



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 130647

DfES Number: 546158

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	17/11/2004
Inspector Name	Tina Kelly

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Courtyard Pre-School
Setting Address	The Courtyard, Leavesden Road Watford Hertfordshire WD24 5ED

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of The Courtyard Pre-School 251549
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Courtyard Pre-School
Address	The Courtyard Leavesden Road Watford Hertfordshire WD24 5ED

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

The preschool has been registered since 1998. They operate from two rooms on the first floor of the Elim Church Centre in North Watford.

They provide sessional care for children who attend a variety of sessions throughout the week. There are currently seventeen children aged from two years nine months up to five years on roll. At this time there were no children aged four attending.

Three children have special needs and the group supports two children who speak English as a second language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. They are open from 9:30 until 12:00 hours. There is a lunch club which runs until 13.30. On the day of inspection nine children were in attendance.

The pre-school is managed by the church committee which is led by the Pastor. The pre-school leader and deputy take day to day responsibility for the running of the group and work alongside the children, both have appropriate early years qualifications and experience. There is a third member of staff who has a great deal of experience in working in the pre-school setting.

How good is the Day Care?

The Courtyard Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children.

The newly appointed supervisor is working closely with the staff team and management committee to ensure the continued smooth running of the pre-school. Most of the documentation for the group has been updated, however the risk assessment procedure needs to monitor outstanding repairs to ensure work is carried out promptly, the policies regarding complaints, lost and uncollected children and the registration system need to be in place.

The well being of the children is of great importance to the staff who have a sound

background in childcare and are well aware of the children's individual needs, however they now need to extend their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. The management need to assess the security of the site with regards to the main entrance and to monitor public access and visitors to the pre-school unit.

The pre-school unit provides children with several different areas to access a wide range of activities and opportunities. The resources are of good quality, they are well presented and offered at the children's level.

The pre-school has received a very good response to the Ofsted parent questionnaire. Good communications with parents are being developed through a new parent prospectus and regular newsletters.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection nine actions were made, four of these were concerned with documentation and safety issues have been met.

However five outstanding actions have been carried over to this year.

Two concerns around the security of the preschool unit and monitoring the children to ensure they are not able to leave the unit unsupervised.

One relating to the registration system as the children and visitors enter and leave the unit.

The child protection policy needs to include a procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

The complaints procedure needs to include the contact number of the regulatory body Ofsted.

What is being done well?

- Children benefit from a staff team who work closely with them at low level, they are well deployed they encourage conversation and extend the children's play with appropriate support. Children's work is well displayed around the room developing the children's sense of pride in their work.
- Children are aware of the routine, they are confident in assisting with tidying up time, asking for additional resources and taking turns at the computer. Resources are of good quality. Activities promote good interaction, conversation and many play opportunities. The selection of books that are borrowed from the library offer the children a range of stories and tales which introduce them to different cultures and family settings.
- Staff have a sound understanding of providing for the needs of all the children in their care, they have recently introduced assessment records to ensure they plan appropriately for the children's ongoing developmental

needs. The pre-school currently supports several children with special needs, the supervisor has attended SENCO training.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation with regard to security, lost and uncollected children, risk assessment, child protection statements and daily attendance register
- knowledge and understanding of child protection issues
- information for parents with regard to the inspection process and the requirements for funding

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since 1st April 2004 Ofsted has not received any complaints about this provision.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown		
Std	Action	Date
2	Ensure the registration procedure records the time all staff and children enter and leave the pre-school.	15/12/2004
6	Prepare an action plan to show how entry to the building and the preschool is managed and monitored to prevent unvetted persons accessing the pre-school unit and children are not able to leave unsupervised.	15/12/2004
6	Prepare a timed action plan to show how the condition of the pre-school is to be improved this refers to the: cloakroom sink, to enable children to	15/12/2004

	use the taps and access the toilet facilities independantly. broken and cracked panes of glass.	
13	Ensure the child protection policy includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff.	15/12/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	Ensure risk assessment procedures are used to monitor the upkeep of the building and shared with the manager on a regular basis.
6	Ensure the lost and uncollected child policies are readily available to parents.
6	Develop the outings policy with procedures and checklist.
13	Develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, signs of abuse, recording and the referral process.
14	Ensure information on the inspection process and requirments for funding is readily available to parents, this should include the complaints procedure.

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 The Courtyard Pre-School is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress within the majority of areas of learning however there are some significant weaknesses within the area of knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the early learning goals, they ensure overall planning gives due emphasis to most areas of learning. However short term plans are limited and do not highlight learning intentions and differentiation for children. Staff interact effectively with children, high staff ratios enable all children to receive due attention. Children have good opportunities to explore their independent learning in a child centred environment. Staff promote positive role-models, children are on the whole polite and co-operative.

The staff team have recently introduced assessment records to monitor children's progress. The aim is to now utilise these to inform future planning for individual needs.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. The provision is overseen by the Church Management Committee, however the pre-school leader is delegated responsibility for overseeing the day to day running of the group. She is new in post, however she has already imposed positive changes that will develop and extend the quality of education offered to the children. She is supported by a committed team of staff. Monitoring and evaluating practices are being explored, thus regular team meetings are imperative to ensure all concerned are involved.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents receive adequate information about the setting, although information about the education offered is insufficient. Parents are informed about topics covered and feel they can be involved within their children's learning through "show and tell". Overall they are happy with their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy and settled within their environment, they have established secure relationships with staff. They are developing positive social skills, sharing resources and waiting their turn to access the computer. Children can and do work co-operatively. They are proud of their own pieces of work and delight in adult praise and recognition.
- Children are developing positive attitudes to books and reading in general. They are encouraged to take home books to share with their parents and they obviously enjoy stories and handling books during the session. Children are beginning to recognise their own names which are available on their coat

pegs and labelled cards utilised during snacks and stories.

- Children receive high levels of support and attention throughout the session, this is possible due to excellent staff ratios. Effective intervention is in place for children with special educational needs. Children do on occasion benefit from 1:1 stories and 1:1 support with craft and practical activities. The impact is that children are very confident to access all activities and resources available to them.
- Staff organise valuable learning experiences for the children, in a bright and stimulating environment. They ensure children have good opportunities to follow their own interests and monitor children so they have equal access to resources. They clearly value children's own work which is attractively displayed.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. To ensure weekly plans give due emphasis to all aspects of children's learning and clearly highlight the learning intentions and differentiation for all children. Ensure newly introduced assessments are utilised to inform planning, all staff should be involved.
- opportunities for children to explore a variety of materials and objects that will support them to question how and why things work. Extend children's knowledge and understanding of both the natural world in which they live and the variety of cultures and beliefs that make up our society.
- parents information, to ensure they are fully aware of the education offered and how this is implemented within the pre-school. Include information on the educational funding that is available to them.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This is the pre-school's first funded nursery education inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children show a keen interest in their environment and activities on offer. They enthusiastically participate within adult-led creative sessions, as well as confidently pursuing self-chosen pursuits. Children sit for extended periods listening to 1:1 stories and working on the computer. Their self-esteem is promoted through staffs praise and encouragement for them to achieve tasks. Children work co-operatively within role-play scenarios. Their independence is growing and could be extended.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident to negotiate with their peers whilst buying and selling flowers in the role-play shop. They are eager to describe their feelings of the wet, smooth and lovely paint on their hands, when engaging in finger painting. Children listen to stories attentively and do access the book corner independently. They have good opportunities to practice a variety of skills that promotes handwriting development. Although more focus on rhyming and rhythmic activities would be valuable.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enthusiastically sing number songs, they are keen to buy a current bun in the bakers shop and work out how many buns are left? Children are learning concepts of money when buying and selling goods in the shop. They are supported to find out how many pink and yellow flowers they have? Children label circle and star shapes utilised for painting. This is reinforced within the computer programme available. They recognise concepts of empty and full. Extension for able children is required.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are developing worthwhile ICT skills, they are supported to develop their mouse control. They can build and construct with a range of resources to create desired effects. However opportunities to explore and investigate a variety of materials is limited. Children's sense of time and place is covered within topics, although some aspects could be explored daily. Children are learning about people who help us in the community, however this is not extended to explore a variety of cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and safely within their environment. They are aware of each others space when finding a place to sit for story sessions. Children are developing an awareness of their own needs, visiting the bathroom independently and washing their hands at appropriate times. Children practice skills such as throwing and catching with bean bags and balls. They effectively utilise writing implements with a purpose. Climbing apparatus is available and should be planned for regularly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are excited to explore the colours, texture and form of paints, during a finger painting activity. They can observe how colours change when they are mixed together, and are thrilled to create orange by mixing red and yellow. Children enjoy singing sessions, although more use of musical instruments would be beneficial. Their imagination is developed through a broad range of role-play scenarios, children are absorbed within the flower shop and play purposefully within this area.

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

- to further develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. To ensure weekly plans give due emphasis to all aspects of children's learning and clearly highlight the learning intentions and differentiation for all children. Ensure newly introduced assessments are utilised to inform planning, all staff should be involved.
- improve children's opportunities to explore a variety of materials and objects that will support them to question how and why things work. Extend children's knowledge and understanding of both the natural world in which they live and the variety of cultures and beliefs that make up our society.
- improve parents information, to ensure they are fully aware of the education offered and how this is implemented within the pre-school. Include information on the educational funding that is available to them.

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.