



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 323015

DfES Number: 516188

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/04/2003
Inspector Name Angela Rowley

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Avenue Private Day Nursery
Setting Address The Avenue Private Day Nursery
The Avenue
Leigh
WN7 1ET

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Lesley & Bernard Meadows
Address 133 The Avenue
Leigh
Lancashire
WN7 1HR

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

The Avenue Private Day Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from a converted Victorian Sunday School building within a residential area of Leigh town centre. The nursery offers full day care provision for up to 71 children aged from six weeks to five years and is organised to provide care in individual rooms for babies, little toddlers, big toddlers, pre-school and nursery group. The nursery operates over 51 weeks of the year, between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm on five days per week. Part time places are also provided. At present there are 86 children attending, of whom there are 16 funded three year olds and 18 funded four year olds All children speak English as their first language. There is a small number of children who have been identified as having additional educational needs. A manager is employed to oversee nursery operations, and in addition to this 15 care staff are employed. In Nursery Group, four part time staff work with the children, and in pre-school three staff are employed. All hold suitable qualifications in early years. The owner of the nursery is an experienced Early Years teacher and adopts an advisory role for her staff. The nursery also receives support from a community advisory teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Avenue Nursery School offers good quality nursery education.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is very good and is aided by the skilful intervention of staff who extend children's vocabulary and encourage language through thinking. Children are making generally good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan well to ensure that a balanced curriculum is provided. Medium term planning is clear and links to the early learning goals. Assessments are well informed although currently they do not link to short term plans, missing opportunities to plan for individual learning needs. Key staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and use imaginative methods to help children learn. They provide first hand experiences and real world objects which capture children's interest and encourage strong exploratory impulses. They miss opportunities however to encourage mathematical problem solving during play, and also in encouraging creative thinking which is hampered by a lack of organisation and restrictions in the use of role play materials.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. There is commitment to evaluating the nursery's performance as a whole, and effective systems are in place to monitor staff development, although there is less emphasis placed on critically evaluating the delivery of nursery education and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of such. The nursery are proactive in piloting new methods to improve the quality of nursery education.

The partnership with parents is generally good. The provision of newsletters informing parents of the theme and how they can contribute to their child's learning, admission questionnaires, parents evenings and information events all help contribute to children's progress. This will be further enhanced when the nursery fully implements plans to encourage parents to contribute to children's assessments.

What is being done well?

- Children's communication, language and literacy skills are very good as a result of the skilful intervention of staff who question well and promote new vocabulary. Children converse confidently, can recognise theirs and other familiar names and are starting to write.
- Children have many good opportunities to gain a knowledge and understanding of the world. They display natural curiosity in exploring real world objects and are skilful in the use of ICT equipment.
- Staffs understanding of the early learning goals which is linked to clear medium term planning.

- The development of a range of systems that promote partnership with parents.

What needs to be improved?

- Opportunities for children to solve mathematical problems through questioning and challenges during play and planned experiences.
- Short term planning systems to make clear links with assessments of the next steps for individual children's learning.
- The organisation of role play to provide children with more opportunities to play purposefully and to extend their own creative thinking in directing their own imaginative play.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress on improving the one issue identified at the last inspection.

Planning to ensure that physical development is given sufficient emphasis in the programme, has been significantly improved. PE sessions and swimming lessons are planned into the weekly routine. Staff link PE/music and movement sessions into the broader theme to give a clear focus and extend learning. In general outdoor play they use a good range of small equipment such as bats, balls, hoops and bucket stilts to encourage skill and control. Children have planned access to a nursery climbing frame, although this provides only limited challenge for more able four year old children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. Four year old children have developed high levels of personal independence. Many can dress and undress independently for PE. Three year old children form strong attachments with other members of their group. They seek each other out for support and show sensitivity and concern for their peers. They are excited and enthused by the interesting first hand experiences staff provide for them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are making very good progress in this area. They speak confidently in both large and small groups. They are learning about reading and enjoy the book corner knowing the meaning of 'author' and 'title'. Three year old children recognise their own names whilst four year olds also recognise the names of familiar others. They identify key letters and sounds such as "M for Megan". Staff extend children's vocabulary and encourage language thinking by skilful questioning during activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. Four year old children count confidently beyond 10 and some recognise numerals below 5. Children independently use positional language and language associated with size and weight during play. They have opportunities to see numbers in their environment such as wall friezes, and in imaginative games such as 'number bingo'. Children are not always provided with challenges to solve simple mathematical problems during play and activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. They are provided with valuable opportunities to explore and experiment with natural world objects such as seed planting, carnation dyeing and looking at eggs with magnifying glasses. Children are provided with valuable opportunities to use ICT equipment. They understand the basic functions of the computer and four year old children control the mouse skilfully knowing how to print.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. They use skilful movements to control equipment such as catching, heading a ball, and balancing on bucket stilts. They develop fine motor skill through the provision of continuous resources such as scissors and tape dispenser. Staff plan opportunities for children to refine movement and coordination during PE sessions which are linked to the theme. There is limited challenge for more able children to develop gross motor skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. They express themselves imaginatively during well planned music and movement sessions pretending to grow like their sunflowers. Three year old children enjoy free painting and start to separate their colour on paper showing satisfaction with the end product. Children attempt to extend their imagination during role play although this is restricted by poor organisation of resources and by staff restricting play to planned areas.

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

- Review planning and assessment systems to provide clear links between assessments of individual learning and the provision of activities that encourage progression towards the early learning goals.
- Increase opportunities for children to solve mathematical problems through play and planned experiences.
- Improve the organisation of role play area to provide children with increased opportunities to play purposefully and extend their creative thinking in directing their own imaginative play.

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.