



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 100224

DfES Number: 590650

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	20/01/2004
Inspector Name	Christine Eglinton

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Harmony House Childhood Centre
Setting Address	Baden Powell Close Goresbrook Road Dagenham Essex RM9 6XN

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Sister Margaret Gallagher
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## 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

Harmony House operates three services within the centre, a Crèche, Pre-School and full day-care, which includes a baby room.

The crèche service is provided to support parents attending training courses which are provided on the same site.

The full day care and pre-school services provide funded nursery education, sessional places.

There are plans in the future for an after-school club.

The facility is set in a newly developed complex, with a large garden for the children also access to a picturesque courtyard.

The nursery building is well maintained, bright and warm, providing a friendly, supportive, environment.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses.

Teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff do not have a good working knowledge of the early learning goals, and they are not fully exploiting the learning opportunities within some of the planned activities. Written plans do not reflect a clear understanding of the early learning goals or offer a broad and purposeful curriculum. Some of the activities are not providing sufficient challenge for the more able children.

There are systems in place to for assessing the children's progress but these are not being used consistently or effectively. There are good systems in place to support children with special educational needs and for children who speak dual languages, which helps to promote an inclusive approach.

Relationships between staff and children are positive, but staff are not using consistent strategies when managing children's behaviour.

Leadership and management has some significant weaknesses. The manager has only been recently appointed and has identified some key areas of weakness in the teaching and learning opportunities. However she has not had sufficient time to implement effective systems to address these weaknesses. There are also weaknesses in how the setting evaluates and monitors the effectiveness of the nursery curriculum.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are kept informed about relevant events throughout the year and are given information about the covered themes and topics. Further opportunities are needed to help keep parents informed about their child's progress throughout the year and become fully involved in their child's learning at home.

### What is being done well?

- The provision for supporting children with special education needs and children who speak dual language is good. Children are given individual support and staff closely liaise with other agencies to support individual needs.
- Children have developed very good self care skills and are able to select resources independently.
- Children are confident in the use of information and technology. They are able to construct and build with a variety of objects.
- Staff are fully utilising the available areas within the premises to ensure

children are able to take part in balanced range of activities.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones
- planning of activities to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are included
- opportunities for children to attempt writing in meaningful ways for a variety of purposes and to link sounds to letters
- opportunities for challenging more able children to develop calculation skills and to start to understand simple addition and subtraction in practical ways
- strategies of managing children's behaviour
- opportunities for children to look at similarities, differences, patterns, change and to learn about the local environment.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The nursery has made limited progress since the last inspection.

At the last inspection it was noted that the setting had to implement a clear and manageable assessment method that supported children's abilities and was used as a planning tool. The setting needed to ensure that the plans gave priority to the key areas of language and literacy and mathematics challenged the more able children and clearly stated the learning outcome. They also had to plan more activities with adult support in the areas of mathematics for older children to extend their understanding of problem solving matching sorting comparing and recording numbers.

They needed to allow more opportunities for the more able children to attempt to write their own names, and plan more opportunities in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world, to explore and investigate natural and man made resources. Further resources were required for technology and programmable toys.

The settings current assessment method is still not enabling staff to help plan for individual learning or being used to inform planning. The setting has attempted to address the weaknesses noted in the key areas of mathematics and language and literacy but have not yet addressed these areas effectively.

The setting has increased their range of natural materials and increased their selection of technology and programmable toys.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing generally good independency skills and are able to work as part of a group. They are beginning to develop an understanding of taking turns and sharing but need further support to consider the consequence of their actions on others and the difference between right and wrong.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are able to express their ideas confidently during play and are beginning to develop early writing skills and form recognisable letters. There are, however, missed opportunities for them to practise writing for a variety of purposes in meaningful ways, and link sounds to letters.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are beginning to develop counting skills and to recognise numerals. There are too few opportunities for children to develop calculation skills and encourage more able children to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are beginning to learn about different cultures and religions and are able to explore natural materials but there are too few opportunities for them to learn about the environment and learn about similarities, patterns and change.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are able to use and handle tools and objects confidently and move in a variety ways. However, there are limited opportunities for learning to move safely with control and show an awareness of others and learn about keeping healthy.

### CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have access to a variety of creative materials and children are able to sing songs from memory. However, they have too few opportunities to express themselves freely using music and dance and express their ideas through a range of sensory experiences.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

## WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are identified in the planning of activities
- develop staff knowledge about the early learning goals and their application
- develop an effective assessment method which assists children's individual learning, informs future planning and builds upon children's imagination and interests
- ensure there are regular opportunities for children to be able to attempt writing for a variety of purposes through practical opportunities and provide more opportunities for children to link letters to sounds
- provide more practical opportunities which enable children to develop calculation skills and challenge more able children to develop an understanding of simple addition and subtraction
- increase the opportunities for children to learn about their environment and investigate similarities, patterns and changes
- ensure staff develop consistent methods to manage children's behaviour in ways which help them to develop self- discipline and consideration towards others.

*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.*