



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 508010

DfES Number: 516696

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 20/10/2004
Inspector Name Nikki Whinton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Link & Learn Pre-School
Setting Address Link Centre
Ike Gradwell Community Suite, Link Centre, Whitehill Way
Swindon
Wilts
SN5 7DL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Link & Learn Pre-School 1057525

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Link & Learn Pre-School
Address Link Centre
Ike Gradwell Community Suite, Link Centre, Whitehill Way
Swindon
Wilts
SN5 7DL

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

Link and Learn Pre-School opened in 1995. It operates from the Ike Gradwell Suite of the Link Centre, in Swindon. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 10 children from 3 to under 5 years on roll. This includes five funded three-year-olds and one funded four-year-old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has experience of caring for children with a variety of special needs. There are currently no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.00.

Three full-time staff work with the children. One member of staff has an early years qualification and one member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives teacher support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Link and Learn Pre-School provides good quality care for children. The playleader has an appropriate early years qualification. Her staff have considerable early years experience, skills and ability. All required regulatory documents are maintained, although one lacks sufficient detail. Good staffing ratios are maintained. The premises are secure, clean, well maintained, warm and welcoming to parents and children. Staff offer a wide variety of equipment and resources.

Most procedures are in place to promote children's safety and prevent accidents. Staff have a good awareness of their fire safety responsibilities. They actively promote children's good health and take positive steps to prevent the possible spread of infection. Staff have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating, which they promote through the drinks and snacks provided. They fully

understand their vital role in the protection of children and have valuable experience of caring for children with a range of additional needs.

Staff know the children well and have a very good relationship with them. They provide a wide variety of stimulating activities to help support children's learning and development. Staff have a very good understanding of how to effectively manage children's behaviour.

The staff work well in partnership with parents and carers. Parents are provided with regular, detailed information about the setting. Staff ensure children are looked after according to parents' individual wishes and offer parents regular informal opportunities to discuss children's care issues.

What has improved since the last inspection?

As a result of the last inspection, the group was requested to complete the following actions;

- . take steps to maintain the room at an adequate temperature
- . ensure children are not at risk from the surface of the outdoor play area
- . obtain written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The playroom is now maintained at an adequate temperature and written parental permission has been obtained for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. These measures now support children's health and welfare whilst in the provision.

However, the surface of the outside play area still poses a risk to children's safety.

What is being done well?

- The staff know the children well and have a very positive relationship with them. Children are confident, well motivated and relaxed within the setting. They are developing their social skills and forming good friendships with staff and peers. Children have access to a wide variety of exciting play opportunities which help to promote their learning.
- The staff offer a wide range of clean, well maintained equipment and resources. Children are able to easily self select from a good variety of safe, stimulating, age appropriate toys and play materials which help to support their development.
- The staff have a very good understanding of health and hygiene issues. They act as good role models and take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. Children are effectively developing their understanding of good practice through the daily routine.
- The staff have a good understanding of the importance of encouraging

children's healthy lifestyle. They ensure drinking water is freely accessible to children at all times. They offer a wide choice of tempting, nutritious snacks. Children are developing their understanding of healthy eating through the snack menu they sample on a daily basis.

- The staff act as good role models. They have a very good understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour. Staff use praise and encouragement skilfully to encourage positive behaviour whilst promoting children's confidence and self esteem. Children behave very well. They are cared for in a way which actively supports their welfare and development.

What needs to be improved?

- the arrangements for children's safety, to ensure the outside play surface does not pose a hazard to children
- the documentation, to ensure the complaints procedure includes information about the regulator.

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
6	Ensure the surfacing of the outside play area does not pose a hazard to children.
12	Ensure the complaints procedure includes information about the regulator.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Link and Learn Pre-School provides good quality provision and children are making very good progress in all areas of learning. Teaching is very good, however, there are residual weaknesses in partnership with parents and leadership and management.

Teaching is very good. The staff plan and provide an exciting variety of stimulating, challenging activities to help promote children's learning and development. They ask searching indirect questions to make children think, reinforce and extend their learning. However, there is scope to develop the use of the assessment programme further. The staff are enthusiastic, well motivated and work well as a team. They know the children very well and have a very good relationship with them. They support children well in developing their confidence, independence and self esteem. Staff act as good role models and actively promote children's positive behaviour.

Leadership and management are generally good. The group benefits from the training and experience of the playleader. The educational provision is not fully monitored, for example a key issue from the last inspection has not been completed. However, the group has a good understanding of its' strengths and areas for development. The group is committed to improvement and is putting good strategies in place to support the future progress of the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents have opportunities to discuss their children's individual progress and achievements with staff. They are initially encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child, to aid staff assessment. However, parents are not encouraged to regularly contribute their knowledge to support ongoing assessment. Parents are invited to become actively involved in their child's learning, both within the setting and at home.

What is being done well?

- The children count confidently and accurately as part of the daily routine. They immediately recognise numbers up to ten when written as labels. They love solving simple, practical mathematical problems and through play are learning to add and subtract numbers. They enjoy meaningful, stimulating, opportunities to develop their awareness of shape, space and measure.
- The children are confident, independent, well motivated and enthusiastic to learn. They have good self esteem and are forming positive relationships with staff and peers. Children are developing their social skills and their awareness of the need to share and take turns.
- The children have a good range of vocabulary, which they use confidently when talking with others. They recognise familiar words in print and enjoy

exploring books. They quickly recognise letter sounds and are learning how to link sounds and letters.

- The children move confidently and safely, showing good spatial awareness. They love taking part in regular keep fit and music and movement sessions. They handle a wide range of equipment, tools and materials safely, demonstrating good coordination and control. Children have a very good understanding of good hygiene practices and are learning to recognise the effects of exercise on their bodies.
- The children go on regular outings to explore the environment and have received visitors to the setting to increase their understanding of their local area and aspects of varying cultures and beliefs. The children enjoy designing and building with construction materials and confidently use information and communication technology to support their play.
- The children love using their imagination to express their own thoughts and ideas, especially through role play and construction design. They enthusiastically sing simple songs from memory and enjoy exploring a variety of musical instruments.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's programme of assessment and monitoring of the educational provision, to ensure regular observations and assessments are undertaken on children across all areas of development and cluster groups
- the staff's partnership with parents, to ensure parents are encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child, to aid ongoing assessment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

As a result of the last inspection, the group was given the following key issues;

- . the identification in planning of the use of information and communication technology to exploit the very good learning opportunities provided
- . the format of assessment, to demonstrate children's progression towards all of the early learning goals and to be more accessible for parents' contributions.

Staff have now purchased additional information and communication technology resources. They plan the use of equipment to support children's learning and play. Staff have introduced a new assessment system and encourage parents to share with staff what they know about their child to aid initial assessment.

However, staff do not undertake regular observations and assessments of the children using the new assessment programme. Parents are not currently encouraged to share their knowledge and contribute to ongoing assessments.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, enthusiastic and eager to learn. They have good self esteem and are forming positive relationships with peers and adults. Children are increasing their social skills and their awareness of the need to share and to take turns, such as when sharing role play materials or playing animal snap. Children love sharing their news, " I don't think my daddy's better yet", " I'm going to Grandma's tomorrow". They are developing their independence through the daily routine.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a good range of vocabulary. They use language confidently when discussing their thoughts and ideas, such as " Sometimes, I have to pretend I've got four legs when I'm a horse". Children love exploring books in the inviting book corner and enthusiastically answer questions during whole group stories. Children confidently recognise familiar words in print and are learning to link sounds and letters. They have practical opportunities to develop their early writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently and accurately, such as when counting the children present, counting coins during role play or counting cards up to ten during animal snap. They love solving problems, enthusiastically telling staff how many more or less items of crockery are needed at snack time. Children quickly and accurately recognise shapes, such as when making sandwiches at snack time and take part in practical activities to learn more about space and measure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning about a range of cultures and beliefs through dance, food tasting and dressing up. They go on nature walks, visit the local library and explore Asda find out more about the area in which they live. Children confidently use information and communication technology to support their play. They enjoy designing and building, using a variety of construction materials and freely talk about past and present events in their lives.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a good understanding of the need for good hygiene practices, child telling adult she needed to clean the table " because of bugs". They regularly enjoy keep fit sessions using dance tapes and musical instruments. They are learning to recognise the changes to their bodies after exercise by listening to their breathing and feeling their heart beat. Children safely and confidently use a wide variety of equipment, tools and materials, showing developing coordination and control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children regularly explore colour, texture, shape, form and space through child centred creative activities. They enjoy using their imagination, especially through construction design and during role play, such as when taking part in sustained imaginative play whilst "working" at Asda and within an office. Children enthusiastically sing simple songs from memory and regularly explore a wide variety of musical 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

- develop the staff's programme of assessment and monitoring of the educational provision, to ensure regular observations and assessments are undertaken on children across all areas of development and cluster groups
- develop the staff's partnership with parents, to ensure parents are encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child, to aid ongoing assessment.

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.