



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221911

DfES Number: 595664

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/03/2004
Inspector Name Susan Patricia Foulger

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care, Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name The Meadows Centre
Setting Address Farriers Gate
New Road
Chatteris
Cambridgeshire
PE16 6QP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Meadows Centre 1069714

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Meadows Centre
Address Farriers Gate
New Road
Chatteris
Cambridgeshire
PE16 6QP

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 Meadows Nursery, After School and Holiday Club offer a variety of children's facilities. The nursery operates Monday to Friday 9.00 - 11.30 am and 12.30 to 3 pm and an after school club from 3.00 to 6.00 pm. These groups are open term time only.

The Meadows holiday club is a full day care group operating during school holidays 8.00 am to 6 .00 pm. None of the groups offer over night care.

All of the facilities offered operate from the Meadows Community Centre, a purpose designed building situated close to the local school in Chatteris, Cambridgeshire.

The group is registered for a total of forty-four children with specific age groups attending different sessions.

Areas available to the group include two large play rooms that can form one room when divider doors are opened, a kitchen and toilet facilities. There is additional office, storage and toilet space for adult use. There is a fully enclosed outside play area.

The setting receives support from the Cambridgeshire Care and Education Partnership and are approved to take children in receipt of Government Nursery funding. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the group.

A no smoking policy is in operation.

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 the Meadows Centre is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Activities are well presented. The planned free play session is a strength and offers variety and interest to the children. The staff's style encourages children to ask questions, think and demonstrate what they know and understand. Activities take account of the children's different levels of attainment and build on what they know. The promotion of positive behaviour is a strong feature. The nursery has a wide range of toys and equipment and offer strong support for children with special needs. An environment is provided that helps the children be self-sufficient by making toys and activities easily available for the children to select for themselves.

Leadership and management of the nursery is generally good. Relationships between the committee and the staff are strong. Committee meeting are held half termly. The staff are committed to providing a quality service for children and their carers. Staff appraisals are carried out yearly. There is a comprehensive staff handbook. Training needs are identified and the nursery arranges their own in house training. Policies are in place, but the committee have limited knowledge of the curriculum the children are following.

Partnership with parents generally good. Parents think highly of the nursery and are complimentary. Especially effective is the support given to children with special needs. Settling in procedures are effective. Communication is verbal and through notice boards and newsletters. Parents are not closely involved in their child's learning and there are no formal systems in place to provide parents with relevant information regarding the early learning goals.

What is being done well?

- Themes and topics are well planned and covered comprehensively. Especially, the planned free play sessions offer a wide range of activities which especially promote mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.
- The staff's relationship with each other and especially with the children is very good. Treating the children with care and courtesy, they are meeting their individual needs and promoting self confidence.
- The programme offered for children with special needs is especially effective. Care is taken to monitor each child and involve the parent at every step. Professional workers are welcomed into the nursery to help with this work.

- The promotion of good behaviour works well. Children are managed consistently and firm boundaries make it clear to children what is expected of them. Staff take time to give clear explanations to them as to why their behaviour may not be acceptable from time to time. They are always encouraged to think about the repercussions of their actions.
- Parents feel welcome and comfortable with the staff and are complimentary of the care their children receive.

What needs to be improved?

- Aspects of physical development
- Opportunities for children to learn more about shapes
- The development of a pro-active process so that parents can be more involved in their children's learning

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in the implementing of the point for consideration from the last education inspection in 2002. The nursery was asked to continue to extend opportunities for children to be independent and able to make choices, particularly at snack time. Whenever possible, children are encouraged to be independent which helps to develop their confidence and self esteem. Equipment and resources are easily accessible and children are encouraged to help themselves. They are encouraged and given time to make their own choices in relation to activities. Staff model basic hygiene routines and allow the children to toilet themselves. There is a useful sequence of pictures and captions on the wall in the toilet area for the children to follow in relation to hand washing. At snack time, the children are able to help themselves and each other, make their choice of drink and pour it themselves.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children form strong relationships with the staff and each other. Staff show them that they are valued and give frequent praise and encouragement. Independence is fostered. Children learn to take turns and share equipment and are free to choose from a wide range of toys and activities, especially in the planned free play session. They have very good concentration skills and adults help and support their play. Behaviour is very good. Clear boundaries are set and consistently applied

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children listen and respond with enjoyment to stories and songs. They use language to negotiate with their peers and adults and are linking sounds to letters. They understand that print carries meaning and can read familiar words. Books are handled appropriately and children use the book corner. The children help to make their own books for the nursery giving them an increasing interest in reading. Children are well supported in writing for a purpose and are given opportunities for mark making.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count and recognise numbers confidently. A good range of planned mathematical activities are provided in the free play session. The use of mathematical language is encouraged. Children can describe position, size and quantity, but are not yet fully conversant with the names and properties of shapes. Children are beginning to show an elementary understanding of addition and subtraction.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are given opportunities to build and construct using a wide range of natural materials and tools. They explore and investigate nature through planned topics such as 'Autumn'. Children have free use of the computer and it is used well to support their learning. They are beginning to know about other cultures and beliefs through the celebration of festivals. Visitors related to the planned topic are encouraged. E.g. the health visitor is coming next week.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children handle scissors and other tools with great skill. Their fine motor control is well developed through the many activities that are provided. The children are able to move about the rooms with control and co-ordination and health and bodily awareness is being promoted by the current topic 'Ourselves'. However, there is little evidence that activities to develop the large motor skills and to promote exercise are given equal importance as the other areas of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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There is a good balance between adult led and child led activities. Children have opportunities to experiment with creative materials. The changing role play area allows them to use their imagination. They are able to work in three dimensions and play with water and sand frequently. Children enjoy singing and help to make books based on action songs. However, they do not use musical instruments on a very regular basis.

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

- The nursery should produce an action plan showing how they will offer the children more sustained physical activities on a regular basis.
- Develop a procedure that will give parents the opportunity to be more fully involved in their children's learning and the progress they are making.
- Extend mathematical development to include opportunities for children to learn more about shapes

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.