



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 511231

DfES Number: 594763

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	30/06/2003
Inspector Name	Peter Bolton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Early Years Centre
Setting Address	West St Leonards County Primary School Harley Shute Road St Leonards-on-Sea East Sussex TN38 8BX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Betty Smith
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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

West St Leonards Early Years Centre is a sessional group that is run by a management committee and has charitable status. It is set within West St Leonards County Primary School and has been operating since September 1998. Some children attending the group come from as far as Ore on the eastern extremity of Hastings as well as from Bexhill-on-Sea on the west. Most, however, are from the immediate surrounding area and are a representative cross section of the local community.

The group is registered to provide care for twenty four children who are over two years of age and under five. There are currently sixty-eight children on roll, including twenty-eight funded four year olds and twenty-five funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The provision caters for children identified as having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

Three full time and three part time members of staff work with the children. Of these, five have early years qualifications. Two members of staff are currently on training programmes to update their qualification.

The centre opens for two separate sessions each weekday during school term times only. Sessions are from 9.15am to 11.45am and from 12.45pm to 3.15pm. The group has recently successfully completed an accredited quality assurance scheme.

How good is the Day Care?

The Early Years Centre provides good quality care for children.

Children are happy at the group and behave very well. Staff are deployed well and organise a stimulating and interesting programmes of activities to help the children reach their potential in all aspects of their play and learning. They give a high priority to children's safety and have put in place appropriate measures to minimise risks to children and to ensure that the environment both indoors and outdoors is safe and secure.

There is a large selection of toys and equipment to meet the children's needs in a pleasant, well organised and attractive environment. The care of children is positive and interactions between staff and children are of a warm and kind nature. Adults foster good relationships between themselves and the children.

A positive partnership with parents is given a high priority. Parents receive detailed and helpful information about the setting and have worthwhile opportunities to join in with activities and events. The setting provides the necessary opportunities for keeping parents regularly informed of their child's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- The planning of the activities offered and the organisation of the premises. The two rooms are set out with different types of activities in designated areas and effective storage enables children to easily access resources. This results in a stimulating range of activities being offered to the children and ensures an attractive and effective learning environment for children.
- Safety is given a high priority. Positive steps have been taken to minimise hazards within the building and outside area, and to create a safe environment for children.
- The care and support offered to children with special needs allows them to take a full and active part in all that the centre offers.
- Adults maintain caring, positive relationships with children so that they are relaxed and confident. The children arrive eagerly, settle quickly, are independent, and interact well together. They behave very well.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Large group activities, particularly Circle Time and story time are particularly successful, with children keenly involved and very well behaved. Staff manage these large group sessions very well. At Circle Time, the quality of the staff interaction with children significantly enhances children's interest and extends both their knowledge and understanding and their abilities in listening and speaking. At story time, staff divide the children into an older and younger group and this ensures an increased interest and engagement in the stories and rhymes offered.

What needs to be improved?

- the induction programme for new 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
1	produce and implement a formal induction process for new members of staff.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

West St Leonards Early Years Centre provides good quality pre-school education where children enjoy learning through a wide range of interesting activities.

The quality of the teaching is very good and has a positive impact on children's learning. The staff have a good knowledge of the early years curriculum, which enables them to provide well planned, purposeful activities for the children. They work well as a team. Effective teaching supports children's progress towards the early learning goals and ensures that they make good progress in all areas of learning. More attention could be given, however, to ensuring that older and more able children are provided with activities that extend their learning.

Leadership and management are good. Much of the success of the setting is due to a good management system and an effective qualified staff team. Regular meetings ensure a shared understanding of good early years practice and staff appraisal ensures that training needs can be identified and met. The setting has recently undertaken a quality assurance exercise which has enabled management and staff to assess and improve the group's practice.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are well informed about the group, its routines and the curriculum. Good quality written information about all aspects of the provision is made available to parents and there are formal and informal opportunities for staff and parents to discuss children's development and progress.

What is being done well?

- Staff plan stimulating and interesting activities to support children's learning in all areas.
- They work well as a team to ensure that they provide a wide range of activities, good role models for children and a harmonious learning environment.
- The consistent engagement in children's play and conversations by staff ensures that children are confident, sociable and have caring relationships with adults and each other.
- Space and resources are used positively and effectively to support children's development.

What needs to be improved?

- the differentiation within activities to extend the learning opportunities for the older and more able children.

What has improved since the last inspection?
All points for consideration and action arising from the last inspection have been satisfactorily dealt with. A review of planning and recording systems has ensured that staff are both more clear about expected outcomes and more able to meet the needs of individual children. More formal, planned opportunities for staff and parents to discuss children's development and progress also ensure that information contributed by parents is more effectively used.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children relate well to each other and adults and are able to express their needs and ideas confidently. Children develop a positive disposition to learning and are interested and involved in their play. They are confident, happy, relaxed and enjoy their time in the group.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak fluently and confidently, engaging easily in conversation with adults and with each other. They develop reading skills and demonstrate a good awareness of sounds and patterns in words through an enjoyment of books and seeing familiar everyday words around the walls. Regular planned activities develop children's writing and letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have many regular opportunities to count. Many of them can count beyond ten and recognise written numerals beyond nine. Planned activities are used to develop understanding of addition and subtraction. Children learn about shape and size and have opportunities to compare, sort and match objects. They use appropriate mathematical language which extends into all areas of their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have regular planned opportunities to learn about the local environment. They use a range of technical equipment with increasing confidence. They recognise similarities and differences between their own and the culture of others and take a positive interest in finding out about the world around them and beyond. Well organised group and individual activities extend children's opportunities to talk about the past and present.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children take part daily in activities to promote gross and fine motor skills. Their movement, control and coordination is well developed and they demonstrate an awareness of space and of others. They use a range of equipment confidently both indoors and out and staff encourage them to be active. They learn about keeping healthy and are aware of why they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children express their ideas freely through a range of art and craft activities, including collage, printing, painting and model making. They have many opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form. They engage in imaginative role-play scenarios.	
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:

- seek to extend the learning opportunities within topics for the older or more able children.

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.