



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 650006

DfES Number: 513143

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/03/2004
Inspector Name Janette Elaina Langford

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name The Centre Preschool
Setting Address Lifelong Learning Centre - Broadmayne
The Hub, Ely Way
Basildon
Essex
SS14 2EQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Centre Pre-school Committee 286158

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Centre Pre-school Committee
Address Broadmayne
The Hub, Ely Way
Basildon
Essex
SS14 2EQ

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 1976 and has been operating from these premises since 2000. It operates from one main room with kitchen and toilet facilities in a life long learning centre in Basildon. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 57 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 30 funded 3 year olds and 13 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special needs and 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 and 12:45 until 15:15.

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

How good is the Day Care?

The Centre Pre-school provides good care for children.

Staff are very experienced and the Supervisor and Deputy have recently completed their level 3 qualifications. The setting is well ordered with routines that allow the staff to spend the maximum time with children. The premises is organised to ensure plenty of space for play both inside and out and allows many activities to run simultaneously. The equipment is of good quality, checked regularly and staff use a resource centre to complement the activities. Documentation has been updated as part of the PSLA Accreditation scheme although times of arrival and departure of children are not currently recorded.

Staff are vigilant and keep all play areas safe. There are relevant policies and procedures to ensure staff and parents are aware of safety issues. Staff promote

good health and hygiene and ensure children are cared for appropriately if they are ill. The setting provides adequate healthy and nutritious snacks. Staff are aware of their responsibilities towards child protection and understand the procedures.

The care, learning and play of all children is good and staff take account of children who have special needs or speak English as an additional language. Staff encourage children to have positive attitudes to our similarities and differences and provide an environment where they can learn about other cultures. Children behave well in response to high, but reasonable, expectations of the staff, they are given choices and kept busy throughout the session.

A good relationship exists between parents and staff with regular discussions about their children. Notice boards provide plenty of information for parents about relevant issues, forthcoming events and what activities the children are involved in. Parents readily approach staff for help and advice with their children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group was asked to ensure that all persons looking after children were suitable to do so. Relevant forms were completed to ensure all vetting information was updated.

What is being done well?

- The session runs smoothly from start to finish, routines enable all activities to remain available throughout the session and staff are deployed effectively with the children, with the minimum of time spent away from them.
- Staff make good use of their outdoor area by providing a variety of interesting activities for the children. Staff instigate games incorporating kicking, throwing and catching balls and beanbags and roll hoops to the children. They look for creatures and grow plants and sometimes use the adjacent adventure playground.
- The staff provide a rich environment which promotes the understanding of different cultures. Posters showing street scenes in other countries are displayed at child height and the resources reflect our multicultural society.
- Children's behaviour is very good, the children respond well to requests and know the routine well. The rolling snack time and short circle time ensure that children do not have to sit for unreasonably long periods and can spend the maximum time enjoying the other activities provided.

What needs to be improved?

- the details of times of arrival and departure in the register.

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
14	Include details of times of arrival and departure in the register.

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 The Centre Pre-school is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in their mathematical development and physical development and very good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff understand how children learn and seize most opportunities to extend this and aim activities at individual abilities. Staff know the importance of observations and assessment records to help in planning and to assist in children's progress. A rich learning environment is maintained and staff are aware of the importance of letting children do things for themselves and displaying their work. The planning does not reflect the good practice. It only links to one learning goal and does not detail links to the six areas of learning. Differentiation is not shown in the planning and evaluations are not written.

Leadership and management are very good. The committee, supervisor and staff work well together to provide a strong team. The supervisor is able to assess most of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting through regular monitoring of systems and practice. She liaises regularly with the EYDCP and PSLA to ensure they are kept abreast of new issues and encourages the staff to have regular training. The setting is committed to the improvement of care and education for all children.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with clear information about the setting and the curriculum. They are kept well informed of their child's achievements and progress, through reports and open days. Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their child, through discussion and questionnaires, and are readily encouraged to help in the sessions.

What is being done well?

- Children enjoy using their emergent writing skills for a purpose, they record some of their activities such as weighing and write their own ideas under their drawings and models. Sometimes the children look out of the window and 'write' down what they see and they make their own marks on labels for their lunch boxes.
- All the displays around the room are child orientated. Staff encourage children to do all the creative work themselves and are there just to guide the children if necessary.
- Children are confident and friendly, readily approaching adults, both familiar and unfamiliar, for help and guidance. They initiate conversations with them, asking names, ages and what they are doing.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities to help children develop their larger physical skills indoors
- the system for written plans, so that they accurately reflect what is already in practice

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good progress since the last inspection. The programme for literacy provides focused activities to improve the children skills. Children write with more purpose and are developing a greater awareness of sounds and letters.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, friendly and use their initiative. They seek adults for help when necessary and have a positive approach to trying new things. There is a wide range of activities from which children can choose which keep them engaged throughout the session. Children are learning to make decisions about what they eat, when to have a drink and demonstrate that they can stand up for their own rights.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have frequent opportunities for purposeful emergent writing. They record what they see, what they have drawn, write letters and practice their names on their own work. Children are confident to speak to familiar and unfamiliar adults and connect ideas together during their play. Books are enjoyed by children in small groups in the book area and as part of a larger group activity. They show enthusiasm for favourite stories and join in with repeated refrains.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are beginning to understand labels as numbers and for counting. Most children can count up to five and some beyond. Children have activities to encourage recognition of numerals and enjoy recording activities such as weighing oranges and lemons. There are some opportunities to learn simple calculation and problem solving but occasionally chances are missed to reinforce this daily. Children recognise shapes in their environment and understand different size concepts.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their natural exploratory skills to investigate and make sense of the world around them, by looking closely at things and asking questions. They have opportunities to grow plants, care for pets and look at the life cycles of caterpillars and tadpoles first hand. Children are learning about ICT and can operate simple programmes on the computer. They are developing an understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move safely and with confidence, using their bodies with increasing control. They are learning to balance, jump, run and stop and enjoy using equipment such as hoops and beanbags. There are fewer opportunities for children to develop their larger physical skills indoors. Children are competent at using tools such as scissors and have planned safe activities using woodworking tools.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have daily opportunities to paint and make collages. They enjoy using different materials and media to design and record their own ideas. They construct larger 3D models from junk materials. Children enjoy making music with percussion instruments both familiar ones and from around the world. They move in time to the rhythm of their singing. There are numerous props to support children in their role-play, whilst they act out both real and imagined experiences.

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

- increase the opportunities to help children develop their larger physical skills indoors
- improve the system for written plans, so they accurately reflect what is already in practice.

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.