



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 301135

DfES Number: 516322

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	04/06/2003
Inspector Name	Pauline Pinnegar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Play Hut
Setting Address	347 North Road Darlington County Durham DL1 3BL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	MS Lindsay McCaskill
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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 Play Hut Day Nursery opened in June 1994. It operates from a two storey property with a large two storey extension. To the rear of the property is a purpose built baby unit. There is also an outdoor play area. The nursery is situated on the north side of Darlington within easy distance of Darlington town centre. The nursery serves the local and surrounding community.

There are currently 92 children from five months to four years on roll. This includes 17 funded three year olds and 16 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. One child has special needs and the group supports one child who speaks English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round except bank holidays and public holidays. Sessions are from 8.00am to 6.00pm. Nine part time and eight full time staff work with the children. Ten staff have early years qualifications and seven staff are currently on training programmes. The nursery receives support from a teacher from Early Years Development and childcare Partnership.(EYDCP)

How good is the Day Care?

The Play Hut Nursery provides satisfactory quality care for children. Management and staff work well together as a team to provide a warm and welcoming environment for children, their parents and carers. Most staff have childcare qualifications and have a consistent approach to their work through regular staff meetings, however deployment of staff in the pre school room when covering absences needs to be more effective. There is a strong commitment to training and further development.

Most staff have an awareness of safety issues however, supervision outdoors including the security of the premises needs to be more effective. Toys and equipment also need to be checked more rigorously.

Staff promote the good health of children by taking positive steps to prevent the

spread of infection. They raise childrens awareness of good hygiene practices. Appropriate measures are taken if a child becomes ill. Childrens individual routines for hygiene, sleeping and feeding are respected particularly in the baby room.

A good range of activities and play opportunities are provided which develop childrens emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. However resources that reflect cultural diversity should be more accessible to the younger children and large outdoor equipment should offer more challenge for older children. Toys should be more accessible for pre school children.

Staff meet childrens needs through sensitive and appropriate interactions that promote childrens self esteem. Childrens behaviour throughout the nursery is good with good relationships established between children and staff. Childrens progress is monitored by staff to inform planning for individual needs. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are well supported.

Parents are welcomed into the nursery and encouraged to share information regarding their child's progress and development. All policies and procedures are available to parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Risk assessments now take place on a regular basis with clear written records maintained including any actions to be taken.

All recommendations required by environmental health have been actioned.

What is being done well?

- Staff have good relationships with children. They help children develop confidence and self esteem by providing a warm secure and stimulating environment. Good attention is given to meeting babies individual needs. (standard 3)
- Children know the boundaries for behaviour and respond well to the praise and encouragement given by staff. (standard 11)
- Staff promote the good health of the children. They are encouraged to wash their hands before meals. Good health and hygiene policies in place. (standard 7)
- There is a strong emphasis on partnership with parents and carers. Parents are kept fully informed and involved in their childs care and progress. (standard 12)

What needs to be improved?

- deployment of staff when covering staff absences. (standard 2)
- the information recorded on room registers. (standards 2 & 14)

- security of premises including access to the kitchen. (standard 6)
- safety indoors making sure sockets, toys, equipment, hazardous substances and stairs are safe or inaccessible to children. (standard 6)
- the provision of resources which reflect cultural diversity for children under three years.
- (standards 5 & 9)
- the provision of large outdoor equipment to challenge children aged three to four years.
- (standard 5 & 3)
- the accessibility of toys and equipment for children aged three to four years.
- (standards 3 & 5)
- the safe storage of records in rooms. (standard 14)

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
2	record times of children's, staff and visitors arrival and departure in nursery rooms.
2	deploy staff more effectively in pre school room when covering staff absences
3	ensure all toys and resources are easily accessible for children aged 3 to 4 years
5	ensure that toys and equipment are well maintained and safe
5	provide a suitable range of outdoor toys, in order to offer sufficient challenge for children aged 3 to under 5 years.
6	ensure that children do not have access to the kitchen except with direct staff supervision

6	ensure that the premises are secure
6	ensure all hazardous substances and exposed sockets are inaccessible to children
9	ensure that younger children have access to the full range of resources that promote positive images of cultural diversity.
14	ensure all records are stored securely

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Play Hut provides a warm and welcoming environment where children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children make generally good progress in their personal, social, emotional, communication, language, literacy, mathematical, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff support children's learning and plan and provide a broad range of activities which support children's needs, however, resources are not always easily accessed by children, outside play equipment does not provide sufficient challenge for more able children and staff are not always effectively deployed. Procedures are in place to support children with special educational needs or with English as an additional language.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. There is a clear commitment to on going staff development and there are systems in place to monitor the provision although does not always show what improvements need to be made.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents find staff are friendly and approachable, They are provided with sufficient information about the setting, how it is organised and about their child's progress towards the early learning goals, although they are not fully aware involved in their child's learning whilst in the setting.

What is being done well?

- Children have good relationships with staff, who they approach confidently, and with each other
- Children use mathematical language in the correct context and they recognise shapes, colours and can count to ten and beyond
- Children use the computer and know how to operate simple equipment confidently
- Children well and are keen to participate in physical activities

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to develop independence at meal times
- the provision of resources outside for more able children
- deployment of staff

What has improved since the last inspection?
There were three areas for development from the last inspection which took place four years ago. Two of the areas have been addressed effectively. Children are now encouraged to write their names using upper and lower case letters and planning includes opportunities to learn about different cultural traditions and religious events. The area of providing more opportunities for children to serve themselves at snack and meal times has not been appropriately addressed and is re-identified in "What needs to be improved".

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They relate well to staff and are developing generally good relationships with their peers. Most understand right from wrong and are beginning to adapt their behaviour to different situations. They are interested and involved in their play although resources are not always easily accessible and they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their independence at meal times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in communication, language and literacy. Children interact, show early negotiating skills and are confident and fluent speakers. They develop reading skills through appropriate use of books and through seeing familiar words around the room. There are insufficient opportunities for children to practise writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in mathematical development. Most children can count, confidently, to ten and some beyond. They are beginning to use mathematical language and most can recognise different shapes, sizes. There are opportunities for children to problem solve and further develop their mathematical ideas in their daily routine although there are missed opportunities to further develop their thinking.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. They use the computer with confidence and can operate simple equipment. They talk about their lives experiences and can differentiate between the past and present. There are opportunities for children to learn about different cultural traditions and religions. There are insufficient opportunities for children to go on outings or have visitors in the setting.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in physical development. They are developing fine motor skills and can use small equipment confidently. They are aware of space and move with confidence and control. Staff encourage children to be active. Children learn about the importance of hygiene through their daily routines. There are insufficient opportunities for children to access appropriate equipment to further develop their large motor skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
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Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in creative development. They have access to a wide range of resources and equipment. They respond well to what they taste, hear, see and smell and express themselves with confidence.

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 opportunities for children to become more independent at meal times
- provide appropriate resources, outside, for more able children
- make sure all staff are familiar with the early learning goals
- make sure resources are easily accessed by children

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.