



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127287

DfES Number: 584580

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/12/2004
Inspector Name Jane Wakelen

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Katherine Wheel Pre-School
Setting Address St. Katherines Lane
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5EJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Katherine Wheel Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Katherine Wheel Pre-School
Address St. Katherines Lane
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5EJ

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

Katherine Wheel Pre-school was registered in 1989 and operates from a self-contained unit on St Katherine's School site in Snodland.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00 and Friday 09:00 to 11:30, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 30 children receive funding for nursery education. Children using the group tend to live nearby and are representative of the local community. The pre-school currently supports two children with special educational needs but at present, no children with English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff. Three staff including the manager hold a relevant early years qualification. One member of staff is awaiting to enrol on a NVQ level II early years course.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The nursery education at Katherine Wheel Pre-school is acceptable and of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the Early Learning Goals with very good progress in Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff work as a team and present activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner, encouraging all children to try new experiences and explore new textures. They encourage children to make choices and allow children to be independent, putting their own name pegs on activity cards, pouring drinks, and putting on shoes and coats. Staff plan a variety of activities to incorporate all areas of learning, although large physical play is limited due to a grass outdoor area and limited space indoors. Staff plan activities for the children on a termly basis, dividing the six areas of learning over the term. Staff make notes and observe children's learning and record these observations to assess their development. However, the assessments are not recorded using the stepping stones or the Early Learning Goals and therefore do not give a clear picture of where children are in their development. Parents are invited to contribute to the assessment process once a term.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. Staff work together to plan the curriculum, understanding their roles and responsibilities. A management committee meet once a month to discuss any issues and to ensure the group is operating efficiently, receiving a report from the manager regarding the day to day running of the setting.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are made to feel welcome in the group and staff operate a keyworker system to record children's progress. Parents receive full information regarding the foundation stage and are kept informed of their child's progress. They receive regular newsletters and policies are always available.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is fully promoted. Staff encourage children to make choices, take turns and take care of their personal needs.
- Staff work well as a team. They plan activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner and promote positive behaviour through praise and appropriate strategies.
- Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are kept fully involved in their child's learning, through regular opportunities to see their keyworker and view assessment records. They contribute to this process and are invited to serve on the committee.

What needs to be improved?

- the assessment procedure using the stepping stones and early learning goals to record children's progress and development under the six areas of learning
- the planning; with regard to the assessment records which need to be used to inform the planning, to plan for the next steps in children's development within the six areas of learning, giving all areas equal attention
- the opportunities for children to use large apparatus and equipment to develop their gross motor skills
- the opportunities for children to develop their skills with information, communication technology toys and the computer.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Limited progress has been made since the previous inspection when three key issues were raised, as follows: -

'Improve the weekly plans, to overcome the limitations in children's access to some equipment, to show clearly what children are intended to learn and to give greater priority to children's learning with the programme for communication, language and literacy.'

Staff changed the plans and added more detail. Children now make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy, looking at books, recognizing their name and using activity cards. Plans remain a key issue.

'Review the format and use of the assessment and record keeping system, chart children's progress through each stage of learning towards all the early learning goals, analyse the information in children's records to aid the planning of future sessions.'

The assessment procedure does not use the stepping stones or the six areas of learning and therefore does not allow staff to chart children's progress. This in turn means planning cannot be informed by the assessment process. This issue remains a key issue from this inspection.

'Develop the support for children with special educational needs (SEN). Develop the SEN register, to include the appropriate records as required by the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Plan and implement specific activities to meet the individual children's development needs.'

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) role is being developed. The area SENCO has been contacted and is working with the setting to develop individual educational plans for children. Speech therapists have been providing the children's programmes to enable the group to follow them providing continuity for the specific children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop good relationships with adults and peers. They are confident learners and are willing to try new experiences. They are able to express likes and dislikes, such as "I like banana, not pear" at snack time. Children make choices about what activities to choose and play well on their own and in small and large groups. Children develop independence, pouring drinks and putting on their coats and shoes. They behave well and understand the rules of the setting.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening to stories and use books independently. They understand print goes from left to right and show good concentration, listening to adults and joining in with familiar repetition. Children are beginning to recognize their name, they find their name peg for activities and some children are writing their name on paper or in the sand. They enjoy mark making with paint and pencils and hold the brush and pencil in-between their finger and thumb. Children are good communicators.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are given good opportunities to practice their counting skills, during routine activities, such as register time. They use counting skills in their play, using duplo bricks and compare two towers for size. They make patterns in the sand and use cotton reels and wooden blocks. They identify colours and use jigsaws and cutters to learn 2D shapes names. Children sing number rhymes and use counters when singing '5 mince pies' to learn number concept.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use a variety of natural materials to explore and experiment, such as sand, water, pasta and gloop, learning their properties and potential. Children learn about the natural world going on nature walks and collecting items, they plant cress and seeds and watch them grow. Children compare changes in the seasons and look at the weather and visit local shops and schools. They have limited opportunities to use the computer to develop mouse skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children develop hand/eye co-ordination through a range of activities such as building with duplo, threading cotton reels and cutting with scissors. They learn good control with fine motor skills, drawing, putting on dressing-up clothes and completing jigsaws. Children have limited opportunities to climb on large equipment, but learn to move their bodies in a variety of ways in music and movement sessions. They crawl through tunnels, bounce on a tramoline and throw balls and climb through hoops.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use a variety of collage materials to stick, join and make patterns. They use paint in a variety of ways, with brushes, printing and hands. Children watch the changes to colour when they add white and use glue with colour or glitter. They use their imagination in role play situations, dressing-up as animals, superheroes or familiar roles from home. They enjoy musical instruments and experiment with their sound and how they can be used.

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

- develop staff's understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals to improve plans; that clearly state the activity, the area of learning, the role of the adult, what children are expected to learn and differentiation
- ensure observations and assessments are recorded using the stepping stones and early learning goals, within the six areas of learning, to enable children's next steps to be planned
- ensure all areas of learning are given equal planning, with particular attention to the use of large physical play equipment and opportunities to use the computer.

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.