



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 126962

DfES Number: 517326

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 06/07/2004
Inspector Name Shona Henderson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Acorns Day Nursery
Setting Address Bradbourne Park Road
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 3LB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Company Child Care Ltd 02221184

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Company Child Care Ltd
Address 9 Reynolds Road
Hove
East Sussex
BN3 5RJ

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

The Nursery is managed by Company Child Care Ltd. who established the group at the request of Sevenoaks Council and provide a proportion of places for employees of the council.

The nursery is in a single storey building on the site of a Primary School and is open Monday to Fridays, from 08:00 until 18:00 term time only.

The nursery offers places to children in receipt of nursery education funding and accepts children from several nearby villages, feeding on to a variety of Primary schools.

No children with special education needs or English as an additional language attend at present although they have previously.

There are 54 children registered at present who are aged between six months and four years old.

There are eleven members of staff working with the children.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Acorns Day Nursery provides high quality nursery education which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Children are happy, enthusiastic and well supported by caring, knowledgeable staff. The friendly, reassuring approaches used by all staff reinforces the setting's philosophy, as laid out in the parents' handbook. Appropriate grouping of children ensures that they are all able to access learning at their own stage of learning. Staff offer and children respond well to opportunities to reach their full potential. Children receive good support in their learning from positive staff interaction and staff's secure knowledge of the early learning goals and stepping stones. The balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities is appropriate. Communication, language and literacy is a priority and learning in this area is very effective. Children enjoy mathematical exploration and respond with confidence although opportunities in some aspects are insufficient to challenge all children. They are developing an understanding of mathematical language. Effective procedures and policies are in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and those who use English as an additional language.

The leadership and management are very good. The manager fully understands the Foundation Stage framework. She and her staff regularly attend training and the teamwork is effective. Staff do not record their observations of the children's progress on a regular basis so some opportunities to use this information to inform planning are missed.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are well informed of nursery procedures, events, and their child's progress. They receive very good information about the early learning goals, which enables them to be involved in their child's learning, and they are invited to contribute to their child's education.

What is being done well?

- Children are welcomed into a very caring and reassuring atmosphere. Settling-in procedures are effective.
- There is a strong partnership with parents. They say they have confidence in the provision and feel involved with their child's early education.
- Children behave well and show an enthusiasm and joy in learning.
- Children are making very good progress in language; they communicate confidently and listen keenly to stories. They are building effective skills in early reading and writing activities.
- Children engage fully in music activities and learn well.

- Staff knowledge of the early learning goals is good and there is effective management of the setting.
- Staff work hard to ensure all children are included and have access to a wide range of well resourced and interesting activities.

What needs to be improved?

- planned opportunities for all children to use mathematical language in everyday tasks, linked to pattern, shape and space, addition and subtraction;
- the method of gathering information on children's learning, and recording in a streamlined and informative way.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection, improvement has been very good. Children now use a range of equipment that effectively supports early writing activities and mark-making. For example, a 'post office' area offers opportunities for children to write envelopes, cards and letters. Children are also encouraged to follow-up some activities by recording words and captions. They learn appropriate skills to develop their writing at an individual level. For example, after using mirrors to study reflections, some children wrote 'This is me.', others copied over dots to record the words and some simply described their work.

In mathematics, children now learn to recognise and record numbers and are using this knowledge to show their understanding of counting.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and caring of each other. They are confident and know their routine well. They share well and are able to take turns with equipment. The four-year-olds can be regularly spotted helping out and including the younger children in their play. Children use the resources in the nursery well and show an interest in a wide range of items that support topics. There was much enjoyment when they made Divali candles and listened to Indian music whilst dancing in costumes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children settle well at story time and listen with interest. They add their comments and ideas when invited, and show their enjoyment. Children have made many labels for objects around the room and are able to identify and say the initial letter of several words. They enjoy listening for rhyme and are able to make-up nonsense words. They have participated successfully in a programme that supports physical development and develops skills linked to handwriting.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to count objects with confidence and know about number order. They represent numbers through grouping and drawings, and some can form numerals correctly. Children count items and acknowledge 'how many altogether' as in their lining up routine. Children explore some mathematical language linked to addition and subtraction problem-solving, pattern, space and shape, however there is a minor weakness through limited opportunities to develop this learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's interest in the environment is good and they recall many experiences. They enjoyed a trip to a zoo and gave details of the journey and animals they saw. They make good use of the immediate environment, demonstrating a questioning approach. They use technological equipment with confidence and enjoyment, and small tools safely and imaginatively in design. Parents support the setting by sending in objects that link to topic work, especially of family celebrations and customs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make good use of the setting's resources, playing confidently on the outdoor climbing and balancing equipment. They use the bats and balls capably and older children are caring and inclusive of younger ones. There is good interaction between physical and creative development and children use craft equipment with independence and imagination. They know about keeping themselves healthy and drinking water is available. They understand about eating nutritious food and about sun protection.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

All children engage happily in a wide range of creative activities. They benefit from outstanding teaching of music, and their awareness and enjoyment is evident in their developing skills. They are able to engage in many art and craft activities and investigate a range of media with independence. They enjoyed the chance to paint with a brush between their toes. They refer to the displays around the nursery, which show a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led work.

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 key issues but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- create more opportunities for children to learn and use mathematical language in everyday situations and to problem-solve using practical activities;
- ensure staff make regular observations of each child's progress, to record these findings in the existing Individual Record booklet and to use the information to guide future plans.

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.