



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 503883

DfES Number: 534511

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/10/2004
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name Smart Start
Setting Address Oberlin Cottage
Oberlin Street, Greenacres
Oldham
Lancashire
OL4 3HS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Cheryl Maria Connell

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

The nursery opened in 2001. It operates in a cottage that dates back to 1820 and which has undergone a complete renovation. The downstairs has been split into five main rooms, where children are grouped according to their ages and stage of development.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00 throughout the year.

They are registered for sixty five children aged from birth to five years. There are 16 three-year-olds and 2 four-year-old children.

There are 25 staff of whom 20 are qualified and 5 are working towards qualifications. There are also three modern apprenticeships who are in training. The owner is a qualified teacher with additional qualifications in childcare and education.

There is support from the Early Years and Development and Childcare Partnership. The nursery is not registered for overnight care. It has been awarded a Quality assurance award, Investors in People award and a Healthy Eating award.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Smart Start Nursery provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and physical development is well planned and children make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff manage the children very well and enjoy an easy rapport with them. Children feel secure and comfortable in the setting and develop a positive sense of themselves. They are happy, confident and eager to learn. The staff have a sound understanding of how children learn in most areas. They observe and record children's progress effectively across these areas. They are less sure of the stepping stones in aspects of creative work and knowledge and understanding of the world. Adult led activities especially in communication, language and literacy and mathematics are clearly introduced. Staff question children to ensure that they have understood new learning and can build on what they already know. There are limited opportunities for children to explore creative ideas and materials and initiate and express their own learning in this way. There are also few resources and activities which encourage children to question how things work and why. Specialist music teaching is of high quality.

Leadership and management is good overall. Staff monitor and evaluate their nursery provision and are able to assess their strengths and weaknesses effectively. All staff are committed to ensuring high quality education for every child and recognise the need for continuous development and training to support this aim.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. There are strong and supportive links with home and parents are informed about their children's learning through newsletters, daily dialogue and regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Strong teamwork, a very harmonious environment and good leadership and management ensures high standards in a relaxed and happy atmosphere.
- Teacher led activities are well organised and learning objectives identified and achieved.
- Children are very happy, secure, confident and at ease in the setting.
- Specialist group music teaching is of high quality.
- Children have good speaking and listening skills and sound mathematical understanding.
- There are good and effective partnerships with parents who are kept

informed about the educational programme and their children's progress and development.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to access a wider range of creative materials and techniques to explore and express their own imagination and ideas
- suitable objects and resources for children to handle and investigate and which will encourage them to question how things work and why things happen.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very confident, happy and keen to learn. They have good awareness and self esteem. Children concentrate, listen well and sit quietly when asked. They are responsive to the staff and each other and able to form positive relationships within their groups. Children are polite, well behaved and developing a clear understanding of right and wrong. They have good personal independence and self help skills. Children are learning to respect their own cultures and that of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have very good talking skills. They speak clearly and interact with each other to organise their ideas and to negotiate aspects of their play. They use a wide and developing vocabulary. Children demonstrate good recognition of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. They identify letters in books and recognise that print carries meaning. They listen well to stories and poems. Children are mostly able to write their names. They also act as writers in their play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children can count to ten and beyond and recognise most of these numbers. They can sort and classify objects by size, shape and type. Children have a good understanding of mathematical language which they use during practical activities. They are beginning to combine two groups of objects. Number rhymes using 'props' help their understanding of subtraction. Children confidently identify shapes and can recognise and recreate simple patterns. They enjoy solving problems using various equipment.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to use their senses and look closely to find out about natural things. They have few opportunities to question why things happen and how things work. Children construct and assemble using a range of large and small equipment. They use a computer and programmeable toys to support their learning. Children enjoy recalling past events on Mondays during group discussions. They also identify familiar features in their locality. Children learn about their own and other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently and safely around a range of large and small equipment. They use their imagination when moving to music and show a good awareness of space, themselves and others. Children recognise they get puffed when running around and enjoy the challenge of outdoor play. They are developing skills of climbing and balancing. Children use various tools to mould, shape, cut, thread and pour. They demonstrate good dexterity and control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children recognise a wide range of colours. They have good musical skills, explore instruments, dance and move to music with a strong sense of rhythm and pitch. However, there are few opportunities for children to express their own creative ideas using a widening range of paints, materials and techniques. In this area they are too directed and activities repetitive. Role-play is enjoyed but is sometimes limited by resources. Children enjoy some sensory experience including sand and water.

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 more opportunities for children to use their imagination and express their own creative ideas using a widening range of materials and techniques
- provide a range of interesting objects, materials and artefacts that encourage children to explore and ask questions about why things happen and how things work

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.