



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 508848

DfES Number: 518267

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/11/2003  
Inspector Name Caroline Valerie Novak

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Puffin Pre School Group  
Setting Address Foakes House, 47 Stortford Road  
Dunmow  
Essex  
CM6 1DG

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Puffin Pre School Group 0123389

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Puffin Pre School Group  
Address Foakes House, 47  
Stortford Road  
Dunmow  
Essex  
CM6 1DG

## 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

Puffin Pre-school Group opened in 1982. It operates from four rooms and the toilet areas in the lower ground level of Foakes House in the centre of Great Dunmow. They use the nearby park for outside play whenever possible. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 56 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 37 funded 3 year olds and 7 funded 4 year olds. The pre-school provides support for children who have special needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:30 and 12:30 until 15:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Nine members of staff work regularly with the children; one member of staff has a level 3 early years qualification, and three members of staff are currently working towards an accredited training qualification. Two other members of staff are waiting to join a suitable course. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

Puffin Pre-school Group provides good quality care for children aged two to under five years.

Staff supervise children well and maintain good adult to child ratios. All areas of the premises are safe and all required documents are in place. However, some documents need updating. All members of the team are clear about their roles and responsibilities and effective procedures are in place to deputise in the event of the manager's absence from the setting.

Relationships between adults and children are very good. Children initiate conversations and adults are interested in what children say and do. Staff make very good use of the indoor play space available and provide a warm and welcoming

environment to help children and their families feel comfortable. They provide wide range of interesting resources and equipment and encourage children to pursue their own interests and become independent. They plan stimulating experiences for children, such as making a camp site with tents and 'dens', and enable them to choose their own activities. They provide healthy snacks and children are able to help themselves to drinking water whenever they want to. Very good procedures are in place to help children learn about good health and hygiene. There are satisfactory systems to provide support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents know what is going on through regular newsletters and an informative Parents' Information leaflet. They receive regular updates on their children's progress and are confident to discuss their children with the staff at hand over times.

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

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to complete a number of actions. All of the actions have been successfully completed.

Evidence of 'suitable person' clearances are in place for all existing staff, and clearances for new staff are in progress. Staff training is taking place and it is anticipated that 50% of staff will be qualified to a minimum of level 2 in early years by 2004. The staff team now have a copy of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and use it to plan activities for funded three and four year old children. Children have access to a range of resources and are able to pursue their own interests. A visitors book is used to monitor access to the setting. Children access drinking water freely from a dispenser in the kitchen, so that they are well hydrated and can think effectively. The complaints procedure provides parents with details of Ofsted in case they need to make contact and the child protection procedure reflects Area Child Protection Committee Procedures.

### **What is being done well?**

- The new staff team are keen to develop their practice and the way they care for children. Three members of staff are currently working towards accredited early years qualifications and two others are actively seeking a suitable course to enrol upon. Long term plans are in place for one member of staff to train to graduate level and all members of the team have undertaken short courses to update their knowledge and skills over the past year.
- The staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for children and their families. An attractive entrance hall provides a wide range of information for parents and carers about the provision, routines and the outside community, together with displays of video's that they might like to rent for their children to enjoy at home. The walls of the premises contain attractive displays of children's own work, clearly labelled and at child height.
- Relationships between adults and children are warm and caring. Adults listen to what children say and are interested in what they do. They work alongside

the children, helping them to form good relationships and to feel confident.

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

- documentation, so that the child protection statement includes procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer; and there is a procedure to be followed in case a child is lost whilst in the care of the setting.

#### **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
14	Update the child protection statement to show a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer; and expand the procedure for uncollected children to include actions to be taken in the event of a child being lost whilst in the care of the pre-school.

## 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 Puffins Pre-school Group is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals for creative development and generally good progress in all other areas.

Teaching is generally good. Adults' knowledge of the early learning goals helps them to plan a range of interesting activities for children. An attractive environment, with well-defined areas, enables children to engage in different activities. Staff work alongside the children to help them become confident and form good relationships. Curriculum planning covers all areas of learning but does not provide sufficient information to enable staff to make the best use of activities and offer appropriate challenges for all children. Some children become unsettled when waiting at snack time, and opportunities for children to extend their knowledge of mathematics and to write for a purpose, are missed. Regular assessments monitor children's progress, but parents' observations of what their children do outside of playgroup are not used to plan the next steps.

A satisfactory system helps to identify and support children with special educational needs, so that they can make good progress; a range of successful strategies help children with English as an additional language to communicate.

Leadership and management are generally good. Regular staff meetings enable the staff to share ideas and exchange information. Relationships within team are very good, and staff work well together. A management committee delegates the responsibility of the day-to-day running of the group to two joint managers. However, there is no system in place for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision to identify areas for further development and staff training.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are well informed about the foundation stage, activities and routines. They are confident to approach the staff to discuss their children's progress.

### What is being done well?

- Children are making very good progress in creative development. They explore colours and textures through activities such as free painting on the easel, foot printing or mixing coloured sand. Staff provide children with opportunities to respond in a variety of ways to the sensory experiences of a 'feely bag', smelling aromatic herbs and spices or playing musical instruments.
- Staff are interested in what children say and do. They listen to what children say and treat their comments seriously. They encourage children to speak out at circle time and extend their communication skills, so that they can become confident to talk to adults and each other.

- The new staff team work together well. They discuss curriculum planning and share knowledge and skills at regular team meetings. The team have made many changes to the daily routine and the way activities are presented to improve the way they work with children. The new joint managers and experienced deputy manager, work alongside the staff to influence practice and continue to evaluate the impact of the changes they make.

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

- staff's knowledge of how the planned activities contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals, so that they can make the best use of the experiences to help children learn and do not miss opportunities to extend learning further through everyday routines
- the use of informative observations and parents comments about what their children do outside the pre-school, so that the planned activities provide appropriate challenges for all children and build upon what they already know

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

The pre-school have made generally good progress with the key issues identified at the last inspection.

Most staff have received training on the foundation stage curriculum and use their knowledge to provide a range of practical activities. They no longer rely upon worksheets and enable children to choose activities and resources for themselves.

Long, medium and short term curriculum plans show learning intentions from the early learning goals and stepping stones. Short term plans identify resources to be used but do not provide sufficient detail to enable staff to make the best use of all of the activities to offer appropriate challenges and extend children's learning.

The system for assessing children's progress is now linked to the early learning goals. Regular assessments show where children are in relation to the stepping stones, but they are not yet used to inform planning that builds upon what children already know and can do.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident to initiate their own activities and engage in conversations about their homes and families. They show high levels of self esteem and form good relationships with each other and with adults in the group. They concentrate and sit quietly at self chosen activities, such as pouring coloured sand onto a sticking picture, and share resources at activities. However, some children become unsettled and disruptive when kept waiting for group activities, such as snack time.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact and speak clearly, using a wide range of vocabulary. They explore new words when they talk about 'shadow pictures' that they make on the wall. They know about 'writing' and recognise their own written name. They enjoy looking at books and make up their own narratives as they play together in the home corner or in small world. Some opportunities for them to use writing for a purpose and learn about sounds and letters in meaningful contexts and everyday activities are missed.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use numbers and counting in their play. They recognise written numbers in 'hook a duck' and are beginning to show some understanding of simple calculations as they work out how many cups they need at snack time. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe size and capacity, and use their developing knowledge of mathematics to solve problems such as pouring their own drinks. Some opportunities for them to learn about mathematics through meaningful everyday activities are missed.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children design and build large constructions from a range of materials, selecting their own resources. They discuss the effects of adding glitter to glue and know how to 'make it stick'. They use the computer and everyday technology such as telephones and calculators with confidence. They talk about their families and home with understanding. However, opportunities to learn about patterns and change in the natural world through activities such as observing the weather each day, are missed.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and imaginatively. They use a wide range of tools and handle large and small items, with co-ordination and control. They are able to ride bicycles, balance and climb in safety. They show an understanding of how their bodies work, and know that fruit is "good for you". They use a range of techniques to shape dough and construct cars from stickle bricks. They develop spatial awareness through activities such as playing in the ball pool or tunnel.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore textures and colours playing with clay or painting pictures on the easel. They experiment with sounds that they can make banging a toy hammer rhythmically on the table. They explore the effects of squeezing dough or the smell of spices and they enjoy using musical instruments and singing songs. They create their own stories and dress up in role play situations, using their imagination to act out their narratives in the carpenter's shop or the camp site.

**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**

- Continue to develop the system for curriculum planning so that plans provide sufficient detail to help staff to make the best use of activities to promote and extend learning in all areas. Show learning objectives for the continuous basic provision that are based on what children already know. Indicate how the activities will be adapted to provide appropriate challenges for more or less able children, as well as for those who speak English as an additional language.
- Continue to develop the system for assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals. Include parents' comments about what their children do outside of pre-school as well as key worker's observations, and use these to identify the next steps to enable children to make progress according to their individual needs. Use the assessments to inform curriculum planning.

*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.*