NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 229126

DfES Number: 530127

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/10/2004
Inspector Name Jan Georgeson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Acre Wood Day Nursery
Setting Address 394-396 Clay Lane
               Birmingham
               West Midlands
               B26 1EU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Hazel Sheppard

This inspection was carried out under the provisions of Section 122 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998
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

Acre Wood Day Nursery opened in 1999. It operates from ground floor rooms of a converted building situated in Yardley and serves the local area.

There are currently 21 children on roll. This includes six funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group opens five days a week all year round apart from Bank Holidays and Christmas. Sessions are from 7:30 until 18:00.

Nine staff work with the children. Over fifty percent of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The nursery holds the Bronze Award.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Acre Wood Day Nursery offers children good quality provision for nursery education and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in mathematical development and physical development and very good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff manage children well; they use sensitive strategies to encourage them to behave appropriately, taking into account their particular needs. They also develop children's awareness of different lifestyles and cultures. Planning has been improved to offer children a generally good range of activities. The new system is easy to understand and use by all staff members and meets the needs of children with different attendance patterns. Staff question children well during activities, encouraging them to think and to demonstrate what they know. The new assessment system is designed to record children's attainments comprehensively, but is not yet effectively implemented and so is not being used to inform planning and guide intervention in activities.

The leadership and management of the playgroup are generally good. The management team helps to ensure that there is a consistent tone throughout the nursery that is accommodating and responsive to the needs of children and their parents. The nursery shows commitment to developing staff's skills and understanding and there are effective procedures to monitor staff performance. However, current use of the assessment system is not successfully monitoring children's progress.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents appreciate the friendly atmosphere and the way the nursery accommodates their and their children's needs. They have good opportunities to become involved in their children's learning by continuing activities at home. There is a good range of both formal and informal opportunities for parents to find out about children's progress and share what they know about their children.

What is being done well?

- Staff interact well with children; they respond sensitively to children's comments to develop their self-confidence, encourage their curiosity and extend their thinking.

- The nursery has developed an effective planning system which ensures good coverage of most of the early learning goals regardless of children's attendance patterns. In addition, staff are responsive to children's interests and dispositions and show flexibility in the way they carry out planned activities.

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- There are a variety of ways for parents to find out about the educational programme, including daily sheets recording children's activities. Parents are also encouraged to take activity bags home which help to support children's progress in communication, language and literacy and physical development.
- Resources are well organised and choices are offered in the course of activities and this helps to develop children's independence.
- The programme for physical development includes frequent well-planned activities to encourage children to learn to move confidently and to develop control in jumping, stepping and balancing.

### What needs to be improved?
- the use of assessments, to monitor children's progress and identify what they need to be working towards next
- checks to ensure that all children have enough opportunities to make progress with climbing and the use of large equipment
- the range and frequency of opportunities for children to develop a firm foundation for understanding of calculation, for example by splitting up a group of objects in different ways and realising that the total remains the same.

### What has improved since the last inspection?
Improvement since the last inspection has been generally good. The nursery has developed the planning system so that it now shows more clearly what children will learn from activities. However, the delay in implementing the assessment system means that staff are not able to use what they have leant from assessments to plan the next steps for children's learning. This aspect will be carried forward as a key issue from this inspection.

The nursery was also asked to extend the parents' brochure to show how the play activities support children's learning, and the brochure now includes a useful timetable for a typical nursery day with some details about activities. "Activities at home" sheets are also helpful in showing parents how activities can contribute to children's learning.

Two aspects of the curriculum were identified for improvement, opportunities for children to listen to a wider range of music and for older children to develop awareness of simple calculation and solving practical problems. Children now enjoy listening and moving to different kinds of music and staff effectively introduce adding on and taking away into activities when the opportunity presents itself. However, this is not supported by enough activities to develop children's understanding of what a total means. This is important if children are to build a firm foundation for their understanding of simple calculation and will be carried forward as an issue from this inspection.

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# SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Judgement:** Very Good  
Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They are enthusiastic, become involved in activities and show perseverance. Children develop good relationships and with support learn to share and take turns. They become familiar with different lifestyles and cultures, using Makaton sign language, a wheelchair and different cooking equipment in their play. Children develop self-confidence and personal independence and can select and use resources by themselves.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

**Judgement:** Very Good  
Children make very good progress in communication, language and literacy. They develop interest in books and enjoy listening to stories, joining in and paying attention to detail in pictures. Children use language well to interact, to ask questions and comment on what they are doing. They use symbols, writing and mark-making to communicate, showing good control with writing tools, and are acquiring the skills and habits which will help them to learn to form letters correctly.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

**Judgement:** Generally Good  
Children make generally good progress in mathematics. They learn to count, recognise numerals and recognise 'how many' in small groups of objects. They are introduced to addition and subtraction in the context of everyday activities but do not have enough opportunities to develop a firm understanding of some of the ideas that underpin totals and calculation. Children develop an interest in shape, size and position by taking part in practical activities to arrange shapes and fit objects together.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

**Judgement:** Very Good  
Children make very good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. They develop a sense of time through work on different topics, such as toys, and in the course of conversations about past events in their families. They learn about features of the environment through trips to different places in the locality and in play with small world toys. Children develop an interest in the world around them and, with prompting, think about why things happen and how things work.

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<th>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<td>Judgement:</td>
<td>Generally Good</td>
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<td>Children make generally good progress in physical development. They learn to use tools to make changes to materials, to draw or write, build and construct. Children learn to control wheeled toys and to make and travel over arrangements of small equipment such as cones and mats. They move with confidence and enthusiasm in both structured PE activities and free play. Opportunities to climb and use large equipment do not occur regularly and this can limit progress in this area for some children.</td>
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<th>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<td>Children make very good progress in creative development. They explore shape and colour and show a confident use of line to represent objects. They also have opportunities to work in three dimensions and mix materials. Children enjoy responding to music by singing, dancing and joining in action rhymes. They are able to use their voices in different ways to take on different characters. They involve other children and develop story lines in their imaginative play with small world equipment.</td>
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Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

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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 assessment system so that it can be used effectively by all staff to record what children can do and identify what they need to do next. In particular, ensure that assessment is used to guide planning so that children make progress along the stepping stones towards using simple calculations and developing confidence with climbing and large equipment.

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.

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