



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 122504

DfES Number: 583626

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/02/2004
Inspector Name Linda Close

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Epsom Methodist Nursery
Setting Address Epsom Methodist Church
Ashley Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5AQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Church Council

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Church Council
Address Epsom Methodist Church
Ashley Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5AQ

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

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Educational provision at Epsom Methodist Nursery is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals is limited by some significant weaknesses.

Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematics and generally good progress in physical development. There are significant weaknesses in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

Teaching has significant weaknesses. Some activities are very well taught but others are less valuable because staff are not equally confident in their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Planning ensures that a reasonable range of activities is offered but there are gaps in some areas of the provision. Some staff provide very worthwhile challenges but others do not expect enough of the children. Children who hear other languages at home are making good progress in speaking English. But staff lack knowledge of their cultures, customs and beliefs and do not acknowledge or value their diverse backgrounds. Behaviour management is generally good. The sessions run to a regular pattern and the children know and enjoy the routine. Staff keep some examples of work but they do not keep records of children's progress to inform their planning.

Leadership and management have significant weaknesses. Training for professional development is not sufficiently encouraged for all members of staff. Some weaknesses in the programme have not been identified and some have been identified but not addressed.

The partnership with parents and carers has good aspects but there are significant weaknesses overall. They receive useful information about the setting and the activities. They are not sufficiently well informed about their child's progress and staff do not find out enough about all children from the parents.

What is being done well?

- The regular routine of the sessions at the nursery helps the children to feel secure. They know where to go at the beginning of the session and know what will happen next throughout the morning.
- Children are gaining fluency in speech using a growing vocabulary. Staff speak clearly to them and they explain the meanings of words well.
- Children are making good progress in counting and number recognition. They relate number to real situations using everyday objects.

What needs to be improved?

- The provision for personal, social and emotional development does not sufficiently develop children's independence and their respect for their own cultures and beliefs and does not acknowledge and value the diversity of the children in the group.
- The programme for physical development does not include climbing and balancing using suitably challenging equipment.
- Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world does not give sufficient opportunities for children to learn about the uses of everyday technology and does not enable them to use information and communication technology or programmable toys to support their learning; provision does not include sufficient opportunities for children to learn about the people and places outside the nursery.
- Teaching methods for creative development do not sufficiently encourage children to experiment, explore materials and media or enable them to express their own ideas in their art work.
- Records of achievement and progress are not made to share with parents or to help staff decide what children need to do next or where individual children need more support.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Three key issues for improvement were identified at the last inspection and staff have made limited progress in addressing them. Staff were asked to give more opportunities for parents to contribute their own observations to assessments of children's progress. Parents cannot add their own observations to assessments of progress because staff do not record children's progress.

Staff were asked to continue to develop planning to show what children are expected to learn from main activities and to show links to the early learning goals. Planning has improved and now shows the aims of activities and links to the early learning goals.

Staff were asked to obtain further resources for communication, language and literacy, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Books are now displayed in a bookcase and the children can access them easily. Resources for creative development have been extended but they are not always used to the full to nurture children's creativity. Small tools to promote dexterity and control have been obtained and they are used appropriately to promote this aspect of children's physical development. No technological resources have been obtained to enrich the provision for knowledge and understanding of the world and this has left a gap in children's learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Staff provide a good settling in procedure for new children. Children feel secure in knowing what will happen next in the sessions which run to a regular pattern. Children know when to sit quietly and their behaviour is generally good. Children's independence is not developed appropriately. They do not all have opportunities to gain respect for their own and other cultures. The children's diverse backgrounds are not properly acknowledged or valued.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's vocabulary is extended well and they are learning the meanings of many new words. Children take part in worthwhile role play activities. They learn about the sounds and shapes of letters. They show a good understanding of how books work and they handle them with care. The children hold their pencils correctly and take part in appropriate mark making activities. They recognise and trace their own names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count aloud in familiar situations. They count reliably up to ten and beyond and are learning to recognise numbers. Staff model the correct terms for naming shapes and words to describe size and quantity. Children use these words with understanding. They take part in suitable problem solving and early addition and subtraction tasks.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children use a good variety of materials such as paper, pulses and lentils. They sometimes enjoy first hand exploration but their learning is often limited because they are not always allowed to experiment. Children gain an understanding of the past and the present in suitable activities and they notice the passage of time when growing seeds. Insufficient emphasis is placed on learning about people and places beyond the nursery and the use of technology is very limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move imaginatively to music. They negotiate obstacles and each other without mishap. They learn about good hygiene. Children use small equipment well including balls, bean bags and quoits for throwing, catching and rolling. They are gaining good manipulative skills through frequent use of construction toys and play with dough and a train set. Children have no opportunities for climbing and balancing using suitably challenging equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children enjoy making music and listening to well told stories. They take part in worthwhile role play activities. Children use a suitable range of resources including paint, chalk, paper and materials for model making. However, the children's own creativity is not nurtured sufficiently. Staff often place too much emphasis on the neatness of the final product rather than what children experience and learn through the process of making.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is not fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Improve the provision for children's personal, social and emotional development through developing children's independence and their respect for their own cultures and beliefs and through acknowledging and valuing the diversity of the children in the group.
- Improve the programme for physical development by developing children's climbing and balancing skills using suitably challenging equipment.
- Improve the provision for knowledge and understanding of the world by providing opportunities for children to learn about the uses of everyday technology and provide equipment that will enable them to use information and communication technology or programmable toys to support their learning; provide more opportunities for children to learn about the people and places beyond the nursery.
- Improve the teaching of creative development by encouraging children to experiment and explore materials and media and by encouraging them to express their own ideas in their art work.
- Develop observation and record keeping practices so that staff have a useful source of information to refer to when planning and to enable them to track the progress of every child; share the records with parents regularly to keep them fully informed.

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.