



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY261001

DfES Number: 522184

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	15/02/2005
Inspector Name	Anita Bartram

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Little Pirates
Setting Address	c/o The Gateway Community College St. Chads Road Tilbury Essex RM18 8LH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Tilbury Home School Link
------	--------------------------

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Tilbury Home School Link
Address	St. Chads Road Tilbury Essex RM18 8LH

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

Little Pirates Neighbourhood Nursery is one of two nurseries run by Thurrock Council Home School Link. It opened in 1998 as sessional care and now operates as a full day care nursery. The nursery is purpose built and is situated on the grounds of Gateway Community College (South Site), at the Tilbury Family Centre in the centre of Tilbury. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 50 weeks of the year. Shorter sessions are available from 09.00 to 11.30 or 12.30 to 15.00. All children share open access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 87 children aged from 0 to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from both the local and wider catchment area. The nursery supports a small number of children with special educational needs, and / or children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 staff. Fifteen of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a further qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Little Pirates Neighbourhood Nursery provides good care for children.

The organisation of the group is thorough and effective. Staff are deployed thoughtfully and key worker groups are productive and worthwhile. Staff ensure a warm and welcoming environment through displays of children's work, posters, notices and well-prepared activities. There is a wide and stimulating range of resources that are sensitively planned to cover all areas of children's learning. All documentation is in place.

Staff provide a secure environment for children. All staff are aware of children's safety. Risk assessments are in place to minimise hazards to children. There are

good working procedures in place on outings. All staff have current first aid certificates and one designated member of staff in each room has received more thorough training. Children are able to try a variety of nutritious and healthy foods at snack and mealtimes. Staff use these times effectively to extend the children's language and independence skills. A healthy choice of drinks are not always readily available to children at meal times. All staff are securely aware of their child protection responsibilities and effective procedures are followed.

Staff provide a very caring environment where children's individual needs are considered well. Staff follow excellent working practices to meet the specific needs of children with special educational needs. There is a valuable and comprehensive range of resources to promote positive images of diversity to children. Children play purposefully and co-operatively. Children's behaviour is very good, they appreciate right from wrong and staff have a sound understanding of the reasons behind children's unwanted behaviour.

Staff are readily available to speak with parents at either end of the day. Parents are welcomed into the group at any time. Staff strive to work in partnership with parents to achieve consistent care for all children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to ensure that all persons, looking after children are suitable to do so. All checks have now been completed on all staff. A named deputy has been appointed. The pond in the garden is safe and staff continue to supervise children within the particular enclosed outside area.

What is being done well?

- Partnership with parents is outstanding. The aims and philosophy of the group is to support children and families and this is done very effectively by all staff and management. Parents have a high involvement in the group.
- Resources are of high quality and in plentiful supply. Staff use resources creatively to stimulate children's participation. As a result, children are busy and productive in their play, making full use of their environment and the experiences on offer.
- The atmosphere in the group is very warm and welcoming. Staff are available to welcome children and parents onto the premises. The bright and stimulating décor and wall displays provide an inviting environment for the children to feel comfortable and at ease in the group.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on successfully meeting all children's individual needs. Consequently, the support for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language is substantial and constructive. Staff observe children's needs and work in partnership with parents and other agencies to provide experiences and activities to help children develop and achieve.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Staff have a very thorough understanding of managing children's unwanted or challenging behaviour. The manager is particularly instrumental in leading staff practice and is an effective role model in helping staff consistency. Strategies used are based upon observations of the child and discussion with all adults involved. Positive methods are used and staff are consistent and confident in applying boundaries of behaviour. Children are very aware of expectations and respond well to the calm and secure environment created by the staff.

What needs to be improved?

- the accessibility of healthy drinks available to children at snack and mealtimes.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report

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
8	Review the accessibility of healthy drinks at snack and mealtimes.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Provision for nursery education at Little Pirates Neighbourhood Nursery is of high quality. It enables children to make very good progress in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is excellent. The curriculum is planned thoroughly and is firmly based upon staff assessment of children's stages of learning in the foundation stage. This enables all children's learning to be extended or supported according to their age or stage of development. Staff interact skillfully with the children. They ask open-ended questions, extending children during activities to move them onto the next steps in their learning. The calm and consistent atmosphere in the group provides a secure and stable environment in which children feel secure and able to take safe risks.

The free-flow organisation of the nursery is successful and effective. This positively encourages children's skills, knowledge and aptitudes needed to reach the early learning goals at the end of the foundation stage. Children are to make full use of the outdoor environment and are developing excellent independence and responsibility for their own actions.

The leadership and management of the nursery is thorough and comprehensive. The nursery manager is a skilled practitioner who is knowledgeable in the foundation stage and effective childcare practice. All staff are committed to their ongoing professional development and this is actively encouraged and monitored by senior staff. As a result, children are provided with valuable and long-lasting care and learning experiences.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. A wealth of information is provided about both the nursery as a whole or of the day to day activities in the group. Staff keep parents informed both verbally and through written reports of children's progress and achievements. Parents are given ideas to help their children at home and staff welcome suggestions and input from parents.

What is being done well?

- Assessment of children's progress and achievements is comprehensive and relates well to the stepping stones. The information gained through assessment is meaningfully used to inform future activities for the children to help them move to the next step in their learning. Curriculum planning is outstanding and ensures that children's experiences are broad and purposeful.
- Staff interaction with the children is professional and of high quality. All staff are aware of different children's stage of learning and seize opportunities to extend different children's learning. There is a strong sense of mutual respect between staff and children.

- Children take great enjoyment from books. Children help themselves to books during free-play time, sitting quietly alone looking at pictures or re-telling the story using the pictures to guide them. Many children have favourite stories and confidently request them from staff or comment on characters or outcomes in the story.
- Staff have fully embraced the principles of the foundation stage and operate a free-flow system where older children can move between indoors and outside readily. This gives children opportunities to explore the wider world and learn in a more open environment more suited to their personality or learning style. A wide sample of the curriculum is provided in the garden so that children who make considerable use of outside are still experiencing a wide range of learning opportunities.
- Due to the child-centred ethos of the nursery, children are becoming very independent and organised in their play. Children decide what they are going to do, gather necessary equipment or tools and complete their task to the end. For example, the wide availability of different creative materials encourages children to plan, organise and complete activities. Children competently put on their own coats to go outside, take themselves to the toilet, or initiate games purposefully.

What needs to be improved?

- the grouping at storytime of younger three-year-old children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the three key issues identified at the previous inspection, resulting in valuable improvements being made to the educational programme.

Planning is now thoroughly based upon the foundation stage curriculum guidance, addressing all six areas of learning and helping children to successfully progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff are aware of using everyday objects and experiences to develop children's appreciation of adding and subtracting. Children were keen to see the large bowl of unusual fruit staff placed on the table. Staff used sensitive questioning to stimulate more-able children's use of mathematical language for taking one away and adding one on. Younger children were supported in counting purposefully or describing the similarities and differences.

All children's listening skills are developing very well. Stories are mostly provided by staff on a one to one basis or in small, incidental groups. Expectations of younger children to sit within large groups to hear stories are sometimes misguided.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff and children have warm and respectful relationships. Staff interact confidently with the children and consequently children respond eagerly to everything around them. Behavioural boundaries are consistently applied by staff. As a result, children have high levels of self-control and can organise their play and subsequent learning in a purposeful and calm manner. The excellent organisation of the setting enables children to be independent and develop excellent self-care skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a great enjoyment of books. Opportunities for children to practice early writing skills are purposeful and meaningful. A vast choice of mediums are provided for children to draw, write, paint or chalk. Consequently, children's early writing skills are developing soundly. Many children use speech and language confidently and for a wide variety of purposes. More-able children use verbal strategies to resolve disputes or talk about their feelings or thoughts.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy counting. Younger children keenly try, joining in with rote counting to ten. More-able children confidently count, and calculate simple number problems by adding one more. Children have valuable opportunities to explore shape and measure through meaningful and everyday activities. They comment on similarities and spot shapes around them, such as square windows. Many children ably describe their journey to the group, referring to landmarks and directions to show their route.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have an excellent understanding of ICT. They deftly use computer software and make meaningful use of mobile phones, cameras and binoculars in play. Children eagerly explore their immediate and wider environment. They move freely around the nursery, using both inside and out. This enables children to learn through experiences well suited to their age, personality and stage of learning. Children confidently discuss opinions and show respect for each other's similarities and differences.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children's use of tools is outstanding. The accessibility of resources such as scissors, hole-punchers and rulers enable children to manipulate a variety of materials. The valuable use of outside, and different level play areas inside enable children to practice and refine skills in climbing, balancing and moving around. Children have a good appreciation of their bodies and keeping healthy. Staff encourage children to eat healthy foods and explain the importance of washing hands.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children thoroughly enjoy action rhymes. They delight in jumping, skipping and hopping to familiar songs and some children move rhythmically to music. Children make full use of imaginative games both inside and out. They use props to act out familiar scenes from home or turn buckets into treasure boxes to hide objects they have collected in the garden. The ready accessibility of resources gives children ample opportunities to use all their senses to investigate different textures and colours.

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 significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- the use of the large, whole group story time for younger three year olds, so that staff can more effectively accommodate different children's level of understanding and concentration.

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.