



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY242708

DfES Number: 546236

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	09/12/2004
Inspector Name	Susan Tuffnell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Footsteps Pre-School
Setting Address	Great Dell Scout Hut Great Dell Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL8 7HX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Footsteps Pre-Nursery 1053874
------	--

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Footsteps Pre-Nursery
Address	Great Dell Scout Hut Great Dell Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL8 7HX

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

Footsteps Pre-Nursery opened in August 2002. It operates from the main room at the Great Dell Scout Hut, Templewood in Welwyn.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-nursery at any one time. The group is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 09:15 to 11:45, term time only.

There are currently 9 children on roll between 2 and under 5 years. Of these 7 children receive funding for nursery education and 1 child is supported for special educational needs.

Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are no children attending who have English as an additional language.

The pre-nursery employs 3 staff, only the manager holds an appropriate early years qualification.

The group has input from a qualified teacher.

How good is the Day Care?

Footsteps Pre-Nursery provides good care for children.

The premises are welcoming and spacious with designated areas for different activities. There is a comprehensive operational plan and well organised use of space and resources. Staff are knowledgeable and experienced in childcare and are working towards gaining the required qualifications. There is a good variety of toys and equipment giving a broad range of stimulating, exciting and challenging activities. Play materials are readily accessible giving children opportunities to make decisions and organise their own play.

Staff are proactive in planning activities that give children experience of the wider world and there is an excellent range of resources available that reflect positive

images of culture, ethnicity and gender. There are satisfactory procedures in place that promote children's health and welfare with effective guidelines in place for staff and parents. Attention to safety is effective with regular risk assessments and health and safety procedures are in place but more detailed recording of fire drills is necessary.

Staff have a sensitive and caring approach to special needs and endeavour to provide a suitable environment and appropriate care when required.

Partnership with parents is very good with regular exchange of information and parents have access to a range of written policies and procedures. There are appropriate and consistent behaviour management strategies and children's good behaviour is encouraged by staff with effective and skilful management, however the policy does not contain a statement on bullying.

Documentation is of high quality and covers policies and procedures which result in the efficient and safe management of the provision.

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

What is being done well?

- The operational plan is comprehensive and covers all aspects of the day to day running of the group. There are impressive procedures in place that ensure staff and parents are fully informed of updated information, policy guidelines, meetings and action plans.
- Children have good access to a variety of play materials, toys and equipment. There is an attractive and bright home corner suitable for a number of children to play together. The children take roles, i.e. mummy, daddy, policeman and organise their own play i.e. cooking, cleaning the house and going to "work".
- The children enjoy stimulating and challenging activities i.e. musical instruments were used to create loud and quiet sounds, physical play equipment allowed the children to practise skills such as the balance beams and they had opportunities to use a good variety of materials to create imaginative collages and pictures.

What needs to be improved?

- staff qualifications
- documentation with regard to the fire drill log book and the behaviour management policy

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
2	develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare
14	review the behaviour management policy to include a statement on bullying meet any recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer (in this case a Fire Log Book)

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Footsteps Pre-Nursery is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the early learning goals. Staff are good role models and encourage and support children's learning. They use effective strategies to challenge children's understanding and knowledge and plan the next stage of their development. Activities are planned that cover all areas of learning but there are weaknesses in the implementation of the short term plans that directly influence opportunities for children to access practical activities and complete tasks. Children respond well to boundaries and benefit from opportunities to initiate and choose activities.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a strong manager and committed staff team. The group have clear and effective procedures in place to monitor performance and evaluate the provision with regular staff meetings and action plans. Visits from the early years teacher are welcomed and teaching strategies are implemented and evaluated. Supervision of staff is carried out regularly and training opportunities are available.

Partnership with parents is very good. Information given to parents is excellent with descriptive assessments of children's stage of learning and clear opportunities for parents to extend some activities at home. Further positive links with home are encouraged through parental involvement in open evenings, staff meetings and participation in topics and themes.

Parents have access to high quality written and verbal information which includes a good range of policies and procedures, newsletters and parents information pack.

What is being done well?

- Children express themselves freely in the home corner and in role play situations. They play in small groups and create "real life" situations i.e. a child was toasting "bread", she put the slice in the toaster and waited, after a short while she said "pop" and shouted to the others "the toast is ready".
- Children explore language and are interested in sounds i.e. a child helping to clean the tables found a mark, "that's permanent" said the staff member. The child repeated this new word many times to herself.
- Children are expressing feelings about significant personal experiences i.e. a child discusses bonfire night with staff "I went to England to see lots of fireworks", and then quietly said "I saw Jesus", forming a link with the Nativity.

- Children respond well to instructions, they play games that require them to be very quiet and still i.e. in "sleeping bunnies" the children timed the action of jumping up perfectly and musical instruments were played quietly and noisily in time with songs.

What needs to be improved?

- implementation of short term plans
- access to practical activities in maths, ICT and writing skills
- children's awareness of safety in physical activities
- children's understanding of sharing and taking turns

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children are forming good relationships and have a developing awareness of their own needs and the needs of others. Children participate in activities that interest them, as part of a team, in small groups or one to one. However some are possessive with toys and find sharing difficult. Children show a good level of confidence and personal independence in self-initiated activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children use language to express ideas and feelings and extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sound of words. Children recognise familiar and favourite books and are handling books correctly. They enjoy rhyming songs and are able to remember and sing repeated verses. Children understand that print carries meaning. However, regular opportunities for children to practise writing skills are limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children show interest in numbers and counting. They enjoy joining in with number rhymes and songs and use simple mathematical language in play that indicates size and shape. Children have emerging skills when calculating and playing with shapes. However, they do not have regular access to sufficient practical maths activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children explore objects and show interest in why things happen and how they work. They are making connections with past experiences and are able to express feelings about significant personal experiences. Children have opportunities to find out about the wider world through topics and are beginning to understand their own culture and those of other people. Access to ICT is limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children have opportunities to develop physical skills and body control. They engage in activities that involve concentration and hand-eye coordination. Children show a sense of space and an awareness of themselves and others. They use a range of large and small equipment confidently. However, they do not show much awareness of personal or group safety.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children are imaginative and creative using a variety of different materials and textures. They are encouraged to explore colour and shape in 2 and 3 dimensions and have access to a range of construction activities. Children join in enthusiastically with action songs and respond well to sound with body movements and the use of musical instruments.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

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

- review the implementation of short term plans and the impact on learning intentions
- enable children to access regular practical activities in maths, ICT and writing skills
- encourage children to have an awareness of personal and group safety in physical activities
- and an understanding of social skills in sharing and taking turns

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.