



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 306445

DfES Number: 513973

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 06/05/2004
Inspector Name Linda McLarty

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Our Lady Of Pity Pre-School
Setting Address Rigby Drive
Greasby
Wirral
CH49 1RE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Our Lady of Pity Pre-School Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Our Lady of Pity Pre-School Committee
Address Our Lady of Pity School
Rigby Drive
Greasby
Wirral
CH49 1RE

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

Our Lady Of Pity Pre-school opened in 1992. It operates from a large room within the Infant block of the Our Lady Of Pity school in Greasby on the Wirral peninsular. The room is sub divided into designated areas of play. The group has a secure outside area which can be utilised as an extension of the classroom in the warmer summer months. The pre-school serves the local area. There are currently 27 children from 3 to 4 years on roll. This includes seven funded three year olds and 20 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 a.m. until 11.40 a.m.

Five part time staff work with the children. All five have early years qualifications. There are no staff currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Our Lady of Pity preschool provides good quality day care in an emotionally supportive, stimulating and attractive environment. The setting is well organised with all necessary policies and procedures in place, although some require revising to reflect current legislation. The strong staff team are guided well by the supervisors and benefit from good quality written planning so that sessions run smoothly, with all staff understanding what they are to do and when. All staff are qualified in early years.

The care learning and play offered is of very high quality. Staff show their evident enjoyment of children and this is fostering the children's self-esteem and confidence well. High staff ratios enable staff to offer care which is targeted to meet the needs of individual children, and staff plan exciting play activities which help children learn in

relevant and practical ways.

In general, most health and safety policies are implemented well, although some aspects are still being worked towards and these are addressed in this report.

The partnership with parents and carers is a strength of the setting. Staff have many useful ways of involving parents in the preschool, including open days, newsletters, written assessments, and informal but effective daily conversations. Parents are a vital part of the management committee. Staff value parental contributions and use the information to provide for the individual care and learning and play needs of the children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good progress in addressing the actions of the previous inspection, in which they were required to: ensure that the regulating body views copies of relevant clearances on staff; contact the Environmental Health department for advice; ensure all aspects of fire safety are examined with the help of the Fire Safety department; provide risk assessments on all areas of potential hazard; maintain records in a confidential manner and ensure that all required policies are in place. Ofsted has been sent copies of staff clearances and the setting has contacted the Environmental Health department, and implemented their suggestions. They also contacted the Fire Safety officer, who verbally informed them that he was satisfied with their current arrangements. The risk assessment is specific to the pre-school sector and has helped staff identify potential hazards. Records are now stored in a locked cupboard, and all policies are in place, although not all reflect current legislation, and where necessary this has been addressed as recommendations in this report.

Staff were also required to provide a record of incidents involving physical intervention connected with unwanted behaviour, and a system has been established, although no incidents have yet occurred. Implementing these changes has had beneficial effects upon improving the way the setting meets the health and safety standards, and has improved the way the setting maintains secure storage of confidential documentation.

What is being done well?

- Children learn through play using a wide range of attractive resources and activities, which staff support with skilful questions which help children learn in relevant and enjoyable ways.
- Staff have many effective ways of encouraging children's good behaviour such as raising their self-esteem and confidence by praising them for effort and achievement, clear explanations of reasons and consequences given with tact and humour, and consistently modelling courteous behaviour themselves.
- Parents views are valued and included in the information used to target care

to meet children's individual needs.

- Snacks are healthy and nutritious and the organisation of snack time encourages a high level of independence in the children.
- The preschool room is spacious and very attractively organised into learning bays with many toys and resources well labelled and accessible to children, and the children's work is displayed with respect.
- Staffing levels which exceed minimum requirements for ratios and qualifications means that children receive high levels of informed and caring support.

What needs to be improved?

- the arrangements for ensuring that the temperature of the room is warm enough
- the arrangements for ensuring that no one other than staff is able to find out the entry code for the door and the arrangements to ensure that the gate to the garden can be closed securely
- the arrangements to ensure that all children wash hands before eating, the arrangements for washing children's cutlery and crockery, and for washing paint pots and children's play items
- Arrangements to ensure that the contents of the first aid box are checked against a list approved by an approved first aid trainer
- the arrangements to ensure that parents and carers are informed of Ofsted's contact address and telephone number without having to ask the supervisors for this information
- the arrangements to ensure that the statement of child protection arrangements is based on current Area Child Protection Committee procedures and the booklet "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused."

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
6	Make sure that the gate to the rear play area is secure and that children are unable to leave this area unsupervised.
7	Review the arrangements for washing cutlery and crockery and the children's play equipment.
12	Make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint and the contact telephone number and address of the regulator Ofsted.
13	Revise the child protection procedure for the pre-school so that it complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures and reflects the booklet "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused."

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Provision at Our Lady of Pity Pre-school is of good quality, and children are making very good progress towards the Early learning goals in all areas of learning, except physical development, where their progress is generally good.

The quality of teaching is very good, and caring, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff make good use of the attractive range of resources and equipment to promote the children's progress across the six areas of learning. However, assessments about children's progress in climbing is not based on accurate information as the children's development and progress in climbing skills is limited by the lack of climbing equipment and alternative opportunities. Detailed planning is informed by assessments of the children's progress through the stepping-stones to the early learning goals in all areas.

The staff's good questioning skills effectively extend the learning opportunities of the resources and activities, and encourage children's thinking skills well.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good, and contributes positively to the children's very good progress.

Parents receive good quality written and verbal information about the educational programme, and about their children's achievements and progress, and the friendly approach of staff is helping them feel very involved in their children's learning. Staff give parents useful guidance about how to support the educational programme, and value parents' contributions and comments.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. The supervisors have developed a strong staff team who are well resourced, and encouraged to access training in early years issues to improve their skills and knowledge. Sessions run smoothly because staff have clearly defined roles and know what to do each morning. However, management have not addressed a recurring key issue from previous nursery education inspections, which has limited children's progress in physical development.

What is being done well?

- Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, and of how young children learn, and plan exciting activities in a stimulating and very well organised environment, in which the very good range of attractive resources is used well to bring out the learning opportunities of adult led and child initiated play.
- Sensitive questioning is helping children to think and become confident problem solvers, and children express themselves very confidently and enthusiastically, and they behave very well.

- Staff show their enjoyment of the children, and give them sufficient time to become engrossed in learning through practical play experiences, and this is fostering self-esteem and self-confidence, and providing a secure basis for future learning.
- Children are learning the names and sounds of letters of the alphabet, and have many opportunities to practice early writing skills.
- Good use is made of the pre-school library to help parents become involved in developing the children's love of reading and encourage children to access and enjoy the wide range of books.
- Staff foster strong relationships with parents, using a range of strategies to inform and involve parents in the educational programme, and their children's progress, which is helping to move the children's learning forward.
- Regular visits to the reception class for shared activities is promoting a strong sense of being in community, and pre-school children benefit from the stimulating joint activities such as singing mathematical action songs.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of group story time to encourage children to learn the direction of text
- the way children's work and photographs are dated both in their files and on display, to enable staff to track progress
- the opportunities for children to develop and make progress in their climbing skills, and arrangements for accurately recording this on assessment profiles,
- opportunities for children to use mobile toys, and to learn about the changes to their body when they are active.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress in addressing the two key issues from the previous inspection, with beneficial effects upon the educational programme experienced by the children. The setting was required to provide children with more opportunities to develop skills in climbing and balancing and plan to use small apparatus more frequently. The second key issue concerned ensuring that plans show how children will be grouped for certain activities where appropriate and include extension ideas for the children who learn more quickly. Although the setting has acquired good quality balancing equipment which offers children varying degrees of challenge, no progress has been made towards providing children with more opportunities to develop climbing skills, as the setting has no climbing equipment for indoor or outside use, and have not made alternative arrangements to provide these experiences. As this has been a key issue from the previous two Nursery Education inspections it is also carried forward from this inspection. Planning now shows how children are to be grouped, and is implemented effectively in the sessions, which flow smoothly, with all of the staff team aware of what they should be doing and when, and well prepared to guide children through the planned

activities. Plans include suggestions for ways that staff can extend the more able children, and this means that the programme offered is challenging in all areas except physical development in which children's progress is limited because of the lack of large equipment.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff are effectively fostering a confident, curious attitude in the children, who relate well to adults and peers. The exciting environment and well-organised programme are helping children develop high levels of personal independence in selecting activities and resources, and in organising their own snack times. Children copy the staff's very kind behaviour, and are learning to understand and respect their own and other cultures, in topic work on festivals like Easter and Chinese New Year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

The children talk confidently and clearly and are encouraged to use language to think through problems, and to extend their vocabulary with words like "absorbent" during practical activities such as planting beans. They are learning the names and sounds of letters. Good use is made of the wide selection of books to help children enjoy reading and the environment is well signed with simple words. They have many practical opportunities to practice simple mark making using a range of materials.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to count in practical using counting songs and in activities such as making models of spiders. They can recognise many numerals, describe shapes, and make patterns of varying complexity using commercially purchased mathematical resources. Movement to music tapes helps them learn the language of position, and the organisation of the room is helping them to solve practical problems such as how many children can sit at the table to have snack, or use the sand or water play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning about nature in activities such as watching tadpoles become frogs. They make complex train track layouts, and use a variety of construction kits. Simple computer programmes support their learning in mathematics well. Daily conversations about their home life foster a good sense of time, and regular visits to the reception classroom and school grounds promote a strong sense of place and community. Staff encourage and build on the children's natural curiosity very well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Movement to music tapes are used well to help children move in a controlled, coordinated and safe way. They can throw and catch beanbags. There are no opportunities to develop climbing skills and the setting only has two mobile toys. The children handle tools well when making sandwiches, and using Modroc and play dough. They are learning about healthy eating during snack time, although sometimes staff miss opportunities to help children learn about changes to their body when they are active.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The exciting environment and sensitive adult interaction helps children express themselves creatively using a variety of media and techniques, in well-organised activities. Children use their imagination well in making up stories, making books, singing, free painting, model making, tactile play, and role-play. They learn about sound through music, rhymes, and quality multicultural instruments. Staff encourage children to become engrossed in imaginative activities in all areas of learning.

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

- Provide opportunities for children to develop and make progress in their climbing skills, and to use mobile toys, and to learn about the changes to their body when they are active.

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.