



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY136941

DfES Number: 537755

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 12/01/2004
Inspector Name Anne Scott

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Christchurch Montessori
Setting Address Beauchamp Place, Reid Street
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 2BS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Gillian Mary Thomas

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

Christchurch Montessori Day Nursery opened in January 2002. It operates from a large hall and smaller room in a scout hut, close to Christchurch town centre. The nursery serves the local area and is registered to provide care for 26 children aged two to under five years of age.

There are currently 48 children on roll. This includes 18 funded three year olds and 11 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with special needs, and children for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 08:00-17:30.

Six full time and part-time staff work directly with the children. Four staff hold early years qualifications. Other staff are currently on training programmes.

The setting receives support from the advisory teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and uses the Montessori method of teaching.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Christchurch Montessori Nursery offers acceptable provision, helping children make generally good progress in all areas of learning except for in Mathematics which is very good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Resources are easily accessible, stored in low level units, encouraging children's independence in choice and selection of equipment.

Members of staff are deployed in each area of learning to provide support and direction as needed.

Assessments of children's progress clearly show how they will progress to the next stage. However, there is an inconsistent approach to behaviour management, and children are unclear about their boundaries.

Leadership and management is generally good. There are clear aims and objectives about how children will develop within the Montessori framework. The manager offers in-house training to keep staff informed of how children can progress to the early learning goals. However, the current staff appraisal system has not identified weaknesses in behaviour management strategies.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents receive clear information about the Montessori method of teaching, and are involved in their children's learning through a book loan service and suggestions for activities to do at home. However, procedures for sharing information about children's progress with parents are not effective.

What is being done well?

- Children are developing in confidence and independence and are beginning to form close relationships with their peers.
- Children are learning to move around their environment safely, and have good opportunities for music and movement through well planned activities, such as a weekly ballet session.
- Children are progressing very well in mathematics and are confident in counting and early calculation. They have good opportunities to recognise numerals, as well as being familiar and confident with shapes, size, volume and patterns.
- There are good opportunities for children to recognise print and letters and staff extend children's language and vocabulary effectively.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation and availability of books, to encourage independence in enjoying stories
- staff's management of children's behaviour
- sharing of children's progress with parents
- opportunities for children to develop independence in creative activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing in confidence and independence and are beginning to form close relationships with their peers, for example, helping each other with coats. However, the management of children's behaviour is not consistent and therefore acceptable boundaries are not clear.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

There are good opportunities for children to recognise print and letters, and staff extend children's language and vocabulary effectively, for example, staff reading a story explain the meaning of the word 'indestructible'. However, the organisation and availability of books limits children's independence in enjoying stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident in counting and early calculation, through meaningful activities, such as counting cups at snack time. They have very good opportunities to recognise numerals through everyday use of Montessori equipment. They are familiar and confident with shapes, size, volume and patterns. For example they help staff tidy large soft play equipment, correctly identifying triangle, cube, cylinder, rectangle and pour water confidently into different sized containers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are provided with opportunities to use ICT and to explore things that work, such as torches and tape recorders. They are beginning to learn about time and place through activities at daily circle time. However, opportunities for children to build and construct, are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move around their environment safely, and with due regard for others. They have a good understanding of personal space, during well planned activities, such as ballet. Children handle small tools with confidence and competence, but opportunities for children to use large physical play equipment are limited.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy regular singing, and successfully express themselves through planned music and movement activities. They are developing a good understanding of their senses through smelling, tasting and tactile activities. However, there are limited opportunities for children to develop independence in creative activities.

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 an effective strategy to share information with parents about their children's progress.
- ensure there is an effective, consistent and positive approach to the management of children's behaviour.

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.