



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 223280

DfES Number: 522733

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	22/03/2004
Inspector Name	Jane Melbourne

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Toddlers Nursery School
Setting Address	67 Leicester Road Grobby Leicester Leicestershire LE6 0DQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Diane Kerr
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Toddlers Nursery School opened in 1995. It operates from a converted three storey detached house in Groby in Leicestershire.

There are currently 87 children aged from 0 to 8 years on roll. This includes 27 funded 3-year-olds and six funded 4-year-olds. There are no children attending with special needs. The setting currently supports two children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round except at Christmas when it is closed for one week. Sessions are from 07:45 until 18:00. Children attend a variety of sessions.

Ten full-time and three part-time staff work with the children. Nine staff have early years' qualifications: eight to NVQ level 3 and one to NVQ level 2. The nursery receives support from a teacher-mentor from the Leicestershire Early Years' Development and Childcare Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Children at Toddlers Nursery School are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff have a generally good knowledge of the early learning goals, which reflects in the generally good quality of teaching and planning. A range of worthwhile activities is provided, but staff sometimes do not follow through the learning intentions and the plans are not closely linked to children's individual needs. Challenges set for children are reasonable, although sometimes methods for older children are less effective. Three-year-olds are making acceptable progress, but four-year-olds are sometimes insufficiently independent and insufficiently challenged. Children with special educational needs are well supported. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively. The nursery is very well resourced, although staff often pre-choose technological and scientific resources or when to use them. Staff are not maintaining the children's assessments effectively, nor using this information to influence the plans.

Leadership and management is generally good overall. Staff are very committed: they have benefited from regular participation in courses and professional development. The nursery has yet to identify some strengths and weaknesses, although staff have reviewed the assessment system. Monitoring is mainly informal and lacks focus, and therefore the impact of this has yet to be really beneficial to the early years' practitioners. Evaluations of the provision for nursery education do not provide sufficient useful information to take the planning forward.

The partnership with parents and carers in educational terms has significant weaknesses, although there are some good aspects to the provision. The nursery provides regular newsletters and a parents' noticeboard, but information about children's learning is limited. There is an annual parents' evening, but information regarding children's progress towards the early learning goals is not made explicitly clear.

What is being done well?

- Staff's effective and consistent management of children's behaviour. Children are clear of the boundaries set, which are realistic for their ages and stages of development.
- Children's positive dispositions and attitudes to learning. There is a happy atmosphere and children concentrate well.
- The successful promotion of children's speaking and listening skills. Children are becoming confident conversationalists.
- The opportunities for children to use their own imagination, particularly during role-play scenarios, which are changed frequently in line with the current topic to create interest.

- The commitment of the staff group to participate in further training and professional development,

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for older children to be independent and to be sufficiently challenged in their climbing skills; the children's handwriting skills; the planned opportunities for practical calculation and further opportunities for children to independently access technological equipment and scientific resources
- the consistency of the assessment process and the use of information gathered to influence the planning and ensure children's individual needs are met
- the planning, to ensure there are no gaps in the curriculum, and the teaching methods, to ensure that all children are sufficiently challenged and staff are clear of, and follow through, the learning intentions
- the monitoring and evaluation of the educational programme
- the quality of educational information available for parents and carers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress at the nursery since the last nursery education inspection has been generally good. Staff have increased the opportunities for children to observe living things and to use their initiative. They have experimented with the position of the book corner and worked hard to encourage children to use it and enhance their interest in books. Children sometimes discuss their favourite stories. Staff continue to monitor this. With regard to children's physical development, children are now using small apparatus such as beams and stilts to practise their balancing skills. Changes made have had a positive impact on children's development and learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident and interested in activities, They are keen to share their opinions and ideas. Their concentration skills are good and they persevere for prolonged periods. Good relationships exist within the group between children and staff, and amongst their peers. They work together well in small and large groups. Children are well behaved and understand the boundaries. They are sensitive to others' needs. However, they do not always use their already acquired independence skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children communicate confidently; their speech is developing well. They display good listening skills, particularly at story-time or when singing. They show interest in books, recognise their own names and other words from around the well-labelled environment. Older children are beginning to associate letter sounds with individual letters of the alphabet. However, they do not consistently practice writing their own names and teaching methods do not enable them to make good progress in writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Many children recognise numerals to 10. They count confidently, with younger children counting up to 10 and older children managing to 20. Children are able to sort objects by different criteria or produce a chosen quantity. They display an ability to solve simple mathematical problems during play. Children are introduced to basic shapes and language associated with size. However they are not yet beginning to perform simple practical calculation, such as adding or taking away.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy exploring and investigating. They keep small pets, grow plants and bulbs and work with different materials. They notice change when cooking or studying seasons. Children regularly design and make models using a range of methods. There is a very good range of technological equipment and many multicultural resources to enhance children's knowledge, although staff choose when this is made available. Children's sense of time and place is enhanced by regular trips into the community.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's balancing skills are progressing well, but challenge in climbing, particularly for older children, is limited. They move confidently and safely around each other outdoors and in the soft play area. Health and bodily awareness is promoted informally through discussion and during topics. Children use a range of small and large play equipment, although do not always use the equipment that is developmentally appropriate. Occasional assault courses encourage movement in different ways.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children experiment with a variety of media and choose from a range of materials and equipment, giving individuality to their creative work. They respond to their senses and regularly use their observational skills to influence both two and three-dimensional artwork. Children enjoy music sessions with the visiting specialist, although opportunities for music and dance at other times are not always taken. Children use their imaginations well during role-play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure assessments of children's progress are evidenced consistently and that this information is used to tailor the planning more specifically to children's individual needs and to ensure they build on what they already know and can do;
- further improve the planning to ensure that there are no gaps in the curriculum and that all children are working towards all the early learning goals in all six areas, and particularly in mathematical development;
- improve the methods of teaching to ensure that all children, particularly the four-year-olds, are sufficiently challenged to their potential, including using their independence and climbing skills to the full. Raise the expectations for children and ensure that staff are clear of, and follow through, the specific learning intentions. Repeat and consolidate learning sufficiently and support children appropriately, for example in their writing and in their use of technology;
- begin to monitor and evaluate whether children have learnt what was intended and ensure that planning and assessment are maintained in a manageable way;
- improve the quality of information for parents and carers, particularly in relation to the curriculum and the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.