



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402982

DfES Number: 521487

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/01/2004
Inspector Name Julie Ann Birkett

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Birchanger Nursery
Setting Address Birchanger C of E Primary School
Birchwood
Birchanger
Hertfordshire
CM23 5QF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Birchanger Nursery Unit 1087372

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Birchanger Nursery Unit
Address Birchanger Primary School
Birchanger Lane, Birchanger
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM23 5QF

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

Birchanger Nursery originally opened in 1990 but changed ownership in 2001. It operates from one room in a demountable building in the grounds of the Birchanger primary school. The group serves the local and wider area.

There are currently 35 children from 2 years 6 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 15 funded 3 year olds and 6 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Currently there are no children attending who have special needs or English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 09:15 until 11:45 and from 12:30 until 15:00 on Tuesday and Thursday.

Five full and part time staff work with the children. Three members of staff have childcare qualifications. Two members of staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Birchanger Nursery provides good daycare.

The setting is well organised and the children are settled and secure. They have a clear understanding of the daily routines and participate fully in the three group times. The organisation of snack time does not fully support the children's developing independence skills and limits time spent at activities. The premises offer a rich learning environment. Children are stimulated by the attractive displays around them. Resources are of good quality and used effectively. Children can access much of the equipment from storage units giving them choice and supporting materials in their own play and learning. Documentation is well kept and confidentiality is maintained.

Clear written policies, procedures and record systems are effectively put into practice to ensure that the children are well cared for and are safe. Designated members of staff attend training to support their particular roles within the group, for example; special needs, equal opportunities, health and safety. This ensures that the needs of the whole group and individual children can be met.

Qualified and experienced staff plan and provide a wide range of purposeful activities. Staff are actively involved with the children, they ask questions and encourage the children to listen, think and offer their own solutions. Children build good relationships with staff and treat each other and resources with respect. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Confidence and independence is fostered through everyday opportunities and meaningful praise. Children have good self esteem and respond well to new challenges. Children make very good progress.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive good quality information about the group and are regularly updated through newsletters and the notice board. Daily communication between staff and parents is open and friendly. There is a yearly parent's meeting and an induction day is planned for all new parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection a key worker system has been introduced. Previously parents had predominately gone to the manager to discuss their child's progress. The new system has improved communication between parents and all the staff, who work together as a team with the children, and encourages sharing of information about the children's progress.

The safety issues in the garden have been addressed and the garden is a safe environment in which the children can play.

Changes to the behaviour management and child protection policy have been made in line with the national standards for daycare and the child protection codes of practice.

What is being done well?

- The provision of a stimulating and interactive environment through displays and interest tables, for example children counted as they added monkeys brought from home to the jungle display, learned how Velcro worked as they joined them together and about weight and gravity as the chain of monkeys became too heavy.
- Interaction between staff and children is very good. Staff ask meaningful questions which encourage the children to think and offer solutions to problems. As a consequence children are motivated and interested in their play and learning and want to know about what, why, when, where and how.
- Staff encourage the building of children's confidence and independence through providing them with attainable, but challenging goals and giving support and praise. Children are encouraged to complete the 'I can do' and 'I

know' display on the wall, be the helper for the day, take messages, suggest songs or select from the song bag. Children are confident, articulate and have good self-esteem.

- The curriculum is planned for all three and four year children who are given the opportunity to work towards the same early learning goals whether they are in receipt of nursery funding or not.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of snack time to give children more independence and to allow more time at activities.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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

Std	Recommendation
2	review the organisation of snack time to give children more opportunities to practice their independence skills and allow more time at their activities for example.

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 Birchanger Nursery is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff provide a nurturing environment where children benefit from a breadth of planned activities which enable them to make very good all round progress. Staff support and guide children's learning throughout the sessions. They make daily observations of the children and record their progress. Staff have a thorough understanding of what the children enjoy and what they already know. They use this information to inform the planning for individual children's development. Children are absorbed in their play and learning because they are interested and challenged. Staff and children have an excellent rapport and all work together in good humour. Children's behaviour is exemplary in response to the high but realistic expectations of the staff.

Leadership and management is very good. The committee demonstrate a clear understanding of its responsibilities with some members actively involved in the daily operation of the nursery. Committee and staff meet regularly to discuss and act upon any identified areas for improvement. The nursery staff are a strong team and work efficiently together. They meet weekly to discuss nursery issues and to plan for the children's next steps.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents have access to quality information about the setting and its policies and procedures. The prospectus and nursery displays inform parents about the foundation stage. Newsletters go home half termly which include the next planned learning intentions so that parents can support children at home. Parents send in things from home, book bags go between home and nursery and parents feel welcomed into the setting. More frequent opportunities for parents to share in their children's progress records could extend the learning links between home and nursery.

What is being done well?

- The educational programme for communication, language and literacy is very strong. Children speak confidently with an increasing vocabulary and listen well during their play to communicate ideas in both real and imaginary situations. They learn letter sounds and formation and use books effectively for pleasure and to find information.
- Children are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of the community in which they live and beyond. Visitors come into the nursery and children make visits, for example to the local superstore where they learn about the bakery, to the library, station or to the woods enabling them to learn first hand and in a meaningful way.

- Staff effectively use spontaneous and everyday opportunities to progress children's learning through conversation with them, for example, the children are encouraged to compare size and weight of the animals being pushed down the slide and calculate speed and distance travelled.
- Stories are read or told by staff with animation, which encourages children to join in with remembered phrases, finish rhyming strings and predict the outcome. Children are frequently participants and helpers in stories for example, Goldilocks and the three bears where children actively learn about consequences of actions and the importance of being kind and thoughtful.
- Children are provided with a wide range of materials and resources to explore and investigate. They use all their senses to find out about different things, sometimes recording their findings in charts or in creative drawings, paintings and collages.

What needs to be improved?

- There are no key issues to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- sharing of information between the nursery and parents regarding the children's progress towards the early learning goals so that parents can support their children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the points for development identified at the previous inspection for funded education. This has resulted in improvements being made to the educational programme. Children are provided with a range of resources in their everyday play which support their understanding of cultural diversity. A designated member of staff monitors the effectiveness of the resources provided.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and settled. They are confident to try new things like the paper crinkle machine. They concentrate well and take pride in finishing a task for example a collage picture. They share and take turns as they play with the dough or wait in line for the slide. Children have good independence skills but also show concern towards others. Children learn about their immediate and wider community through books, music, topics and first hand experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and enthusiastic speakers and express their ideas as they play. They listen well and respond to songs and stories with great enjoyment. They choose books to share at nursery or to take home. They understand the structure of stories and make up new and retell old stories. They learn letter sounds at register time and through games and learn to recognise their own names. Children make marks for a purpose and they are encouraged to form letters correctly as they progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children recognise and name numerals and use numbers as they count one another, play dice games and hopscotch. They match, sort, order and sequence with plastic bears. They recreate patterns and learn about shape when threading. They record number in charts of the height of towers built. They discuss and compare weight and volume as they fill buckets of sand or play in the water. They use addition and subtraction when they sing number rhymes and can solve problems such as "how many more?"

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children find out about living things as they plant, go for walks, observe tadpoles, spiders and worms. They learn about the seasons at register time and when they fly kites they have made. They examine objects and materials, sometimes using magnifiers and mirrors, and comment on the changes they see for example when dissolving ice, sugar, flour and salt. They build during craft activities and free play with construction kits. Children use tools well and are competent on the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children demonstrate good hand eye coordination when using a wide range of tools and equipment such as rollers and cutters, scissors and pencils. They skilfully weave pieces of fabric onto a large frame. Children move with care and control around furniture and when choosing a space at story time. They move confidently outside using wheeled toys or just enjoy the freedom of running, skipping and jumping. Children stretch and curl and can hold their positions when pretending to be growing beans.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show good imaginative skills. They use puppets to tell stories and put on shows in the puppet theatre. Children listen to music from around the world. They join in enthusiastically at group singing time but also use instruments independently to experiment with sound and rhythm. Children draw and paint freely and eagerly participate in planned craft activities using different materials and techniques. They use all their senses as they take part in cooking activities or food tasting.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no key issues to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- provide more frequent opportunities for parents to share information about children's progress towards the early learning goals so that parents can support their children's learning for example; more formal key worker meetings, more frequent written reports on which parents comments can be included or include space on an initial child profile for parents and staff to record their on going comments on the children's progress.

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.