



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 123649

DfES Number: 546110

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 13/09/2004
Inspector Name Karen Molloy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Old London Road Pre-School
Setting Address 4th St Albans Scout Hut
Riverside Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 1ST

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Old London Road Pre-School 1082051

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Old London Road Pre-School
Address 4th St Albans Scout Hut
Riverside Road
St. Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 1ST

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

Old London Road Pre-School opened in 1999. It is run by a management committee of parents and friends of the pre-school and operates from a scout building, close to the city centre of St Albans, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local community. They have use of two main rooms, a kitchen and toilet facilities. An enclosed garden is available for outside play.

There are currently 36 children from 2 years to under 5 years on roll. This includes 18 funded three year olds and 1 funded four year old. The setting can support children who have special needs or who have English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Fridays, term time only. Sessions are from 09:15-11:45 and 12:30-15:00. A lunch club is also available from 11:45-13:00.

There are currently eleven members of staff in total, of whom 6 have early years qualifications. All staff have completed first aid training. Additional staff are employed to escort children from a local school for the lunch club.

The pre-school are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and are working towards the Hertfordshire Quality Standards (HQS) kite mark.

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 Old London Road Pre-School is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in five areas of learning and very good progress in physical development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have good relationships with the children. They plan a variety of practical activities and children receive a balanced education programme. The staff team are becoming more familiar with the stepping stones and recently had outside support to assist them in planning for the Foundation Stage. The setting needs to develop the planning and assessment further to ensure appropriate challenges are maintained for all the children and to ensure a system is shared and understood by all staff. Staff record short observations to assess children's learning and collate these alongside photographs and home information.

The setting work with parents to support any child with special needs or a child who has English as an additional language.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. The supervisor has organised a mentoring system where a qualified member works alongside an unqualified staff member to develop their knowledge and understanding. She is an enthusiastic 'hands on' leader and aims to maintain an interested and motivated staff team. She has identified the need to delegate some responsibilities and to ensure effective communication within the team. Ongoing training and development is encouraged both in-house and externally. The setting intends to undertake the Hertfordshire Quality Standards award.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents/carers are actively encouraged to be involved in the group. They are encouraged to share information about their child and feedback is positive. However, there is limited information about the Foundation Stage and organised opportunities for parents to discuss children's progress/share records.

What is being done well?

- Staff interact very positively with the children and have established secure relationships with them. They listen and support them, acknowledge their comments and ask questions to develop their thinking. Consequently, children are happy, settled and confident in their approach to the adults. 'Person of the Week' provides an opportunity to develop children's self esteem further.
- Opportunities for mark making are available and encouraged. Tall pieces of paper encourage children to practise up and down strokes, paper and pens in

the 'office' area enable children to take messages and a child is supported in making a tea/coffee list for the adults.

- Children's physical development is supported well. They are provided with a range of equipment and activities to promote this area both indoors and outside. Activities include using the small trampoline, action songs, hoops and wheeled toys. Indoors, children demonstrate increasing control in using pens and pencils and explore malleable materials by patting, squeezing and rolling them.
- Staff work in partnership with parents, who are encouraged to share what they know about their child. 'Home information' is gathered prior to children starting at the group and this gives staff an insight into the child's individual needs. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved and do help out during sessions. Feedback from parents is positive.

What needs to be improved?

- a system for planning and assessment that is clearly understood by all staff and ensures that children's assessments inform future planning
- information shared with parents/carers with regard to the Foundation Stage and children's progress
- the systems for communicating and sharing information effectively with staff and the organisation of staff responsibilities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This is the settings first inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are happy and settled in the group. They are able to leave their parent/carer with confidence and explore their environment. Children are interested and many are able to sit and listen well during large/small group times. Children are beginning to form good relationships with each other, calling on a friend to hide with and show care and concern, for example, asking another child 'are you tired?' However, opportunities to develop a sense of community are more limited.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to listen to stories with enjoyment and respond appropriately to simple instructions/questions. Older children are able to accurately predict what will happen next in the story and would benefit from further challenges to develop language for thinking. Children are able, with support, to find their name card and put it onto 'Elmer'. Children have the opportunity to mark make and confidently 'write' messages at the office.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show an interest in shape and space by playing and arranging 3D foam shapes into towers and buildings. Adults introduce and use some positional language as Teddy looks for the boot, looking 'under' and 'over' and children recognise when the adults foot is 'too big'. Although resources are available, there are limited opportunities for children to compare two groups of objects. Scales, tape measures and dominoes are used to introduce concepts of weight, measure and number recognition.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show curiosity and interest; an older child spends time exploring a large egg timer, and is able to explain what it is and how it works, although opportunities to explore and investigate are limited. The road safety theme introduces safety and the role of the lollipop person. Children use bricks to build, experimenting with different shapes to find out what will/will not balance. They are beginning to differentiate between past and present by bringing in/discussing past photographs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move and run freely outdoors, making use of the available space. They can negotiate a pathway when walking, running or pushing a buggy. Children confidently climb onto a low wall, walk along it and jump down. They move their body to attempt to keep hoops spinning around their waist. Children can manoeuvre cars around a track indoors and take part in active songs and movement session. Children are beginning to use pens/pencils with increasing skill and control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use their imagination in many different ways. A home corner area encourages role play and children spend time ironing, making tea and talking on the telephone. They use opportunities to explore different media and materials, through painting, using glue and play dough. Children join in favourite rhymes and action songs such as 'Miss Polly' and 'sleeping bunnies'. They are beginning to use small world play to express and communicate ideas and would benefit from further opportunities.

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

- develop planning and assessment to ensure assessment of children's development informs future planning and is clearly understood by all staff
- develop information shared with parents about the Foundation Stage and establish informal/formal opportunities to discuss children's progress and share records of their learning
- establish effective systems for communicating with staff and review how responsibilities are shared with the group.

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.