



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 131606

DfES Number: 512721

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/06/2003
Inspector Name Alison Jane Kaplonek

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Pixies Tree
Setting Address 63 Portsmouth Road
Southampton
Hampshire
SO19 9BE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Pixies Day Nuseries

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Pixies Day Nuseries
Address 39 Locks Road
Locks Heath
Southampton
Hampshire
SO31 6NS

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

Pixies Tree pre-school and nursery opened under the present management in March 2000. It is situated in the Woolston area of Southampton. The nursery occupies six rooms in a large detached house in Portsmouth Road, with the under threes occupying the downstairs rooms, and the three to five year olds using the rooms upstairs. There is also a large enclosed back garden for the children to use.

The nursery is registered for 36 children under five years old, and it is the nursery policy not to accept babies under three months old. There are currently 88 children on role. This includes 19 funded three year old children and 13 four year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. None of the children has special needs and one for whom English is a second language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm during term times and holidays.

Nine staff work with the children. Seven staff working in the nursery are qualified in Early Years. Some of the other staff are undertaking training at present.

The nursery shares the support of an Early Years manager with other nurseries in the chain. The setting has recently received support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

The nursery provides unsatisfactory care for children.

Staff demonstrate concern for the children and treat them with respect.

Some staff have Early Years qualifications or are training at present and this is encouraged by the management. Efforts are made to provide 50% of staff who are qualified and ratios of staff to children are maintained. However, staffs knowledge of the National Standards needs to be improved.

Cleanliness and safety in some areas of the premises are poor and insufficient care is taken to protect children from unvetted adults. Procedures and policies are unclear and not all are stored on the premises.

Inadequate systems are in place to keep children safe. Meals are nutritious and drinks are always available however children continue to be offered a poor range of snacks.

Babies are provided with an interesting and varied range of activities to encourage their development and learning. Resources and activities for children from 18mths -five years however are insufficient, providing limited opportunities for children to reach their full potential.

Parents are welcomed in to the nursery and have good relationships with the nursery manager and staff however, some information provided to parents is not always accurate.

The management structure of the nursery fails to provide appropriate support for staff on a daily basis, or to monitor provision.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions raised at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- 1.The nursery premises are spacious and the children have access to a fully enclosed garden.(ST4)
- 2. Children are provided with nutritious main meals and learn hoe to feed themselves.(ST8)
- 3. Staff treat the children with respect and concern. They know the children reasonably well.(ST9+10)
- 4.Children with Special needs are welcomed to the nursery and parents feel that they can approach the nursery manager with any concerns regarding their children.(ST10+12)
- 5. Staff are encouraged to take part in training and at least 50% have Early Years qualifications. Ratios are maintained at all times.(ST2)
- 6.Babies are provided with an interesting and varied range of activities.(ST3)

An aspect of outstanding practice:

n/a

What needs to be improved?

- 1.the protection of children with particular regard to the safety of the premises, the registration procedures and access of unvetted adults.(ST1,2,6,13)

- 2.the range, choice and organisation of toys and activities to support the needs of children aged 18mths-five years.(ST3+5+9)
- 3.the strategies to manage children's behaviour in a consistent and positive manner(ST11)
- 4.the support systems from upper management to ensure effective communication with nursery staff and parents .(ST1+12)
- 5.the organisation and availability of the operational plan, including records, policies and procedures, to promote the good health, welfare , care and learning of children aged 0-5 years.(ST7+14)

Outcome of the inspection

Unsatisfactory

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
1	Ensure staff who have not been vetted are not left alone with children.	01/07/2003
1	Identify ways in which management and staff have a working knowledge of the National Standards.	01/09/2003
2	Ensure that registration system records staff and children's times of arrival and departure from the nursery.	01/09/2003
2	Ensure operational plan explains how the setting runs and shows how the resources (staff, premises and equipment) are used to meet the needs of children, particularly relating to the management structure in each room and continuity of care for children.	01/09/2003
2	Ensure that all relevant records relating to staff, volunteers, management and anyone living or working on the premises are available on site at all times.	01/09/2003

3	Devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs, with particular regard to toddlers and pre-school children.	01/09/2003
4	Adequate space is made available at all times for children, especially to the pre-school children.	01/09/2003
5	ensure that toys and equipment are clean, well maintained and safe.	01/09/2003
6	Ensure sleeping children are protected at all times.	01/07/2003
6	Conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimise identified risks.	01/09/2003
6	Meet any recommendations made by the Fire Safety officer.	01/09/2003
7	Obtain written permission for parents seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.	01/09/2003
11	Identify strategies to manage children's behaviour in a positive and consistent manner with particular regard to the pre-school children.	01/09/2003
12	Ensure information in the parent's handbook is accurate and up to date.	01/09/2003
13	Ensure staff understand their responsibilities with regard to reporting concerns.	01/09/2003
14	Ensure that policies and procedures relating to the National Standards are kept on the premises at all times and are regularly updated.	01/09/2003
14	Ensure that staff and parents know where to find the information that they need.	01/09/2003

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
7	Ensure blanket cover for the administration of calpol is discontinued
8	Ensure children are offered a variety of healthy and nutritious snacks.
11	Keep a sufficiently detailed record of significant issues and share this with parents.
13	Ensure confidentiality is maintained when dealing with child protection issues.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Pixies Tree offers unacceptable nursery education and children are making poor progress towards the early learning goals.

The overall quality of teaching is poor. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones and how to use them is limited which impacts on the planning of activities. Children's assessments are not effectively used to influence planning and they are not sufficiently challenged or supported where needed. The organisation of time, activities and resources is poor which impacts directly on the children's behaviour. Staff praise children and have established good relationships with them, although they miss learning opportunities during the day to introduce vocabulary, question children and develop and consolidate learning, in particular, relating to mathematical development.

Leadership and management of the nursery shows significant weaknesses. The management structure fails to provide appropriate support for staff on a daily basis and the operational plan is ineffective. There are systems in place for the induction and training of new staff, however management are not active in monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education. Communication between management and staff is lacking and there is no-one influencing practice.

The partnership with parents shows significant weaknesses. Parents are not well informed about their children's achievements and progress and are not provided with information relating to the early learning goals. There are insufficient opportunities available for parents to share information about their children and be actively involved in their learning. Parents have established good relationships with the manager of this nursery, although are not fully aware of the management structure in place overall. Information in the prospectus and details of plans and routines are not always accurate and do not reflect practice.

What is being done well?

- Children's progress in physical development is generally good. They benefit from an attractive outside play area, which includes a good range of large apparatus developing co-ordination and skills in climbing.
- Staff praise children and have developed good relationships with them.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning, the early learning goals and stepping-stones.
- opportunities to extend learning and provide sufficient challenges for

older/more able children and to support those who are younger/less able.

- the system for planning to ensure learning outcomes are identified and assessments of children used effectively.
- the use of time, daily routine and the structure of activities to make the most of all learning opportunities, particularly in mathematics.
- the organisation and availability of resources to ensure all children are fully involved and can access the full range independently.
- the support system from upper management to ensure effective communication with parents, monitoring of staff and the commitment to influence and evaluate practice.
- opportunities for parents to be kept informed about their child's achievements and progress and how they can extend their child's learning at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?
First Inspection

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's personal, social and emotional development shows significant weaknesses. They have limited opportunities to be independent during the day and do not play an active role in their learning. The organisation of activities and availability of resources prevents children from making choices about their play. Their behaviour is very disruptive at times and they find it difficult to share and take turns. Children are confident to speak in group situations and suggest ideas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show significant weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. Many can write their own names, however staff tend to write them. Emergent writing is not freely available during the session. Children are introduced to letters of the alphabet, although staff fail to support the younger and less able. Children's spoken language is developing well, and they enjoy exploring books, although opportunities are missed to introduce new vocabulary and extend discussion.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Children's progress in mathematical development is poor. Insufficient opportunities are provided for them to demonstrate an understanding of size, shape and the comparison of numbers. Children are not challenged through activities and do not freely use mathematical language. Most children are confident in counting and recognising numerals 1-9, although opportunities are not available for them to practise counting and consolidate their learning during activities and the daily routine.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world shows significant weaknesses. They have insufficient opportunities to explore and investigate, using their senses, and to develop their skills in designing and building as activities are too structured and resources cannot be accessed independently. They learn about their local environment through topic work and have access to a working computer although this is not used effectively to support children's learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's progress in physical development is generally good. They are confident in using scissors and glue sticks, although insufficient opportunities are provided for them to do so, and they cannot be accessed independently. Access to smaller equipment, such as beads and cotton reels is restricted, and these are not used effectively to develop learning. Children are confident in using large equipment although many opportunities to extend vocabulary and consolidate learning are missed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show significant weaknesses in their progress in creative development. They have limited opportunities to use their imagination in role-play, music and movement and to explore creativity. Activities are too structured, pre-prepared, adult led and prescriptive. The accessibility of resources hinders children's opportunities to be fully engaged in activities when available. Children enjoy singing and have developed a good repertoire of songs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is not fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is unacceptable. Children are making poor progress towards the early learning goals.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and how to use every day activities and routines to promote children's learning in all areas of development.
- evaluate and improve the system for planning, ensuring children's assessments are used to provide sufficient challenges and offer appropriate support.
- evaluate and improve the organisation of the daily routine and accessibility of equipment and resources to ensure children can be fully independent and play an active role in all areas of learning, in particular relating to creative activities and role-play.
- develop procedures to ensure staff are monitored and supported effectively and practice is evaluated.
- improve the communication with parents, ensuring they are kept up to date with children's developmental progress and opportunities are available for them to be actively involved in their learning.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 20 working days showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the local education authority. The Department for Education and Skills will write to the provider asking for a copy of the action plan. The Secretary for Education and Skills will then decide whether to withdraw the provider's entitlement to receive funding for 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.