



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507912

DfES Number: 538224

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/07/2003
Inspector Name Stacey Sangster

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name St Thomas-a-Becket Nursery
Setting Address 3 Tutts Barn Lane
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN22 8XT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Management Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Management Committee
Address 3 Tutts Barn Lane
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN22 8XT

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

The premises are a spacious prefabricated building in the grounds of the Thomas-a-Becket Infant School.

The facilities include two classrooms, cloakrooms, toilets, storage rooms and a tarmac and grass outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered to care for up to 50 children between the age of 2 and 5 years.

Eight staff are employed to work in the nursery. The group is managed by a management committee with close links to the school.

How good is the Day Care?

Thomas-a-Becket Nursery provides satisfactory care. There are eight staff working in the group, only two hold a childcare qualification therefore the qualification requirements are not met. Some staff are undertaking training to address this issue. Records reflect that the required staff ratios are not always met, the setting state that these records are not accurate and that school ancillary staff provide cover. The operational plan guides staff in the running of the setting, it continues to require amendment. The use of the building is well thought out to provide best use of the space for children. The setting is well stocked with good quality toys and equipment, these are easily accessible to the children. Most documentation produced by staff within the setting is detailed and professionally kept. Children's safety is given high priority within the setting. Appropriate practical measures have been taken to minimise risks to children and the result is a child centred safe environment. The setting supports equal opportunities in all areas, from staff recruitment to toys and equipment that positively reflect the diversity of society. Children with special needs are supported well. The childcare is positive. Interaction between staff and children is nurturing and kind. Good relationships are fostered between adults and children. Due to the high number of unqualified staff the supervisor does not always work in direct contact with children as staff need direction and support. This can leave

insufficient staff working directly with the children and has a negative impact. The supervisor and staff use their knowledge and understanding of child development to provide stimulating and interesting programmes of activities throughout the nursery to help children of all ages to reach their full potential.

A positive partnership with parents is given high priority within the nursery. Parents are kept regularly informed of their child's progress in a variety of formats.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the setting agreed improve policies and procedures relating to child protection; staff and management are now clear about their roles and responsibilities and written materials to guide and support staff are detailed and clear.

It had also been agreed to develop the ineffective systems in place to ensure the maintenance and safety of equipment, all staff are now aware of their responsibility to report and remove hazards. A risk assessment check list has been drawn up, but has yet to be implemented due to restrictions on staff time. Consideration should be given as to how this could be implemented.

What is being done well?

- The organisation of the premises. Children are groups in ages within the two rooms which are laid out in pockets of activity with designated areas for different types of work and play. Storage enables children to easily access resources. This results in a stimulating and effective work and play space for children.
- Safety is given high priority. The positive steps taken to minimise the hazards within the building and outside area, create a safe environment for children.
- There is a strong emphasis on equal opportunities. Care and support offered to children with special needs, enables them to take a full and active part in all that the nursery offer.

What needs to be improved?

- Staffing, levels of staff working in direct contact with children and staff qualifications;
- documentation - clarity and accuracy of policies, dating and signing observational records, evidence of required ratios being met, an accurate record of who is working in the setting and when.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
2	Ensure there are sufficient staff to enable the correct ratio of adults working in direct contact with children.	04/09/2003
14	Ensure that records of staff attendance are accurate and reflect that the required ratios are met at all times.	04/09/2003

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure that there are effective procedures in place to deputise.
2	Improve strategies to ensure that the minimum qualified staff ratios are met.
2	Clarify roles with regard to the responsibility for policy documents.
14	Update and amend policy documents to bring them in line with the requirements of the National Standards.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The quality of nursery education provided by St Thomas a Becket Nursery is acceptable and good overall, enabling children to make progress towards the early learning goals.

The teaching is generally of good quality and has some very good aspects. The persons in charge use their knowledge and understanding of child development to provide a stimulating and interesting programme of activities. However, frequent changes of staff and the large number of staff who do not have suitable early years qualifications have a negative impact on the quality of some of the teaching. Evaluations of the work undertaken and recordings of what children do are limited and mean that planning for individual children's development is not as focused as it could be.

Leadership and management of the group has significant weaknesses. Roles and responsibilities of the person in charge and the nominated person are not clearly agreed. The inability to recruit and retain qualified members of staff has meant that the required proportion of the staff group does not have a suitable qualification.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Most parents feel well informed about the group, its routines, policies and the curriculum. Parents are provided with useful information and, for most, the formal and informal opportunities for them to discuss their child's progress and achievements with the staff are adequate.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy at the nursery and relate well to adults and other children. They are confident, interested and concentrate well. Behaviour is good.
- Space and resources, both indoors and outside, are used positively and effectively to support children's development.
- Staff provide a secure, friendly learning environment in which children have opportunities to use a wide variety of equipment.

What needs to be improved?

- record keeping, including observations of what children do and the evaluation of the activities provided;
- clarification of the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the management and day to day running of the nursery;
- staffing, particularly with regard to the recruitment and retention of qualified staff, ensuring that more than one suitably qualified person is on duty at any

one time, and taking account of the qualifications and experience of staff when setting adult:child ratios.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, happy and relaxed. They relate well to each other and to adults, they are positively inclined towards learning and are interested and involved in their play. They are developing independence and are well behaved.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak fluently and are confident in holding conversations with adults and each other. They are developing reading skills and an awareness of the links between sounds and letters. They enjoy stories and show an interest in books. Regular planned activities help develop children's writing and letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count for a variety of purposes, are able to recognise numerals and are developing an understanding of the way numbers work both through the planned activities of the curriculum and incidentally. They are knowledgeable about shape and size and have opportunities to compare, sort and match objects through a variety of practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have regular planned opportunities to learn about the local environment and about the similarities and differences between their own culture and that of others. They use a range of technical equipment, such as computers, though inadequate staff support sometimes means that this experience is not as positive as it could be. Both the planned and informal activities extend children's abilities to talk about the past and present.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children regularly take part in activities to promote motor skills and they use a range of equipment confidently both indoors and outside. Their movement and coordination is well developed and they demonstrate an awareness of space and of others. They learn about keeping healthy and are aware of why they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children express themselves freely through a wide range of art and craft activities. They have many opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form and to create their own art work. They instigate and take part in imaginative role-play scenarios.

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

- ensure that regular and detailed observations are made of what children can and cannot do so as to inform future planning;
- consider way to increase the number of qualified staff recruited and retained;
- take into account the qualifications and experience of staff when setting adult:child ratios.

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.