



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 304957

DfES Number: 521128

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/11/2004
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Ashdene Independent Pre School
Setting Address Ashdene Pre School
Thoresway Road
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 6LJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ashdene Independent Pre-School 519992

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Ashdene Independent Pre-School
Address Thoresway Road
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 6LJ

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

Ashdene Independent Pre-/school opened in 1987. It operates from a large mobile building in the grounds of Ashdene Primary School. There are three rooms, two of which are currently in use whilst the third room is undergoing refurbishment. It is situated in the suburban area of Wilmslow in Cheshire and serves the local community. Most of the children attending the pre-school will go on to attend Ashdene Primary School.

There are currently 68 children on roll aged between two years six months and four. This includes 32 funded three year olds. Currently no children have special educational needs and none use English as an additional language, although such children have attended in the past.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.00 until 11.50 with younger children attending the afternoon sessions between 13.00 and 15.10.

Eight full and part-time staff work with the children. All the supervisors have the Diploma in Pre-school Practice, and one holds a teaching qualification. The pre-school receives support from a teacher from Cheshire's Sure Start/Early Years Team.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Ashdene Independent Pre-school provides very good quality nursery education which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Effective plans indicate staff's good understanding of the early learning goals. They know the children well and ensure that challenges are presented at an appropriate level. Detailed plans show how children will progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff are kind, friendly and consistently use positive strategies to manage children's behaviour. Staff work well together to organise an attractive environment making good use of resources to promote learning. Time is managed well overall but children have less time to use the popular outdoor play area. The assessment of children's progress and achievement is based on careful and regular observations. Staff use this information to plan for children's future learning.

The leadership and management are very good. The committee is actively involved in the management of the pre-school. Staff are responsible for the day-to-day management. This works well. Staff share the responsibility for leading sessions which ensures the effective use of skills. The clear plans to ensure continuing improvements to provision are reviewed regularly. Although one member of staff has responsibility for planning this is viewed as a shared process.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents play an active role in the management of the pre-school. An attractive brochure ensures they are well-informed about the setting. This information is supplemented by displays, photographs and notices to help parents make clear associations between play and learning. Regular feedback about children's progress is provided by the friendly and approachable staff team. Parents' evenings and open events provide more formal opportunities for staff and parents to share information about the children.

What is being done well?

- Staff prioritise the planning of children's creative activities. The careful management of these activities is effective in promoting other areas of learning and skill development. As a consequence children are learning more about numbers and the world around them.
- Children have many chances to develop their fine hand skills. Staff plan for this development through providing interesting and exciting play activities such as construction play, art and craft, and threading activities. These activities are carefully graded to meet children's individual needs.
- Children's early attempts at reading are valued and encouraged. Children use books well in a range of ways. Books support their understanding and inspire

their investigations of the natural and made world. Children routinely take books home to share with their families.

- Parents play a very active role in the management of the pre-school. Their contributions of time and expertise are welcomed by staff. The fund raising events have contributed positively to the provision of an attractive and well-equipped learning environment.
- Attractive and well-presented resources are used effectively to create an interesting and stimulating environment where children can learn through well-organised play activities. Staff present materials imaginatively and ensure that children have access to other equipment to develop their own ideas as they use small world toys with construction sets.

What needs to be improved?

- Opportunities for children to use the full range of art and craft materials to freely express their own ideas imaginatively.
- Children's access to, and use of the outdoor play area.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have devised a system for monitoring planning to ensure that all the early learning goals are included over time.

Plans are now more detailed. Long term plans show clearly how activities will be used to develop themes and promote learning across all six areas. Medium and short term plans indicate how the stepping stones towards the early learning goals will be met. Plans are evaluated and this information is used to influence future plans. The plans also include opportunities for assessment which ensures that all children's needs are met. However plans still do not indicate how children can make free and imaginative use of the full range of materials available to them.

This has contributed positively to all staff's understanding of the early learning goals and has actively involved them in the planning process. This has had a positive effect on both teaching and learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children attend the pre-school willingly and talk to staff excitedly about their recent experiences. They are confident and self-assured as they play well together in the sand. They share toys willingly as they play outdoors and happily wait their turn to use their favourite toys. They can choose freely from the good range of activities on offer. They are willing helpers at tidy up times and serve snacks and drinks to their friends. Children are well-behaved and show care and concern for others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak confidently to each other and with adults. They listen carefully to stories and like sharing their news at circle time. Children enjoy stories and use books with care and interest. They also understand that books are a useful source of information. Early reading skills are developing well. Most children can recognise their name and several make good attempts at writing. Children enjoy using the well-equipped writing area. Good emphasis is placed on early writing and mark making.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's number skills are well-promoted through planned activities, routines and spontaneous play. Good emphasis is placed on numbers one to five. The number interest table actively involves children in their own learning. Through songs and rhymes they develop ideas of one more and one less. Creative activities and construction play help develop their understanding of shape, size and quantity. They create their own mathematical patterns using materials such as threading shapes and peg boards.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good opportunities to learn about the environment by observing and investigating natural materials. They learn about the wider world through use of the computer and books about other people and places. Themes are used well to support this type of learning. They use good quality construction sets with skill but have fewer chances to use recycled materials to design and build three dimensional models. They celebrate festivals representing their own culture as well as those of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use space indoors and outside with confidence. They negotiate large climbing equipment with increasing skill. By using the varied range of wheeled toys they learn to steer carefully, balance and use pedals. They line up sensibly respecting each others' space. They are learning about their bodies and healthy eating in ways that hold meaning for them. They are skilled tool users. They enjoy using the good range of materials to draw, write and paint, showing good levels of competence.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have many chances to use a good range of creative media to explore colour, texture and form. Children sing tunefully as they play and they have a developing repertoire of songs. Their imaginative play is well supported by attractively presented resources. They act out their own scenarios using small world toys and act out familiar roles in the home area. Planned creative activities that have predetermined outcomes are less successful in fostering children's free expression of ideas.

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 improve the following:
- The provision of art and craft materials to ensure that children have full access to the whole range for their free and imaginative use to express their own ideas;
- Children's access to the outdoor play area throughout the day.

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.