



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109310

DfES Number: 524289

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 22/03/2004
Inspector Name Sue Taylor

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Roadend Farm Nursery
Setting Address Roadend Farm Nursery School
Udimore
Rye
East Sussex
TN31 6BY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Louise Mair

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

Roadend Farm Nursery School opened in 1988. It operates from two converted barns within the farm itself and has the use of an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves a number of surrounding villages and nearby towns.

There are currently 56 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. This includes 28 funded 3-year-olds and 12 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs and for whom English is an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are available within the nursery day from 09:15 until 15:00.

Nine part time/full time staff work with the children. Four have early years qualifications and three are currently on training programs.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Roadend Farm Nursery School provides nursery education that is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff have a reasonable knowledge of the early learning goals, though their understanding of the stepping stones is limited. Planning is flexible and takes account of children's interests, though the possible learning intentions are not always clear. The staff know the children well and respond appropriately to their individual learning needs. However greater written detail is necessary to ensure that the individual educational needs of children identified with special needs are fully met. They use effective methods to motivate the children, who are interested and respond well. Weak systems for assessment limits the effectiveness of the planning and monitoring of children's progress.

The leadership and management is generally good. The committed staff team is well supported by the owner. Individual appraisals help identify future development needs, with further training valued and encouraged. The owner is aware of the nursery's strengths and is conscious of the need to improve identified areas. The limited assessment process hinders effective evaluation and monitoring.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. They receive a detailed prospectus including information on how the group covers all of the six areas of learning. The nursery is open to parents visiting and looking through their child's work folders and talking to staff. They are informed about the letter of the week and topics, though this detail could be extended to allow parents greater involvement.

What is being done well?

- The farm environment provides wide learning opportunities for the children. They can observe how the weather and seasons affect the natural world around them. They are able to experience how to care for and respect animals.
- Their hand-eye coordination is well developed. The children freely chose activities from the shelves that involve fine movements. They enjoy using items such as pipettes to move water from containers, pegs around bowl edges and moving rice with small tongs.
- The children's behaviour is very good. They respond very well to the staff and are clearly appreciative of the praise and encouragement they receive. They get on well with each other and show a willingness to help their friends.
- The planning is flexible and allows for the children to initiate play. Staff have followed children's interests and developed related activities. Children who are fully involved in their own purposeful play are often left to continue.

What needs to be improved?

- assessment, to show individual children's progress towards the early learning goals
- the development of more detailed individual educational plans for children with special needs
- involvement of parents in their child's learning
- planning to show clear learning intentions for activities, that can effectively be evaluated, inform future planning and meet all children's needs
- staff's understanding and knowledge of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to further develop the systems of planning to consistently include the intended learning outcomes of activities with reference to the desirable learning outcomes.

The issues have been met in part but need further development to ensure that the planning of activities now links clearly to the stepping stones and early learning goals. For the daily session plans the learning intentions are too numerous to be effective. However there are some good references to the areas of learning for some activities.

They were also asked to include in the plans how staff are to be deployed and which staff will support each activity.

The deployment of staff is not an issue currently. The staff are very aware of their roles and which activities they are responsible for.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very confident and keen to try new experiences. Most will persevere at an activity until finished. The more able children are able to concentrate well, listen to other children talking. All children have a strong sense of belonging to the nursery, they know the routines well and enjoy their time. They confidently interact with familiar adults. They behave very well. They have personal independence such as accessing the toilet when they wish and putting their own coats on.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

They communicate well. Speaking confidently to adults and other children whilst playing. They listen to stories with a good level of attention and involvement. They use books with care though limited use is made of books to show how information can be found. They begin to link sounds and letters well. They regularly practice letter shapes. Pre-writing skills are developed, though they do not always have the use of pens and paper in play. Some begin to write clear formed letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count willingly in adult led activities and sometimes in their own play. Some are able to count beyond 10 and begin to recognise numerals. They explore size and shape in play and whilst using Montessori techniques such as pouring, sorting boxes into size and depth. Children spend time at these activities and make their own challenges by mixing the boxes. Some progress is lost though missed opportunities for counting and solving simple problems within the daily routine.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

They show great curiosity and interest. They enjoy constructing shapes using a range of materials and simple tools such as glue spreaders or a hole punch, though choice is limited in free play. They use computers, learn mouse control and how to follow a simple programme. They benefit from the surrounding environment to observe the changes around them. Visiting the lambs is a favourite activity. They begin to take an interest in learning about other countries and the lives of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The children develop control in movement such as by clambering up and sliding down hills, bouncing on the trampette, running and balancing. They begin to have an awareness of space around themselves and for others. They develop good hand-eye coordination for fine movements though less in some other areas such as catching and throwing balls. Their understanding of the effect of exercise on the body could be better developed. They have different materials to manipulate like playdoh and clay.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

They enjoy free art work. They explore colour and texture. Some art and craft activities could be less adult led. They have the chance to build objects in two and three dimension. They participate well in singing especially familiar songs. They experiment with musical instruments to make sounds and some use them rhythmically. They explore their thoughts using all of their senses, though this could be improved by more effective adult interaction.

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

- encourage greater involvement of parents and carers in their child's learning
- extend staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals
- improve the current planning and assessment systems showing (i) how they ensure that individual children's needs are met, (ii) how this informs future planning and (iii) how it links to early learning goals.

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.