



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 133112

DfES Number: 520353

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/05/2004
Inspector Name Beryl Baggs

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name YMCA Day Nursery
Setting Address International House, Broad Street Place
Bath
Avon
BA1 5LH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The City of Bath YMCA

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The City of Bath YMCA
Address International House
Broad Street Place
Bath
Avon
BA1 5LH

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

YMCA Day Nursery is sited within the Bath YMCA building and is registered for full day care for a maximum of 20 children under the age of 5 years, with a maximum of six children aged between 18 months and two years.

Sessions are from 08.30 to 17.30, Monday to Friday all year round, excluding Bank holidays and certain days between Christmas and New Year. There are different sessions available throughout the day. It serves families from the city and those coming to work in Bath.

The nursery has sole use of its self contained rooms and uses the gym hall within the building for physical play sessions. Meals and food are provided by the on-site restaurant kitchen. There is an enclosed outside play space with paved and safety surfaces of which the nursery has sole use.

There are 45 children on roll of whom 13 three-year-olds and seven four-year-olds receive nursery education grant. The setting supports children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

There are six staff and a manager all of whom are qualified or working towards a level three qualification in childcare and education. The nursery is supported by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff hold books so children can see and give children time to think. Children are challenged using the programmable toy 'roamer' and in pre-school games. Support to children with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language is good, using some of a child's home language in the nursery to provide links with English. Behaviour is well managed with staff understanding why children behave poorly. The limited planning and staff understanding of all the learning potential of an activity restricts children's learning such as counting, phonics and general knowledge when the main focus of the activity is physical development. Some activities are not prepared well, such as painting a cow and dairy tasting, with no link through story or information at whole group time. Although staff are usually very involved in play, this was not consistent during the nursery day.

Leadership and management is generally good. They have worked well to develop an outside play area, and to encourage training and development in all staff. They have identified that improvement is needed to make the literacy area more inviting, to develop a writing area and clarify the role of the special needs co-ordinator. The deputy is aware of some of the weaknesses in activities and is working to increase the skills of staff in this area, but planning is not currently monitored.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with good information about the nursery. The early learning goals and policies are included in the brochure and displays show children's work. Rotas have been devised to ensure parents meet all staff during the week. Parents have free access to the comments books and can add their own remarks. Parents are not informed in advance of topics or activities and do not have access to displays showing what children learn from play.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy, excited, curious and eager to learn.
- Physical play is planned everyday.
- Individual support to children with special educational needs or who use English as an additional language is effective.
- The display of examples of children's work each day informs parents about children's activities.
- Children talk to each other about what they are doing, have good opportunities to explore and investigate and use their senses.

What needs to be improved?

- staff understanding of all the learning potential from children's activities, ensuring the full range is identified and promoted in children's play, and consistency of staff involvement in children's play at all times, ensuring the adult role is clear from the plans
- the literacy area to make it more attractive to children, encourage them to choose books independently, considering writing resources and adult involvement
- the monitoring of planning before putting it into practice to ensure all learning potential is identified and staff are confident in their role
- the parents involvement in children's learning to help them understand what children learn through play
- the clarification of the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection is generally good. The last inspection was in June 2000 and two points for development were raised:

Continue to develop manageable planning systems. Include details of how activities will be modified for children who learn more quickly or slowly.

Planning has been delegated to prevent this becoming unmanageable for the deputy. Planning sheets now include extension or support ideas for more and less able children but putting this into practice is not consistent across all staff.

Ensure that there are more planned opportunities for children to investigate, explore and question why things happen and how things work.

Children explore a wide range of objects and materials including sand, water, life cycles of frogs and butterflies and watch beans growing into plants. They observe worms in an accessible wormery. Staff talk to children and encourage their questions about what they see and feel. Knowledge and Understanding of the World has been judged as very good at this inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested and eager to learn. They speak in a familiar group and sit quietly when appropriate. They are aware of their own needs and ask for help from adults. They form good relationships. They behave well and are learning right from wrong. They see from the books and play materials the needs of different people. Although children can select jigsaws and choose what to play with, opportunities were limited for children to develop independent skills, for example, during snack time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk well in conversation, ask questions and describe what they are doing. They listen to stories well and use books at planned times in the session. Children learn the sounds of letters at the beginning of their names. They write their names on their work and learn the shape of letters. The book corner is not welcoming or comfortable to use. The range of books does not include factual ones. There are no writing materials in the role play area for children to use in their play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count objects well, using one-to-one correspondence. They recognise numbers and use them in their play when programming the 'roamer'. Children play number games including one which includes symbols for addition and subtraction. More able children add numbers together. Children enjoy jigsaws and have many opportunities to sequence pictures and patterns. They use shape to make models and pictures. Their opportunities to count and compare numbers in everyday routines are limited.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore a variety of materials including sand, water, dough, and smelling fruit. They consider changes over time in the life cycle of frogs and caterpillars, and leaves in the autumn. They design and build with duplo, mobilo and junk. Children develop a sense of time talking about changes to them since babyhood and previous events in their lives. They learn about where they live and people who help them. They learn about important special occasions in their own and others' lives.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move with confidence, climbing, jumping, and running. They generally space out well in circle time. They learn about healthy living and know to wash their hands before snacks and meals. They use tools and equipment with growing skill; pencils, paint brushes and tyres. Children are not developing a sense of safety during large physical play in the gym due to lack of adult involvement.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore colour and texture in their art and craft, junk modelling, and mixing paints. They have opportunities to listen to music and match movements to what they hear. They use their imagination well in small world toys. They respond clearly to what they smell and see and show delight in what they achieve. Children did not sing during the inspection.

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

- improve staff understanding of all the learning potential from children's activities, ensuring the full range is identified and promoted in children's play. Develop consistency of staff involvement in children's play at all times, ensuring the adult role is clear from the plans
- improve the literacy area to make it more attractive to children to encourage them to choose books independently, considering writing resources and adult involvement
- monitor the planning before it is put into practice to ensure all learning potential is identified and staff are confident in their role
- develop parents involvement in children's learning to help them understand what children learn through play

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.