



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 650148

DfES Number: 510310

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/10/2003  
Inspector Name Chris Gregson

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name The Centre Pre-school (Colc)  
Setting Address The Centre  
Straight Road  
COLCHESTER  
Essex  
CO3 5EF

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Centre Pre School 1035531

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Centre Pre School  
Address The Centre  
Straight Road  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO3 9EF

## 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 Centre Pre-school opened in 1973. It operates from two rooms in a community building in Colchester. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently thirty-two children from two to under five years on roll. This includes twenty funded three year olds and five funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with special needs and some children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45.

Seven part time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One staff member is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

The Centre Pre-school provides a satisfactory standard of care for all children. Children are protected by effective policies and procedures that are shared with parents. The supervisor is highly qualified and, along with other staff, attends short courses to update existing knowledge. Displays of children's work, photos and posters enhance the building. The resources that reflect diversity are very good and children are happy and know the daily routine.

The pre-school is secure and staff operate an effective registration system. Staff know about health and safety, child protection procedures, have first aid training and encourage children to use good hygiene practice. Effective records inform about children's health and welfare including any specific diet or allergies and staff act on this to ensure children are protected.

Staff plan a range of activities to promote the children's overall development.

Children freely choose from these during the first part of the session. However, this good practice becomes diluted towards the end of some sessions. Staff observe and record children's progress and provide extra help for children with a specific need. Children's behaviour is generally good, however, there are inconsistencies in how staff deal with occasional instances of challenging behaviour. Children can play inside and in the playground outside, where staff supervise the children closely to ensure they are safe.

Partnership with parents is very good. Staff warmly welcome parents and children to the group and help children to settle and feel secure. Children are cared for according to their parents' wishes and they find staff friendly and helpful. They are kept informed of future plans through newsletters and informed of their child's progress through informal daily contact and an open morning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection, the pre-school agreed to keep a record of significant incidents. A book has now been prepared so that any incident can be recorded to ensure the safety of the children and staff.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff provide a very good range of resources with positive images in the posters, books, small world figures, dressing up clothes and computer programmes.
- Partnership with parents is very good. Staff are friendly and supportive and encourage parents to help settle the children into the pre-school providing children with a secure environment.
- Staff provide good support for children with a specific need. They work with parents and other professionals to provide for individual needs and to encourage children's learning in the early years.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- behaviour management, so staff are consistent throughout the session
- the procedure for ensuring the accident book is always countersigned
- the organisation of sessions, to fully involve children at all times.

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

Std	Recommendation
3	Ensure children are engaged in purposeful play throughout all the session.
7	Ensure that parents countersign all records in the accident book.
11	Develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at the Centre Pre-school is generally good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a range of activities both inside and outside. They give clear instructions and ask questions to make the children think about things they see and do, however, organisation and management of staff's time and resources limit children's learning in some aspects of literacy and mathematics. Large group sessions do not always extend the learning for the more able child. Staff know the individual children and plan activities around the child's own interest.

Staff have developed a system to observe and assess the children within their key-worker groups. This is linked to the stepping stones and used to plan for the individual child's learning. Staff provide good support for children with a specific learning need.

Leadership and management are generally good. The staff plan and work together as a team and are given time to plan and evaluate the activities. There is a very comprehensive system in place, and information displayed, to ensure all staff and volunteers know what area of learning is being covered in the activity and what is expected of them. Staff are given information about training courses and there is an annual appraisal system

The partnership with parents is very good and staff spend time talking informally to parents before and after the sessions. An open morning, where they share the children's records with parents, has been introduced.

### What is being done well?

- Children see and play with a very good range of resources and activities that promote positive images; enabling them to develop an understanding, respect and value for their own and other cultures and beliefs.
- Relationships between staff and parents are very good. Staff welcome, value and listen to parents and provide them with information about the group and their child's learning and progress.
- 'Me and My World' books provide a direct link between home and the pre-school so that the children feel secure and ready to learn within the pre-school environment.
- Clear information is provided on the tables to enable staff and parents to identify the areas of learning being covered in that activity.

- Displays around the room are labelled to show children that the printed word has meaning.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- children's access to books and meaningful writing activities, supported by a variety of materials and tools
- opportunities for children to use simple calculations, in adding and taking away, in everyday activities.

#### **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 identified at the previous inspection resulting in some improvements being made to the educational programme. Staff are involved in, and are developing, the planning. Focus activities provide children with planned opportunities to extend their learning in some areas and inform staff of the required language intended for the activity. Children talk daily at news-time and on a one to one basis with their key worker. They look at books before snack time, see labels around the room and are learning to write their name on their work. However, these activities have not been developed sufficiently to always extend the older and/or more able child. The plans show that staff have introduced some problem solving activities for children in the home corner and play dough activities. A very good précis of the special educational needs code of practice has been devised and shared with all staff members to enable early identification of a child's needs. Very good information has been made available to parents on the areas of learning through the prospectus and also through a display in the window.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and are engrossed in self-selected activities. They form good relationships with the staff and their peers and are learning to be considerate to others. Independence is encouraged and they wash their hands and unpack their own lunchboxes. Children are learning to take turns and share when playing snail or ladybird board games. They are able to talk about their family and share news looking at a post card from abroad.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children freely talk to staff. They are using language to explore imaginary experiences like being a doctor. They listen to stories and respond to simple instructions at the computer. Children know how to hold a book, however the book corner is not freely used. They see words have a purposeful meaning on the wall displays, however this is not extended into other areas such as the home corner and writing table. Children are beginning to write their names with well-formed letters.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can count up to ten and beyond. They are beginning to recognise and write numerals. They learn adding and taking away through songs, however this good practice is not used in everyday activities. Staff encourage them to predict the next number when adding prickles to the clay hedgehog. Children use mathematical language and competently describe position and match shapes on the computer and board games. They can compare size and weight using toy animals.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore and examine a range of materials. They gather leaves from outside and talk about change, colours, seasons and then use them to print on clay. They watch the butterfly life-cycle and are developing a sense of time and place, talking about visiting Marsh Farm and the local school pond looking for frogs. Children can construct using bricks and join materials with glue or tape. They are learning about their own and other cultures through bonfire night and Diwali activities.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move freely around. They climb, balance, slide and travel under and over the climbing frame. They are learning to be aware of healthy eating and visit the local supermarket to buy fruits to eat. They are becoming aware of their bodies and the effects of exercise. They use simple tools such as rakes, spades, funnels, cutters, scissors, paintbrushes and pens. They can use play dough and clay to mould and shape. They see the effects of water on sand when using a mould to create a shape.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can explore colour using paint, crayons and doing activities such as the handprints in red and green for stop and go in road safety. They enthusiastically play musical instruments and hear music at snack-time. They use imagination with stickle bricks, making and flying a plane. They pretend to be doctors or lions that roar and show their claws. They explore shape and form by touch and use all their senses through herbs in the sand tray, peppermint in the play dough and making biscuits.

**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**

- provide more interesting opportunities for children to access books and writing materials freely throughout all of the session
- use more everyday opportunities to further develop children's use of simple calculation.

*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.*