



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 404874

DfES Number: 511453

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 05/11/2004
Inspector Name Gillian Jefferson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Wethersfield Preschool
Setting Address The Pavillion Playing Field
Hedingham Road
Wethersfield, Braintree
Essex

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Wethersfield Preschool 1023628

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Wethersfield Preschool
Address The Pavillion Playing Field
Hedingham Road
Wethersfield, Braintree
Essex

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

Wethersfield Pre-school opened in 1984 and operates from two main rooms in a pavilion. It is situated on the Derek Flannery Memorial Playing Field on the outskirts of the village of Wethersfield. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00, with an optional lunch club 12:00 to 13:30 on Monday and Wednesday to Friday for 39 weeks of the year. Tuesday sessions are currently a focus morning for funded children. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding villages.

The pre-school employs nine staff. Five of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One of the staff is working towards an enhanced early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA), and has close links with the village primary school.

How good is the Day Care?

Wethersfield Pre-school provides good care for children.

The group have created a bright and stimulating environment for the children to attend. All required documentation and procedures are in place, though they may benefit from being grouped for easy reference by staff. The day to day organisation is effective though a little inconsistent between sessions. All the required checks are carried out for staff and procedures are in place to ensure new staff and committee members undergo the required checks. Over half the staff are qualified, though some staff require completion of the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) process to confirm their qualification level. The whole staff team have the opportunity to attend additional training courses to update and expand their

knowledge and skills. Resources are organised well by staff and children can freely select equipment with ease.

The group keep up to date with safety, health and hygiene related issues to maintain the care they give the children. Regular safety reviews are carried out and procedures are known by staff. A range of healthy snacks are provided for the children, based on their dietary requirements, and the children's lunches are stored safely. Activities and equipment are adapted to ensure all children can participate.

Children enjoy being involved in a diverse and stimulating range of activities and opportunities on a daily basis. The staff team use the range of equipment they have to set challenges. Skilful interaction helps children move towards taking the next steps in their learning, though this is not yet fully consistent. Records are kept about the children's development and are used to inform planning. The children are well behaved and the staff skilful in promoting acceptable behaviour.

Parents and carers are kept well informed. The staff team are friendly and approachable. Positive comments about the group were received from parents/carers during the inspection.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the time of the last inspection the group agreed to: ensure observations and records of what children do are used to plan the next steps in their play, learning and development; make the kitchen inaccessible to children; revise the behaviour management policy to include bullying; revise the complaints procedure to give contact details for Ofsted and make it available to parents and carers; revise the child protection statement to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against staff and obtain written permission from parents/carers to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

Regular planned and spontaneous observations are now recorded and the children progress towards the early learning goals monitored for funded children attending the group. Observation notes are also made for the younger children to ensure they are encouraged to develop as well.

A hook and eye latch has been added to the outside of the kitchen door to prevent the children's unsupervised access.

A statement that covers bullying has been added to the behaviour management policy.

Ofsted's address and telephone contact numbers have been added to the complaints procedures and this is available for parents/carers on the notice board.

A paragraph has been added to the child protection statement that covers the procedures that will be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

All parents/carers have completed a consent form, obtaining permission to seek

emergency medical advice or treatment.

What is being done well?

- The provision of a diverse and stimulating range of activities and opportunities on a daily basis.
- The display of children's artwork to decorate the setting, provide a welcome and indicate things the group do with the children.
- The promotion of children's independence through their ability to select equipment and resources for themselves to build on their skills and play and set their own challenges.
- The staff team are friendly and approachable and enthusiastic about learning and the activities they provide.
- The promotion of acceptable behaviour, through modelling, praise and encouragement and the use of a rewards system.
- The adaptation of activities and equipment to meet the needs of all children attending the group to remove barriers to their inclusion.

What needs to be improved?

- consistency across sessions, so that organisation runs effectively and smoothly each day: with all staff knowing what their roles and responsibilities are; sufficient staff working directly with the children at all times; and all staff having confidence in interacting with the children and questioning them to increase their learning.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
2	Develop and implement strategies to monitor and maintain consistency in the quality of day care and organisation across all sessions.

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 Wethersfield Pre-school is of good quality overall. It enable children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goal for mathematical development and very good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. A bright and engaging environment is provided by staff, where children's artwork is given importance and displayed. Staff plan effective, diverse and stimulating opportunities to promote learning towards the early learning goals through a balance of planned activities and continuous provision. Plans demonstrate staff knowledge of where children are and support them in adapting their questioning to meet and progress all levels of ability, although a little more detail may prove helpful. The programme is delivered with a generally high degree of success, but there are some minor inconsistencies between different sessions, due to staff confidence and organisational issues. Mathematical development is slightly less effective during some sessions as staff do not consistently maximise opportunities to use mathematical ideas and methods to develop problem solving with the children. Assessment records are kept to a high standard and provide dated observations and evidence of the children's progress. They are used to inform the planning and ensure sufficient challenge is given to both three and four-year-olds.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff have a formed a strong team and share planning and assessment responsibilities. Procedures are in place to provided continuity in the nursery education during committee changes. New strategies are being drawn up to maintain the quality over all sessions.

Partnership with parents is generally good. They are kept well informed through regular verbal feedback and comments made in the home/group books. Parents and carers may look at their children's records on request and receive a written report before they leave.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal social and emotional development is very good, especially their behaviour, and development of confidence and independence.
- Children learn to read and write through their access to a range of opportunities appropriate to their stage of development, including unusual activities such as writing in shaving foam.
- Children gain a broad and informed knowledge and understanding of the world through a wide range of activities. Their computer skills are extremely good, and they learn to operate programmes through the use of the keyboard and mouse.

- Children have daily access to physical play, indoors and out, that helps them use equipment and tools with a high degree of skill and precision.
- Children are encouraged to use their imagination freely in their creative work, dance and role play, and learn to respond to music and develop rhythm.

What needs to be improved?

- parents and carers access to the records of progress towards the early learning goals and their involvement in learning and sharing what they know about their children's development
- the consistent use of mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems in everyday situations
- the consistency of the provision's organisation, interaction and records across all sessions and the staff team.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

Children are now involved in a range of activities where they can identify the letters of the alphabet by sound, and staff have adopted a policy of using letter sounds and names to support this further.

All information for parents, planning documents and assessment records has been updated and now reflects and links to the early learning goals.

The group have also extended opportunities for parents and carers to be informed about the children's progress in learning and share information about their children's learning at home. Home/group books are used to pass information about the children's progress and statements are often clearly linked to areas of learning or early learning goals. Parents and carers are encouraged to review comments made and add to them if they wish. Parents and carers are also able to see their children's dated record of progress towards the early learning goals if they request.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are highly confident and build very good relationships with each other and with staff. They learn to show care and concern for others, with the older children often supporting and helping the younger ones. Children develop good self esteem through the support of staff and the display of their work. Children learn about different people's needs and acquire a sense of community. Children become independent, selecting activities and equipment for themselves. They are very well behaved.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident communicators. They freely use language to organise and explore real and imagined experiences. Their expression of their feelings and ideas is especially evident within their role play. Children enjoy practising their early writing skills and mark making. They learn to write the letters of their names correctly and can select letters by their sounds. Children enjoy stories and access books independently to 'read' for themselves.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count within their play and activities with a good degree of accuracy to ten and beyond. They recognise numerals, order them correctly, and estimate small numbers of objects quickly. They have fewer chances to solve number problems. Children learn about 2D and 3D shapes. They record number in different ways using charts and tables. Children readily use size language when playing and make good size comparisons and descriptions. Children are supported in calculating.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore a wide range of materials including more unusual media like shaving foam and shells in the sand tray. Children design and make in a variety of materials, and use their skills to make things for their role play, such as envelopes. They operate simple computer programmes by themselves. Topics and themes are used to build the children's sense of time and place, supported by outings and trips. They also develop an awareness of their own and other cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are involved in a wealth of daily physical opportunities. They use equipment indoors and out and learn to climb and balance with increasing skill. Children develop a very good awareness of space. They have very good hand-eye coordination as a result of using a wide range of tools in planned and spontaneous activities. Staff promote children's bodily awareness and understanding of healthy eating through discussions during everyday activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children skilfully use their imagination in role play and creative work. They spontaneously dance to music from the computer programmes. Children enjoy music and learn a range of songs. They are enthusiastic singers and learn to clap out their names and gain an understanding of rhythm. Children are encouraged to share their experiences and feelings and are confident in expressing and communicating their ideas.

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

- Further expand opportunities for parents/carers to access their children's progress records and be involved in their children's learning and share what they know about them.
- Increase consistency across all sessions in the children's use of mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems in everyday situations.

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.