



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113612

DfES Number: 520406

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	23/06/2004
Inspector Name	Joanne Lindsey Caswell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Next Step Nursery
Setting Address	Church Street Cuckfield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5JZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Janet Beales
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Next Step Nursery was established in 1990 and opened in its current location in 1993. It operates from self-contained premises within the former village school in the centre of Cuckfield, West Sussex and serves the village and surrounding area.

Children start at the nursery in the term in which they reach three years of age. There are currently 41 children on roll. This includes 22 funded 3-year-olds and 13 funded 4-year-olds. The nursery is experienced in supporting children with special educational needs. There are currently three funded children present, who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:15 and 12:25 to 15:30. All day sessions are from 09:15 to 15:30. Children may attend either full time or part time sessions.

A team of five qualified early years practitioners work with the children. Staff qualifications include BA Early Years Education, NNEB, NVQ Level 3 Early Years Care and Education and BTEC National Diploma in Childhood Studies. All staff have valid first aid certificates and have access to further training. A further two qualified early years staff provide emergency cover for staff absence.

Staff adopt traditional early years teaching methods, with particular emphasis placed on learning through play and exploration. Full use is made of the local environment and the nursery allotment. Children participate in nature walks, gardening and environmental activities on a daily basis.

How good is the Day Care?

Next Step Nursery provides good quality care for children. Staff are professionally qualified and work very well together as a supportive and dedicated team, who are committed to providing high standards of care. The nursery is very well-managed and the daily routine is organised well, enabling children to participate in an extensive range of activities. The premises are maintained to a high standard and

provide a welcoming and stimulating environment. Resources are plentiful, of good quality and are easily accessible to children. Regulatory documentation is maintained to a good standard, although some minor details are missing.

Staff are extremely vigilant regarding children's health and safety. Good procedures are in place to ensure safe practice and children are taught the importance of safety and good hygiene routines as part of topic work. Children's dietary needs are catered for and staff are aware of regulations regarding the safe storage of food. All staff promote anti-discriminatory practice within the daily routine. Activities are adapted, wherever necessary, to ensure all children can participate at their own level. Staff are experienced in supporting children with special educational needs and good provision is in place to manage this. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection issues and have undertaken relevant training.

Staff provide an extensive range of curriculum activities to stimulate children's learning and development, making full use of the local environment. Staff manage children's behaviour extremely well and children respond positively to the praise and encouragement they are given.

Staff develop strong relationships with parents and good procedures are in place to ensure parents are fully involved in their children's care and learning. Staff offer a welcoming environment for parents and exchange information with them on a daily basis regarding their children's needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- Children interact well with staff and their peers and develop their social skills within a loving and caring environment. Children respond well to staff and approach them happily.
- Staff are committed to ensuring all children receive a high standard of care. They are dedicated to all the children in the nursery and meet their individual needs accordingly. They provide a very homely, relaxed and loving atmosphere, in which children feel safe, secure and happy.
- Children have access to an extensive selection of indoor and outdoor activities on a daily basis. They have ample opportunities to participate in activities, such as gardening, nature walks and visits to the farm, which meet their overall developmental needs and encourage exploration, observation and discovery skills.
- Children's behaviour is managed extremely well. Children respond well to the positive and happy atmosphere and show a clear understanding of staff's expectations.
- Staff are experienced and dedicated child care professionals. They have a

clear understanding of how children learn and provide appropriate activities. They are extremely proactive in increasing their knowledge and skills and ensuring nursery practice is continually improved.

- Staff promote equality of opportunity to children well. All activities are adapted to ensure all children can participate fully and children are introduced to diversity within society, by celebrating different cultures and customs and looking at differing roles of members of the community.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Staff plan an outstanding range of activities, incorporating full use of the local community, to enable children to undertake a wide range of new experiences and learning opportunities. Children experience activities involving nature and environmental issues on a daily basis and every opportunity is utilised to stimulate language, encourage curiosity and develop imagination.

What needs to be improved?

- the information obtained from parents regarding children's medical history.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
7	Ensure children's records include up-to-date information on children's immunisation record.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Next Step Nursery is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are professionally qualified and provide a very happy, friendly, caring and stimulating atmosphere. Staff form very strong relationships with the children and are dedicated to meeting their individual needs. They use creative and imaginative teaching methods to sustain children's interest and encourage learning. They make very good use of the local environment and introduce children to environmental activities in a fun and practical format. Children's behaviour is managed well. Staff utilise all potential learning opportunities to stimulate children's learning and develop their curiosity. Children's progress is closely monitored and staff make regular observations and assessments to ensure all children are provided with sufficient challenge to extend their learning. Curriculum plans are extremely detailed, although have not yet been adapted to include activities in the newly-acquired nursery allotment.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. All staff are encouraged to develop their professional skills and undertake further training. Staff are dedicated to providing a high quality service and ensuring continual improvements are made, wherever possible, to improve overall standards. Effective staff deployment ensures children receive plenty of individual attention.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and are encouraged to be fully involved in their children's nursery education and are welcomed into the nursery by staff, at all times. Parents receive information about the early learning goals and effective procedures are in place for parents to help support their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and sociable and show an interest in their surroundings. They show curiosity and motivation to learn and acquire new skills.
- Children's communication skills are developing well. They have good language skills and engage in conversation with both adults and other children. They enjoy looking at books and are developing good writing skills.
- Children's mathematical skills are good. They show an understanding of concepts such as number, shape, size and pattern and implement these in daily activities.
- Children's behaviour is very good. They show courtesy and respect for one another and are developing an understanding of other people's needs.

- Staff develop very good relationships with parents. They offer a welcoming environment and encourage parents to take an active part in their children's learning.
- Activities are well-prepared and resources are used well. Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn and ensure children are provided with sufficient challenge.
- Staff utilise all the learning opportunities available to children, both inside and outside. The learning environment is organised well, enabling children to play freely, explore and investigate.

What needs to be improved?

- the details included in the curriculum plans, relating to learning opportunities in the newly-acquired nursery allotment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection in November 2000, two key issues were raised.

1) Review the deployment of staff to maximise their use of time and ensure that they are interacting with the children whenever possible

Staff have addressed this positively and have made very good progress in this area. Effective staff deployment now ensures all staff are aware at the beginning of each session which activities and duties they are responsible for, ensuring staff are interacting with children at all times.

2) Provide more opportunities for children to enjoy role-playing, enabling them to use writing to communicate meaning in their play; and to introduce mathematics into everyday activities.

Very good progress has been made in addressing this issue. A well-resourced role-play area is available during each session and is changed regularly to incorporate the current theme. Staff ensure that writing materials are available at all times, enabling children to practise their writing skills and incorporate these into their play.

Mathematics and number/counting activities are incorporated into all activities - children count the number of children having different snacks each session and use simple addition to count the children in total. Good provision is also in place for children to see numbers around the nursery and to use counting in everyday activities, such as cooking.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's social skills are very well-developed. Children are confident, enthusiastic and very motivated to learn. They interact extremely well with their peers and establish strong relationships with staff. Children have very good levels of independence and they behave very well, clearly understanding acceptable boundaries. They are beginning to understand the needs of others and are developing an awareness of other people's feelings.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good language and conversational skills and they extend their vocabulary as they explore new topics and enjoy books and stories. Children listen well and contribute confidently during group discussion. Children's writing skills are progressing well and there is good provision to practise writing in activities such as role play. Children have a very good understanding of letters and sounds and understand that print carries meaning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's understanding of mathematical concepts is developing well. They have a very good understanding of number value and undertake counting activities confidently. Children complete simple calculation and use appropriate mathematical language, such as more than and less than. Children are introduced to concepts such as shape, size, capacity and weight through well-planned, daily activities such as cookery.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are given ample opportunities to explore and investigate. They make full use of the local environment to observe nature and undertake daily environmental activities, such as gardening in the nursery allotment. Children develop an understanding of different roles, cultures and customs through well-planned topic work and practical activities and have extensive opportunities to develop new skills. Children use a good range of ICT resources and are developing an interest in how things work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's physical skills are well-developed. Good provision is in place to enable children to take part in physical activities each day, such as gardening, parachute games, BAGA Funfit programme and participating in daily walks. Children move with ease and show good co-ordination and an awareness of space. They handle a range of tools competently, such as scissors, writing materials, spades and paintbrushes. Children are developing an awareness of keeping healthy and understand sun safety.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have access to a wide range of creative activities. They are able to express themselves freely through art and craft, using a good selection of media. Children use their imagination to develop their ideas and use creative language. They enjoy regular role play activities. Children use their senses to explore taste and texture and participate in daily musical activities, using a range of musical instruments.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- Review curriculum plans to ensure learning opportunities in the newly-acquired nursery allotment are recorded.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.