



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 306444

DfES Number: 518426

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/03/2004
Inspector Name Sheila May Price

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Our Lady of Pity Annexe Pre-School
Setting Address St Catherine's Church
Birkenhead Road
Hoylake
Wirral
CH47 5AF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name . Our Lady of Pity PreSchool Com

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

Our Lady of Pity Annexe Pre-School has been operating from the St Catherine's Church Centre in Hoylake, Wirral since 1994, and is an independent organisation run by its own committee. Also on the site and sharing some facilities is the reception class annexe of Our Lady of Pity Primary School in Greasby, with which the pre school has close links. The pre-school operates from 09:00 to 11:40 Monday to Friday and 12:40 to 15:20 Monday to Thursday term time only, and caters for up to a maximum of 24 children per session aged from three to five years. The facilities for the children include a designated pre-school room with it's own adjoining toilets, and the use of the hall, an additional toilet, carpeted reception area, and a small safely enclosed outdoor play area. Twenty four children are currently on the register of whom 19 three year olds and 5 four year olds receive funded nursery education. There is a team of five staff of whom four have qualifications in early years care and education.

How good is the Day Care?

The quality and standard of day care at Our Lady of Pity Annexe Pre-School is good.

The manager and staff are well qualified, have considerable experience between them, and use this very effectively to support children's care, learning and play. Operational systems work well to ensure that there is a high ratio of adults to children for supporting learning and supervision. Good use is made of space and resources. Everyone is given a warm welcome. All children are equally valued and respected and learn to appreciate diversity.

There are very well organised planning systems ensuring children participate in a wide range of activities which promote all areas of development. Staff relate to children with warmth and understanding, use good care practices and are skilful in promoting their learning and development. Children are happy and secure, they enjoy the activities and use the good resources provided with imagination and creativity.

Staff supervise children well at all times and are alert to dangers. The child protection policy and procedures are not personalised to the setting and there is a need for some staff to update training. Good security is provided at the door at arrival and collection times. There are clearly written policies and procedures relating to health and hygiene, which are implemented well by the staff. Children have healthy snacks including fruit each day and can help themselves to water at any time.

The good use of initial information from parents about their child and the settling in process help children feel reassured. There are excellent systems for exchanging information enabling both staff and parents to share concerns about progress or celebrate achievements. Parents understand how the provision operates, are aware of what the children are learning, and are encouraged to be involved wherever they can.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were eight actions arising from the last Children Act inspection. Some related to documentation and policies, and some to health and safety issues. All actions except one have been appropriately addressed. A risk analysis sheet has been introduced and used as a basis for daily checks on safety and for the overall safety of the building. There is now an updated written complaints procedure, a no smoking policy, and better recording systems for accidents and incidents. A copy of the Wirral Area Child protection Committee guidance has been obtained, but staff knowledge of procedures remains a little uncertain.

What is being done well?

- Co-operation and teamwork underpin the success of the pre school. The manager and staff create a happy and friendly environment where individuality is respected and allowed to blossom, while maintaining an awareness of others and their needs. This helps children learn to get along with each other and develop strong relationships.
- Activities stimulate children's imagination and creativity. Children have great fun pretending to go on an alien hunt, having picnics on the moon, learning funny rhymes, finding buried treasure, exploring sound and moving to music, dressing up as favourite story characters, and making their own models.
- Children are very well supervised while also allowed a certain amount of independence to stretch their capabilities and learn to work things out for themselves. The premises are kept safe and secure and equipment thoughtfully set out to enable children to explore at their own pace with a little help from the staff.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Exceptionally good methods are used to share information with parents and help them understand about what children are learning at the pre-school and to encourage parents to give support at home. A presentation evening is held, which explains what children learn during the Foundation Stage and how this links to the

curriculum they provide at pre-school. Changing displays of photographs are used in the room to demonstrate how this works in practice. Newsletters explain clearly how the topic links to learning and how parents might help the children. Notices about what is happening each week are displayed on the window. Each child makes a project book to take home which is an individual record of what they have learnt.

What needs to be improved?

- the review of the pre-school's own child protection policy and procedures in line with new local and national guidelines and the ongoing training of staff.

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 |
|-----|---|
| 13 | Ensure that there is a comprehensive review of the child protection policy and staff are trained to carry it out. |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Our Lady of Pity Annexe Pre-School provides high quality nursery education. Children make very good progress in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Excellent organisation of time and resources underpins the effectiveness of the teaching, along with the enthusiasm and vitality of the manager. All staff equally contribute to the fun filled and purposeful sessions where children are excited and eager to learn. Staff are secure in their knowledge of the early learning goals and of how children learn. Curriculum planning is thorough and well thought out. Children consolidate their learning through regularly revisiting subjects in new and exciting ways. The staff are perceptive, using good knowledge of the children to assess their capabilities and help plan what they should learn next. They are confident and skilful in their handling of behaviour and extending learning from the children's own ideas.

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The manager inspires confidence with her clear grasp of the underpinning theory behind child led learning within the foundation stage which enables her to give excellent support to the staff. The staff work very well together as a team because differing personalities are respected and all contributions are valued. There is a strong commitment to improvement evidenced by the actions taken since the last education inspection. Monitoring and evaluation of the provision through self assessment is carried out but not recorded.

The quality of partnership with parents is very good. Information about the foundation stage and the way children are learning is presented to parents in a very professional manner using an introductory pack, presentation evenings, newsletters and displays. Parents are invited to look at their children's work at any time and also to contribute to the assessment profile. As a result the parents are very well informed and able to support children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- The manager provides strong leadership putting to use the knowledge gained from her foundation degree in early years and her continuing studies to exemplary effect in all areas of the curriculum. This creates inspiration for the other staff who are also able to use their differing talents to provide the warmth and friendliness, humour and imagination, that is the hall mark of this setting.
- The teaching is of high quality because the staff listen to children and seek to understand how they learn as individuals. This child led approach gives the staff a secure foundation from which to develop children's learning, capitalising on their interests and capabilities. There is an underpinning ethos of respect for others which enables the staff to manage children's behaviour

so well, helping them learn what is right and wrong, and creating a happy learning environment.

- Children have wonderful opportunities to be creative in all areas of the curriculum. This stems from the creativeness of the staff who are able to find new and interesting ways to stimulate children's imagination and allow for individuality of outcome without losing the thread of the intended learning aim. To quote a parent, 'death by worksheet' does not happen at this setting.
- Good methods are used for partnership with parents. The pre school's good liaison with schools helps parents appreciate the continuum of learning from pre school through to the end of reception and to value the early steps as an essential part of the foundation stage. The topic books the children bring home demonstrate a holistic approach to learning with which parents can empathise and be involved in at home.

What needs to be improved?

- the division of responsibility for making written observations so that that assessment profiles are easier to maintain
- the written record of how the educational provision is monitored.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were four key issues arising from the last education inspection. These related to staff support in the role play and construction play areas to help children explore their own ideas further, the encouragement for children to select their own activities and to promote independence at snack time, providing more problem solving activities in mathematics, and to identify the learning potential in differing activities and resources to help staff understand how to use these better.

The setting has made very good progress in taking action on all four key issues. This has resulted in a much greater emphasis being placed on children's independence and for staff to use child led activities as the basis from which to extend their learning. Children are allowed time to be imaginative and explore their own ideas first before staff intercede to extend learning in other directions. Snack time encourages independence being run café style with self service and choices of food and drink. Staff know how to take advantage of every day activities to encourage children to solve mathematical problems. Having attended a training programme covering each of the learning areas all the staff now have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and awareness of the learning potential of activities and resources.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children gain confidence and personal independence through self service at the café, and following their own ideas in play. Children have high levels of self esteem encouraged with praise and reward. They are highly motivated to learn because the staff build on their interests and capabilities to explore new avenues in exciting ways. The 'show and tell' activity works extremely well in connecting home with pre school so children feel secure and happy in their new environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop very good communication skills as staff create reasons for conversation and skilfully intercede with relevant vocabulary or questions to help children express themselves. Children enjoy well known stories like 'Whatever next' and make up their own version in a book of their own they can use for reading and writing. They become good story tellers using role play. Children learn to link sounds to letters in stories and rhymes and recreate the shapes with their 'magic finger'. .

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use mathematics in real situations learning to count and make comparisons from measuring out ingredients for the pancakes or counting plates to see if there are enough. They recreate mathematical patterns in art and learn how shapes fit together to build a rocket. Children are challenged to think and solve problems and write numerals for a purpose such as the rocket count down. Children make their own number lines to take home with a list of ideas for parents to follow up with them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Imaginative themes based on stories are used to capture children's interest in the world around them. Children design and make moon buggies for exploring the moon. Parents tell children about what happened in the world when they were babies. The growth of plants and animals help children explore time and change. Children investigate their reflections in different mirrors, explore the properties of different materials in cooking, and use electronic equipment such as the camera and computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children move with confidence and increasing co-ordination as they imaginatively stamp, twirl around, hop, stride and balance on one leg using all the space around them when 'going on an alien hunt' and jumping in and out of craters on the moon. They learn to control their movements as they travel over, through and around carefully constructed obstacle courses and carry food and cups of water at snack time. They use small equipment and tools to help with hand to eye co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children's creative development is excellently fostered. They look at pictures by Kandinsky and create their own on similar themes of shape and line. They thoroughly enjoy exploring colour, patterns and textures through collage and paint with pictures based on Elmer. They use close observation to paint flowers for Mothers Day. Children are excited and physically responsive to music. They depict ideas and feelings in their pictures. In all play situations they are imaginative and creative.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no key issues arising from this inspection.
- As part of the pre school's continuing development the following two points are raised for consideration:
- further develop the role of all staff in making written observations for the assessment process
- further develop how the setting monitors its educational provision through a written record of the quality assurance process.

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.