



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 130629

DfES Number: 517442

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	19/01/2004
Inspector Name	Karen Molloy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Cassio Pre - School
Setting Address	St Andrews Church Hall Church Road Watford Hertfordshire WD17 4PY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Cassio Pre-School 1029697
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Cassio Pre-School
Address	St Andrews Church Hall Church Road Watford Hertfordshire WD17 4PY

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

Cassio Pre-School has been registered since January 1993 and is held in St Andrews Church, Watford. The group have use of a main hall and two smaller rooms. The children also have access to an outside play area.

The Pre School operates Monday to Friday 09:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 15:30, term time only. It is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and guardians. The Pre School serves the local community and surrounding area and is registered to take children from 2 years to under 5 years.

It is led and managed on a daily basis by joint managers; Pam Keeney and Lorraine Sellers, who are both child care qualified and experienced. A staff team of 8 all hold relevant childcare qualifications and the group now have an administrator too.

The group accommodate children with special needs and children who have English as an additional language. They also have funded 4 year olds and follow the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance.

The Pre School have completed the Effective Early Learning programme (2001) and are currently undertaking the Hertfordshire Quality Standards (HQS) accreditation. They are members of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

Overnight care is not provided.

How good is the Day Care?

The day care facility offers good quality care for the children. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced and they continue to keep up to date with current practice by attending ongoing training.

The provision is welcoming and inviting. All the relevant documentation is in place and these are regularly reviewed, with input from staff and parents, to ensure they remain working documents and relate to current practice.

Staff have a good awareness of safety issues and attention has been paid to the safety and security of the children. The group have identified and addressed any potential hazards and regular risk assessments ensure safety is monitored. Health and safety is a regular agenda item at meetings and ensures all staff are kept informed of any changes.

Children's specific dietary /medical requirements are made clear and shared with the staff team.

Staff are familiar with child protection procedures and the team are booked to attend child protection training to develop and update their knowledge in this area.

The range and quality of activities and resources is very good. There is a balance between free choice for the children and activities that are more adult led. Opportunities are organised to enable the children to work independently and in small and large groups. Staff take into consideration the children's differing ages and stages of development, enabling them to access resources and make independent choices.

Staff meet the children's individual needs well by listening to them, supporting and reassuring them and promote a calm and comfortable environment. Children play cooperatively and are happy and relaxed.

Partnership with parents is good with a variety of methods used to communicate and share information. A parent rota encourages parents to be involved and parents are invited to committee meetings. Feedback from parents is positive.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions identified at the last inspection. However, the group is currently undertaking the Hertfordshire Quality Standards (HQS) accreditation.

What is being done well?

- Staff show a commitment to further development by attending ongoing training and regularly review and evaluate their practice (standard 2)
- Staff organise the provision effectively with good use made of staff, space and resources. All areas of development and learning are covered and there are clearly defined areas for the children to relax and play in. The routine is flexible and takes into consideration the children's differing needs (standard 2)
- Staff and children interact with each other in a very positive manner. Staff are friendly, supportive and enthusiastic in their approach to the children and they, in turn, respond well to the adults. Children are listened to and their questions answered. Questions are asked to develop the children's thinking and explanations given to increase their knowledge (standard 3)
- Staff meet the children's individual needs well. The children are able to make independent choices and staff respond quickly and appropriately to any child

that may require additional help or support (standard 9)

- Staff provide a good range of activities for the children with a balance of free choice and more adult led activities. There is sufficient time for the children to become engaged and absorbed in their chosen area of play (standard 3)
- Staff have a good partnership with parents. They work with parents to gain information about their child, prior to them starting at the pre school. They organise a settling in session for new children, operate a key worker system and communicate with parents in a variety of ways, including; newsletters, committee meetings and informative booklets.
- Parents are actively encouraged to be involved and parents feedback is very positive (standard 12)

What needs to be improved?

- temperature of premises; to ensure this is monitored and maintained at an appropriate level (standard 4)

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
4	Ensure premises are maintained at an appropriate temperature

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at Cassio Pre-School is of a high quality overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Together they plan and enthusiastically implement a wide range of activities and experiences that cover the six areas of learning. Staff are aware of what stage the children are at, they have clear aims for each activity, which they evaluate. They are able to extend children's learning and support those who are less able. Resources are well organised and encourage children to select activities and be independent learners.

Staff use their observations and assessment of children's learning to inform future planning.

They clearly highlight areas where children are making progress and where they need support. However, children's progress in creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world needs to be assessed in more detail.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is very good. Staff show commitment by attending on-going training and developing their skills. They meet regularly to discuss planning and assessment. and are continually looking of ways they can improve the provision. An effective staff appraisal system is in place that ensures the evaluation and development of the quality of teaching.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are provided with informative booklets about the pre-school. Prior to children starting at the pre-school parents are asked to complete a questionnaire about their child that helps staff to meet their individual needs. Regular newsletters, invitations to help at the pre-school, termly reports and a daily verbal exchange of information keep parents informed and involved in their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- Effective planning of the curriculum, time, resources and environment ensure that all six areas of learning are covered well.
- Enthusiastic implementation of activities ensure that children have enjoyable worthwhile experiences at the pre-school that help them make progress.
- Staff have developed secure relationships with the children. They know them well, support them when necessary and challenge them effectively.
- The effective partnership with parents ensures that parents are involved in their child's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's observations and assessment of children to ensure that creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world are covered in more detail.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made very good progress since the last inspection. Training on the code of practice for the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs (SEN) was highlighted as an area for improvement. Staff were also asked to explain more clearly the levels of support that could be offered if a child has educational needs above those of other children.

These areas were effectively addressed when a member of staff completed the S.E.N.C.O training. She now supports parents and assists staff with assessment and individual educational plans for children they feel may have SEN. A file of information on special needs has been compiled that both staff and parents are able to access.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and confident within their environment. They settle quickly and enthusiastically access resources independently. Children play co-operatively and show care to others when they offer support at the computer and in the home corner when dressing up. They develop good concentration skills and can sit quietly when required to do so. Children respond positively to the consistent expectations of staff and behaviour is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children communicate well with their peers and adults. They handle books with care and are able to listen to stories with increasing attention and enjoyment. They can recall events and predict what may happen. Children use descriptive words such as 'squashed circle' when describing an oval shape. Staff provide children with many opportunities to develop good writing skills. They can effectively utilise crayons and pencils and draw with purpose using felt pens on the white board.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently count to 22 at registration time and on returning from outside play. Staff provide children with practical experiences to learn about shapes, size and calculation. Children compare height when building a tower with large bricks. They can select a shape from the interest table when asked. Children can sequence large, medium and small squares. They are able to complete simple additions and subtraction sums when cutting up an apple at snack time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children can competently complete simple programmes on the computer that support learning in other areas. Staff plan interesting activities that teach children about other cultures and beliefs. Children learn about past and present events in their own lives and those of others. This is extended by visits by people from the local community. Staff provide children with a stimulating variety of materials to explore and construct with. Children confidently use a variety of tools and equipment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children learn about the importance of staying healthy. They confidently move around their environment and show respect for other children's personal space when waiting to go down the slide and dancing to music tapes. Staff inspire confidence and encourage children to try new activities such as pretending to be butterflies and lions. Children have many opportunities to explore a wide range of materials, tools and equipment, including a garden area where they plant flowers and vegetables.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff plan exciting opportunities for children to use their imagination and express and communicate their ideas. They explore colour, texture, shape and form in two and three dimensions. Children are able to use words such as 'she's spoiling it' to express personal frustration. Children are familiar with a wide variety of songs and rhymes. They show enjoyment when singing and performing the actions to Wind The Bobbin Up. Children enjoy free painting and choose colours for a purpose.

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:
- Ensure observations and assesment of children for creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world are covered in more detail.

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.