



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 130772

DfES Number: 581088

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/07/2004
Inspector Name Susan McCourt

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Southern Cross Preschool
Setting Address 103 Trafalgar Road
Portslade
Brighton
East Sussex
BN41 1GU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Chair of Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Chair of Committee
Address Southern Cross Preschool
Southern Cross Evangelical Church, Trafalger Road
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1GU

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

Southern Cross Pre-school has been registered since 1982 and is based in Portslade using the hall belonging to Southern Cross Evangelical Church. The group is open from 09:15 to 11:45, Monday to Friday, term times only. On Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, children can stay until 13:00 for a lunch club.

The pre-school offers sessional care for 30 children aged two to five years. Currently there are 41 children on roll, 18 of whom are funded four-year-olds and 10 are funded three-year-olds. There are two children with English as an additional language and two have special needs.

The pre-school has the use of two halls, a kitchen and toilets with a small garden for outdoor play. Most play happens in the main hall and the second hall is used for small group work and physical play.

There are eight staff, all of whom are qualified for their role. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Southern Cross Pre-school provides good quality care for children. All staff are qualified for their role and they have set up the premises to be an inviting and stimulating place to play. There is a good variety of equipment and activities for children to choose from every day. Policies and documentation are regularly reviewed and updated.

Staff are very careful of children's safety and make regular headcounts, especially when moving between the halls. The attention to hygiene is also good and children are taught about the importance of cleanliness. Drinks of water are always available and at snack time children have healthy options but biscuits are also included. Staff are made aware of any individual needs a child may have when they start at the group and the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with parents and

other professionals to ensure that needs are met. Staff are aware of the child protection policy and that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Staff are careful to ensure that every child feels confident and secure in the group when they first start. The routine allows for lots of free play, small group work and physical play. Staff act as key-workers for a small group of children and build good relationships with all the children attending. Children have lots of choices and are interested in the activities on offer. The learning environment includes lots of positive images of people from around the world and children learn about other cultures through festivals, food and craft activities.

Parents receive a handbook giving only basic information about the group. Policies and procedures that guide the group are available on request and parents are also welcome to work on the committee or help at a session. Staff are keen to increase the amount of involvement that parents have.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- Staff have set up an interesting learning environment with lots for children to look at, examine and explore. The main hall and outdoor area provide inviting and stimulating places to play with a good choice of activities.
- Staff are all qualified for their role and have considerable experience. They give consistent clear messages about how children should behave and encourage the children to be independent, while giving good support to those children who need it. Children have good self-esteem as a result.
- Children are very busy and active in the group, confident to talk to staff and visitors. Children play well with each other and co-operate on role plays and craft activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the healthiness of the snacks offered
- the information given to parents.

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
8	Ensure that the children have a range of healthy snacks.
12	Ensure that parents are given a full range of information about the work of the group.

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 Southern Cross Pre-school is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress in mathematical development, physical development and creative development with very good progress in the remaining areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have set up a good learning environment and encourage the children to be independent and confident, choosing for themselves what they would like to play. Staff act as key-workers with a small group of children and they meet for specific activities once a week. Staff becoming more familiar with the Foundation Stage and contribute ideas to plans which currently only focus on a limited number of stepping stones each week. They are working towards adapting their planning to make better use of the connections that exist across the learning areas and include ideas for differentiating in order to target challenges for children. Staff make regular notes of children's achievements to ensure that they are making progress.

The management and leadership of the group is generally good. The committee meets every two months through the year although there is limited continuity from one year to the next. The supervisor and deputy are very experienced and work alongside staff at all times providing guidance and role models. They monitor the provision to ensure that the planning covers each of the areas of learning.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents have a basic handbook about the group and are increasingly asking to see the policies and procedures. Parents can work on the committee or help at session times and staff are always available to talk to parents during opening hours. Parents receive folders containing their child's work at the end of the year to show the progress they have made.

What is being done well?

- Staff pay close attention to helping children feel secure and confident within the group. They actively promote talking about feelings and noticing what each others faces are saying. Children know the difference between kind and unkind behaviour and are quick to empathise with characters in stories, or with other children in the room.
- Staff have set up a visual timetable which includes words, pictures and sign language gestures to help children know about the routine. It includes a wide range of the activities on offer and children help staff put it together by looking around the room and selecting the right pictures. All children use it and it has been of particular value with children with special needs.
- Staff are very interested in what the children have to say and value their

contributions. They praise all attempts at writing and craft activities and enjoy the children's company.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's confidence in using the Foundation Stage in planning and differentiation
- the children's opportunities to solve problems.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were five key issues raised at the last inspection. Two were related to planning and assessment. All staff are now involved in the planning of activities and the supervisor is continuing to develop this work in conjunction with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Staff also make assessments about the children's achievements and these are monitored along with the plans to ensure that the curriculum covers all six areas of learning.

The third key issue was about learning addition and subtraction in practical activities. Staff have developed a series of props to use in counting songs such as ten green bottles. Staff also created a shop with resources that they already had giving prices and counters to the children. This, and an awareness of the language involved, helped the staff to take more opportunities to use different activities to talk about adding and taking away.

The final two key issues were about providing more able children with physical challenges and teaching the children about other cultures. Extra resources were purchased and staff used existing resources differently in order to progress. The learning environment now has an excellent array of images and posters of different communities and activities have been re-examined in order to provide extra challenge and interest.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff are attentive to new children to help them settle and feel confident. Staff promote good behaviour and help children stand up for themselves. Children are busy and active with lots to choose from. They take part in small and large group activities and help with tidying up. Children learn to share and take turns and often create their own games where they play co-operatively with each other. Children learn about feelings and show sympathy and understanding.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn to associate simple sign language, pictures and eventually, words and see a lot of letters and words around the room. They become familiar with the alphabet in a variety of activities and enjoy looking at story books and having books read to them. Staff provide lots of interesting ways for children to make marks, such as in foam or shallow sand, and children also have opportunities to practice writing their names, letters and numbers. Staff praise all attempts at writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff create a specific maths area every day with a good variety of activities to help children learn about shape, size and weight. Children count up to ten and beyond and recognise numerals. They learn about capacity and measurement in simple practical ways. Staff take opportunities to involve children in doing simple addition and subtractions in counting songs and as children leave to go home. Staff do not take opportunities to involve children in other types of problem-solving.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about growth and change in the environment and learn about the urban and natural world. They use a variety of materials in their craft and art, including recycled and found objects. There are numerous technological toys available for children to use independently. Children learn about the present, past and future in simple projects and make records of their observations. They learn about other cultures in a variety of practical activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn to climb, balance, throw, catch and cycle as part of the planned curriculum. Children enjoy pretending to be animals and moving in different ways, travelling under, over and through obstacles. Staff have developed their resources for physical play and incorporate aspects of role play such as setting up a garage and repair shop for the bikes. Staff teach children aspects of health such as sun safety but do not always take opportunities to talk about how their bodies work.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make a variety of craft and collage including taking part in large group projects such as an Easter tree or wall display. A lot of these activities use pre-cut shapes, which limits the creativity of the child, though staff are always supportive and value all the work children produce. Children enjoy the role play areas and play co-operatively in small groups. Children learn to sing a good variety of songs and sing spontaneously when playing. They enjoy playing with instruments.

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

- Increase staff confidence in the Foundation Stage to improve planning and differentiation in activities
- Ensure that planning includes opportunities for children to solve simple problems and use problem-solving language.

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.