



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 133487

DfES Number: 517408

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 04/03/2004
Inspector Name Jane Melissa Hull

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Combe Pre-School
Setting Address Methodist School Room
Park Road
Combe, Witney
Oxfordshire
OX29 8NQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Combe Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Combe Pre-School
Address Methodist School Room
Park Road
Combe, Witney
Oxfordshire
OX29 8NQ

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

Combe Pre-School opened in 1968. It operates from a Methodist school room in the village of Combe. The group serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 16 children from two to 5 years on roll. This includes 7 funded 3 year olds and 3 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special needs and no children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45. A lunch club is available from 11:45 until 13:00.

Three staff work with the children, all of whom have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The nursery education at Combe Pre-School group has significant weaknesses. Children are happy and are developing confidence and self-esteem within the group. They are making generally good progress in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. However, children's progress in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development has significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff create a caring and welcoming environment for children and make good use of the available outdoor areas. Staff have knowledge of the early learning goals and stepping stones children take towards them but routinely fail to apply this knowledge to maximise individual children's learning during play and activities. Staff maintain records of children's progress and undertake general planning for learning. Children generally behave well but staff occasionally fail to control and organise children, to ensure they gain the most from the activities. Staff do not make effective use of space and resources and the organisation of the learning environment does not encourage children to be self-sufficient.

Leadership and management is generally good. The management team and staff work well together and are developing systems of monitoring the provision for nursery education. However, expectations of teaching are not high enough. The staff team are committed to their professional development and are well-supported by the committee in improving the education for all children.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good quality information about the setting and what their children are doing. They have opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and have regular opportunities to share what they know about their children's progress with staff.

What is being done well?

- Staff create a welcoming and caring environment in which children are happy and settled. Parents report children to be eager to attend and to enjoy their time within the group.
- Children are confident and are developing self-esteem. Staff are knowledgeable about each individual child and provide them with appropriate sensitive care and support.
- Parents receive good quality information via the prospectus, newsletters and notices. Parents are encouraged to assist in the sessions and contribute to their children's learning. Regular parents evenings provide parents with opportunities to discuss children's progress with staff to complement the informal daily chats enjoyed.

What needs to be improved?

- use of space and resources
- the range of child initiated activities at each session
- staff's use of opportunities to extend children's learning and experiences
- the management and organisation of children
- children's independent use of books
- opportunities for children to make marks and practise their handwriting
- opportunities for children to use their imagination in art and craft activities and role play
- opportunities for children to select their preferred materials, resources and tools.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection staff place emphasis on the recognition of sounds however, the programme for language and literacy requires further development. Resources such as books, which reflect ethnic and cultural diversity, are more widely reflected in the group. However, children do not seek out books, or use other resources regularly.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are happy and settled in the caring environment. They are interested in activities and are developing confidence and self-esteem. Children are developing their concentration skills and speak confidently in the familiar group. Children enjoy praise for appropriate behaviour but occasionally struggle to work effectively as part of a group. Children are developing a sense of community and are learning about the views and needs of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident communicators who initiate conversations and interact when engaged by staff. Children enjoy stories and are able to listen and respond to them with enjoyment. However, they do not routinely seek out books for independent use. Children are linking sounds with letters. They recognise their names and 4 yr olds attempt to write them. Children have limited opportunities to make marks and practise their handwriting or to write for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children use numbers confidently, counting everyday objects reliably beyond 10. Children can re-create simple patterns and use numbers in familiar contexts. Children are developing language to describe size, shape and quantity but have limited opportunities to use this and other mathematical concepts, in the setting. The learning environment contains limited numerals for children's reference.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are learning about the place in which they live and enjoy regular outings and outdoor activities. Children identify and find out about living things and objects. They are learning about the beliefs, customs and cultures of others and enjoy marking a variety of festivals by practical activities. Children are confident in the use of computers and negotiate a simple computer programme well. When designing and making, children have few opportunities to select resources for themselves.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing confidence in movement and an awareness of space. They use a range of outdoor play equipment with confidence and have regular opportunities to develop their large motor skills. Children are developing skills in using equipment such as scissors and pencil sharpeners. Children are learning good practices with regard to exercise, eating and personal hygiene.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children enjoy singing simple songs from memory but have limited opportunities to use musical instruments. Children undertake a range of arts and crafts although many of these are to create adult-determined outcomes using materials and equipment pre-selected by staff. Children have few opportunities to use their imagination in art work and opportunities for role play are limited by the organisation of space. Children enjoy using their senses during baking and feely-bag activities.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure staff use their knowledge of the early learning goals and stepping stones children take towards them, to extend opportunities for children's learning, taking into account their individual needs and abilities
- develop techniques of managing activities and children, to improve the quality of the children's experiences and to maximise the activities' outcomes for children
- review the use of space and resources, to provide children with additional opportunities to develop their learning and select resources for themselves and work independently.

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.