



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127394

DfES Number: 517786

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/10/2003
Inspector Name Christine Robinson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Mr Noah's Nursery School
Setting Address Congregational Church
Iden Green, Benenden
Cranbrook
Kent
TN17 4HQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Mr Noah's Nursery School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Mr Noah's Nursery School
Address Holly Villas
Chapel Lane, Iden Green
Cranbrook
Kent
TN17 4HQ

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

Mr Noah's Nursery School opened in 1995.

It operates from rooms in the congregational church premises in the small village of Iden Green near Benenden. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding villages and is managed by a committee as part of the church's activities.

There are currently 32 children from two to four years on roll; a small number of school age children may attend in the holidays. This includes 12 funded three year olds and five funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. No children have special needs and all children speak English.

The group opens five days a week apart from Thursday afternoons; it is closed for two weeks at Christmas and Easter and for the month of August. Sessions run from 09:00-16:00 but some children attend on a sessional basis.

Four staff work with the children and three have early years qualifications. The supervisor is currently on a training programme and two hope to start training in the new year. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership . French and music teaching are included as part of the curriculum.

How good is the Day Care?

Mr Noah's Nursery School provides good quality care for children. Staff are committed to training and providing an environment in which children can play and learn. The rooms are bright and clean and a good selection of toys and equipment is accessible to children. All the required records are kept. Policies and procedures for staff and parents are available but not always organised to ensure clarity and are sometimes very minimal in content.

Hygiene practice is good and staff have a generally good awareness of health and safety but there are no formal systems of risk assessment and the registration

system is not sufficiently accurate to ensure children's safety in an emergency. Children bring their own packed lunches but staff are also aware of any special dietary needs. Staff are keen to support children with special needs and excellent systems are in place to ensure they are given opportunities to fulfil their potential. Staff have an awareness of child protection issues and receive in-house training in this area.

Staff interaction with children is positive and there is a good balance between free and structured play. Children behave well and staff use a range of appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour. The nursery is managed by a church committee and the practice reflects a strong Christian ethos; the nursery welcomes all children.

The nursery aims to work in partnership with parents and staff are keen to involve parents in all aspects of their children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- There is a good variety of interesting activities including resources for messy and imaginative play. Visiting teachers are used to provide children with early French and music experiences to help promote children's language and creative development. This year, a new system called 'write-dance' has been introduced which helps children to strengthen connections between small and large muscle control. Staff report that this has already improved children's flexibility and fine motor movement.
- Staff use a range of methods such as merit charts and observation sheets to encourage children and to help understand the reasons for unwanted behaviours. Staff value good behaviour and children are taught to work together, share and co-operate in large and small groups.
- Staff work to provide a clean and safe environment for children. All staff are first-aid trained, all appropriate records and permissions are in place and children are encouraged to learn about good hygiene routines such as regular hand-washing. The supervisor has just completed a course in infection control.

What needs to be improved?

- the accuracy of the registration system;
- the provision of a formal risk assessment system;
- the quality and detail of written policies and information.

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
12	improve quality of written information for parents, including an equal opportunities policy;
13	amend the child protection policy to include the procedures to follow where there are allegations against staff.
2	maintain an accurate registration system;
6	devise a system of formal risk assessment that includes the provision for staff training and the implementation of a health and safety policy;

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Mr Noah's Nursery School provides children with worthwhile learning opportunities and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals and in some areas like mathematics, language and knowledge and understanding of the world, they are making very good progress.

Staff work together as a team to manage children well and provide them with a chance to learn through a range of interesting activities like French and music and movement. No children have special needs or speak English as an additional language at the moment, but systems are in place to support such children. Planning comprises extremely detailed long, medium and short-term plans which reflect the six areas of learning and the detail of the stepping stones system. Structured teaching within small and large groups ensure that children are making progress according to their ability. Although there has been a considerable improvement in the formal assessment records made available to parents, the everyday assessment of individual children is fragmented, not recorded separately and not related sufficiently to planning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The church based committee liaises closely with staff and provides strong support. The staff meet together on a regular basis to discuss planning, training and other aspects of managing the nursery. The supervisor provides a clear lead in managing the systems for developing the curriculum and demonstrates a determination to improve the educational opportunities for all children.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Although there is a lack of detailed information for parents on the setting itself, all other aspects show a strong commitment to involve and support parents. Parents are kept well informed about their children's achievements and progress and encouraged to be involved with their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Staff show a commitment to ensuring that parents can become involved in their children's learning. Parents are kept advised of their children's achievements through a termly report and receive a detailed summary when children leave. Curriculum planning is displayed for parents and there are regular newsletters. Recently a forum has been set up to give parents an insight into aspects of the early years curriculum and an opportunity to meet with staff and each other.
- Staff see music as an important part of the nursery programme and children experience a varied range of music -based activities that both promote creative and physical development. Children acquire a sense of rhyme and rhythm through specific music teaching, the singing of familiar nursery

rhymes and develop their vocabulary by learning French songs. The 'write-dance' system encourages children to move their bodies in time to classical music.

- Staff are very familiar with the detail of the stepping stones system. The supervisor has strived to find manageable systems that enable the planning of the curriculum to help children progress. A colour-coded system used in conjunction with a key worker scheme enables staff to ensure children are being taught at a rate that is consistent with their age and ability.

What needs to be improved?

- the provision of written information for parents about the setting;
- the planning for outdoor physical play;
- children's free access to craft resources;
- the system for assessing children's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection in 1999, only one key issue for action was identified. This concerned the provision of a brief assessment summary for the parents of the children completing their last term. The nursery has made very good progress in addressing this action.

All parents now receive a termly written report and the nursery has just started to take part in the 'transfer document' scheme. This scheme gives parents and reception class teachers a written overview of where children are in their progress towards achieving the early learning goals.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children display interest in the activities provided and approach adults and other children with confidence. Staff listen to children's feelings and boost their self-esteem by displaying their work, acknowledging concerns and giving praise and encouragement. Children are developing self-care skills and a sense of community through the nursery's involvement in the local church and village life.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children converse well with adults and other children. They enjoy books, are able to link sounds and letters and many can recognise and read their own names. Children have lots of formal and informal opportunities to practise writing and demonstrate sound pencil control skills. The introduction of the 'write-dance' system has further promoted children's fine motor skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are introduced to a commercial system for learning numbers-Ten Town. They can recognise numbers up to ten and some can count beyond. Children learn about addition and subtraction through songs and rhymes and through using multi-link cubes. They gain experience of size, shape and pattern through play activities like painting and more formal activities like work sheets. On the day of the inspection, children enjoyed learning about sequencing by exploring a set of Russian dolls.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

The nursery is situated in a rural area and staff use this to help children develop a sense of their local community. Children are able to explore the natural world by handling small domestic animals and by celebrating harvest festival. Children gain an understanding of science through simple experiments and of the wider world through interest tables and project work like foods around the world. Older children are able to use the computer independently and develop skills like 'mouse' control.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and enjoy moving their bodies in time to music in 'write-dance' and music and movement sessions. Children develop hand/eye co-ordination through using a varied range of tools like scissors and tweezers. Records show a lack of planned opportunities to practise skills like balancing, catching and jumping.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to express their feelings through musical and role play activities. They are able to explore colour, form and shape through interesting activities such as painting, cooking, woodwork and clay. Craft activities tend to be adult directed and there are few opportunities for children to explore texture and space creatively.

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

- ensure that planning provides for children to:
 - a) practise skills like catching, jumping and balancing during outdoor play sessions,
 - b) express their creativity through free access to craft resources;
- ensure that assessment records are kept separately for each child using a system that compliments the detailed planning records.

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.