There are currently 32 children on roll. The playgroup is in receipt of government funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and attend a variety of sessions throughout the week. The setting is open four days a week, Monday to Thursday. Sessions are from 9.15am until 11.45am and 11.45pm until 2.15pm. There are systems in place to support children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The committee employs six members of staff to work with the children, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The setting welcomes a number of regular volunteers and childcare students and receives support from Buckinghamshire Early Years and Childcare Service.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time in this exceptional setting. They make excellent progress given their starting points as staff genuinely know them well and recognise them as unique individuals. Children's care and learning is extremely well tailored to meet their needs and current stage of development. Excellent partnership working overall promotes children's welfare and learning extremely well. The setting demonstrates an excellent capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the effective two-way flow of information with parents, by providing opportunities for them to easily access and review the written policies and procedures.

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

Staff are highly committed to safeguarding children and implement a number of well-thought-out procedures in order to maintain their welfare and safety at all times. All staff have undertaken child protection training and are knowledgeable about the procedures to follow if they have concerns. Volunteers and students also clearly understand their role and know how to protect themselves and children. Safety and security of the children is paramount. The playroom is secure and, as this is situated on the first floor, staff have conscientiously thought about the evacuation drill. This is practised on a regular basis with all children, which means that children know how to leave quickly and safely in the event of an emergency. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children and keenly observe them as they play, particularly outside. Children play safely as thorough risk assessments have been undertaken for all areas to highlight any hazards. Local outings take place, and these are also fully risk assessed to ensure children remain safe.

Through excellent self-evaluation processes, the playgroup's strengths have been identified along with areas to develop in the future. The manager provides exceptional leadership to the well-established professional team. Since completing her degree course, she has used her newly acquired knowledge and skills to significantly influence all areas of practice. For example, she has introduced a detailed planning sheet that includes links to theories so staff can learn about the different approaches used in education. The manager's enthusiasm motivates the highly qualified staff team who support one another extremely well. They update their training on a regular basis, constantly reflect on their practice and work closely with the local authority to bring about changes. This means children are cared for by confident, committed staff, who carry out their work with great passion. Children have access to an extremely well-resourced environment. This includes a wide range of high quality toys and equipment, which are stored in low-level, accessible units around the room. Children use many real items, especially in role-play situations. For example, fruit and vegetables are provided in the 'farm shop' and bunches of keys in the role-play area. There are many bright, colourful examples of children's work, which add to the stimulating environment children enjoy.

Children benefit from the first-rate engagement between staff and parents. There is a wealth of information available to ensure parents know what is going on in the setting, including a portfolio of well-written policies and procedures. Although these are displayed and parents are encouraged to look at them, the manager recognises many parents do not take this opportunity or have any input into their content when they are reviewed. Parents and carers are impressed with the setting and express their delight at many positive aspects. For example, they feel the environment is intimate and staff have really good relationships with the children. They feel that staff help children settle well, give priority to making them feel safe and secure and help them to make excellent progress. The setting has developed wide-ranging partnerships with local schools, outside agencies, the church community and an orphanage in South Africa. These partnerships help to extend

children's learning, particularly their knowledge and understanding of the world.

The setting is highly successful in promoting equality and diversity. Excellent support is given to the many children new to the playgroup and their parents to promote a smooth transition from home to playgroup. Children settle well and respond positively to the reassurances and cuddles offered by staff. Children with special educational needs receive superb support. There are very strong links with other settings and agencies. For example, children attending other settings receive a visit there from their key person. This means children's developmental needs can be discussed and consistently promoted.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children flourish in this highly stimulating setting. They participate in a wide range of planned activities, which cover all areas of learning. Through these activities, they develop many skills; for example, they use giant chalks to make marks and think critically as they complete jigsaw puzzles. Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices about what they want to do. They mix their own paints using powder paint and water and add dried spaghetti and sand for texture if they wish. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff expect children to have good manners and develop respect for their environment by tidying away their toys after use. Children behave extremely well considering many are new to the setting; they appear busy and interested in what is going on. Children have ample opportunities to initiate their own play. For example, during role play in the farm shop, they pretended to use the cash point machine, which led to a great game of recognising numbers to 10.

Children develop an excellent understanding of healthy eating through cooking activities, such as making vegetable soup using produce donated from the church harvest festival. Food is also used to help them develop their knowledge of the wider world; for example, they taste different fruits and try new foods, such as naan bread, for their snack. An innovatively designed lunch trolley containing cool pads has been purchased to ensure food in lunchboxes does not spoil. Children adopt very good personal hygiene habits and know that washing their hands helps to stop germs spreading. Nappy-changing procedures are thorough, and staff wear aprons and gloves to prevent cross-infection. Outside, children develop and practise many physical skills; for example, they move and manoeuvre ride-on toys, balance on the beam and run freely.

Children demonstrate that they feel safe in the setting as they confidently move around, relating well to adults and their peers. They are learning how to stay safe. On their way to and from the garden, they walk carefully up and down the stairs, touching the wall as they walk along the path. Staff encourage children's language development by communicating freely, asking questions and introducing new vocabulary. For example, when a child shows a member of staff his 'big bit of

orange' she tells him it is called a 'segment'. Stories and songs further contribute to children's language development and encourage them to express themselves creatively. Children enthusiastically join in at group times, when they request well-known songs and rhymes. They anticipate what is going to happen next as they listen to a familiar story. They develop many skills for the future. For example, they use information, communication and technology resources such as the computer and digital cameras. Children's achievements are frequently observed and recorded by staff throughout each session and are used to inform planning. A comprehensive learning journey is maintained and, upon transfer to school, staff write reports for parents and the school summing up children's achievements. This helps to record the excellent progress children make.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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