



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220144

DfES Number: 520581

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/04/2004
Inspector Name Jill Hunn

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Harpole Pre School
Setting Address Old School Hall, School Lane
Harpole
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN7 4DR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Harpole Pre School 1025526

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Harpole Pre School
Address Old School Hall, School Lane
Harpole
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN7 4DR

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

Harpole Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from the Old School Hall in the centre of the village of Harpole. The pre school serves the local area.

There are currently 27 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 7 funded three-year-olds and 11 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending with special educational needs or children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:15 to 11:45 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 9:15 to 13:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays.

A total of four staff work with the children. Half the staff hold an early years qualification to NVQ level 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children attending Harpole Pre-School are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good with some very good aspects. Staff generally have a secure knowledge of the Early Learning Goals. Plans of activities are based on the six areas of learning and are used flexibly. Staff are developing a system of evaluation. They provide a stimulating learning environment which captivates children and there are very few gaps in the curriculum. However, there are insufficient opportunities for more able children to consolidate and extend their mathematical knowledge. There are suitable systems in place to support children with special educational needs and children who do not speak English as their first language. Staff are warm, friendly and caring. They make good use of carefully framed questions to develop children's thinking skills and consolidate their learning. Staff consistently encourage children and manage their behaviour skilfully. Children behave very well. Staff organise space and resources thoughtfully to promote children's learning. Effective systems are in place for observation and assessment but they are not used to plan the next stage in learning for more able children.

The partnership with parents is very good. A range of good quality information is available to parents so that they are aware of the Foundation Stage and how the pre-school operates. Parents are informed about their children's progress through open evenings and discussion. Parents help out at sessions and join in events. They are able to support children's learning at home by sharing library books and visits from 'Benjamin Bear'.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. Effective management systems are in place and the staff and committee work well together as a supportive team. The staff are committed to providing a successful educational programme for the children.

What is being done well?

- Staff successfully foster children's personal, social and emotional development. They consistently praise and encourage children and value them as individuals. Staff plan sessions with clear routines which help children feel secure and allow them time and space to explore their own ideas and interests. As a result, children become confident, keen to learn and behave very well.
- Opportunities for children to become aware of other cultures and beliefs. The programme includes a range of interesting activities that reflect diversity and enable children to learn to value and appreciate other people. Children use a variety of musical instruments from other cultures, such as the Chilean rainstick and caterpillar rattle. They learn how people with disabilities live

their lives through an excellent range of factual information and displays.

- Opportunities for children to express their creativity through music. Children sing a variety of songs and action rhymes. They explore the sounds of an imaginative range of instruments by banging, shaking and tapping out rhythms. Children listen and respond to different types of music including includes music from other countries.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to link sounds to letters
- opportunities for older and more able children to consolidate their mathematical skills and knowledge by solving simple mathematical problems during activities
- planning, by further using observations and assessments to plan the next stage in learning for more able children
- opportunities for children to learn the importance of keeping healthy.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the four key issues raised at the last inspection. Improvements have been made in most areas which have had a positive impact on children's learning. The system for planning has been developed and now covers all six areas of learning, staff deployment, resources to be used and how gaps in children's learning will be covered. It does not, however, include the next steps in learning for more able children. The system for observation and assessment has been developed with more information about how children work towards the early learning goals and identifies any gaps in learning. The system for evaluation of activities is currently being further developed. Half of the staff group has changed since the last inspection. Three members of staff have attended further Foundation Stage training so that they now have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and are able to undertake effective observations and assessments of the children. All staff now contribute to planning by attending regular meetings. The programme for mathematics has been well developed since the last inspection. Children regularly count and refer to numbers during practical activities but opportunities for more able children to solve simple problems are limited.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They concentrate well and sit quietly when required. Children are happy and confident. They are developing their independence. Most children successfully dress and undress for PE sessions without assistance. Children form strong relationships with adults and peers. They learn to co-operate with each other and behave very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children speak confidently in small and large groups. Older children initiate conversation with adults. Children listen attentively at group time and respond well to questions. They use their emerging writing for different purposes. Younger children ascribe meaning to marks and older children write recognisable letters, with some, all of their name. Children enjoy a range of fiction and factual books and recognise their names from cards. However, they do not sufficiently link sounds to letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a strong interest in number. Younger children are developing their counting skills to ten with older children beyond. Older children recognise some numerals and understand their meaning. Children create patterns. They discover the properties of shapes using construction materials. They use words to describe position, weight and size and explore capacity as they work with sand and water. Older children compare numbers but there are limited opportunities to solve simple problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children investigate a variety of materials using all their senses. They explore why things happen and how things work with an interesting range of resources which stimulate their curiosity. They learn about growth by planting beans and bulbs and understand that a caterpillar grows into a butterfly. They use technology to support their learning. Children begin to differentiate between past and present events in their lives and develop an awareness of their own and other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move with confidence. They use movement to express feelings when enacting a giraffe, a snake and how a seed grows during PE sessions. They show an awareness of other's personal space when moving around the room and during indoor and outdoor activities. Children successfully use a variety of equipment to develop their fine and gross motor skills with increasing control. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to learn about the benefits of being healthy and active.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore and express their creativity in two and three dimensions using a variety of materials and textures. They make connections in their learning through an exciting range of role play situations such as the bug corner and DIY store. Children use a wide selection of musical instruments and sing a repertoire of songs and action rhymes. They listen and respond to music from other countries.

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 the planning so that observations and assessments are used to plan the next stage in learning for older and more able children
- develop the range of opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and for older and more able children to consolidate their mathematical skills by solving simple number problems.

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.