



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220257

DfES Number: 511901

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 26/11/2004
Inspector Name Katherine Powell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name Victoria Centre Out Of School Activities
Setting Address Victoria Centre, Palk Road
Wellingborough
Northamptonshire
NN8 1HR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Victoria Centre 278215

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Victoria Centre
Address Palk Road
Wellingborough
Northamptonshire
NN8 1HR

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

The Victoria Centre has been registered since 1992. It is a committee run provision which operates from The Victoria Centre in Wellingborough. The provision serves a diverse white and multicultural community.

The provision operates a playgroup and out of school club during school term-time and a playscheme during school holidays. The playgroup runs from 09.15 to 11.45 each week-day, although extended care is also available from 09.00 to 12.30 if required. The out of school club opens every day from 15.00 until 18.00 and caters for children aged four to eleven years. Staff from the centre collect children from a number of local schools. Children walk or are transported to the centre by minibus, depending on the location of the school. The holiday playscheme is open every week-day from 08.00 until 18.00.

Three main play areas are used by the different groups, these include the sports hall, Bailey Room and Sanctuary. There is a large kitchen and dining area which houses the pool table. There is also an outdoor play area which has a safety surface and staff take children to a nearby park.

There are currently 13 children on roll at the playgroup. This includes 2 children in receipt of nursery funding for 3-year-olds and 1 child in receipt of funding for 4-year-olds. There are 52 children on roll at the out of school club. There are children attending who have been identified with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

There is a group of core staff who work at the facility, as well as a bank of reserve staff. At least 50 percent of the staff have appropriate early years qualifications. The person in charge has direct responsibility for the management of all the childcare facilities at the Victoria Centre and their day to day running.

The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Victoria Centre Playgroup offers a welcoming and stimulating learning environment where children feel happy and secure. Overall, the children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals and in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and physical development they are making very good progress.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning and assessment systems provide a suitable framework to help children develop their skills and make progress. Staff work well as a team and plan an interesting range of activities to cover the six areas of learning. Staff provide a rich variety of experiences to promote children's awareness of diversity within society. Physical activities are well planned and staff use space and available apparatus effectively. Staff interact well with children and have formed effective relationships. They question children during practical activities to extend their learning, however, children are not actively encouraged to independently select reading materials and there are missed opportunities to further develop children's awareness of some mathematical language during daily routines. There are effective systems in place to support children with special needs. Children behave very well in response to high expectations and support from staff. Children's thoughts and ideas are valued, although they are not able to freely access a wide range of tools and materials during creative activities.

Leadership and management is very good. Senior managers ensure that staff are well supported, good early years practice is shared and areas for future development are identified. Staff are positively encouraged to undertake further training.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive high quality written information about the provision and the curriculum. Parents are well informed about their child's progress and achievements and have opportunities to contribute to assessment records.

What is being done well?

- Staff have developed very good links with the local community and consequently provide a broad range of activities to promote children's awareness of diversity within society.
- High priority is given to promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are very well behaved, confident and have developed high levels of independence.
- There is a very good partnership with parents which is fostered through effective written and verbal communication. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning.

- The planning of the educational programme effectively promotes learning in all six areas. Staff know children well and plan activities which build on their previous skills and learning.
- Staff make very good use of the outdoor area and available resources to promote children's physical skills. Activities are well planned and are included in the daily programme.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to use appropriate language to compare two numbers during daily routines
- opportunities for children to independently select books and reading materials during free play sessions
- the range of tools and materials freely available to children during creative activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup has made very good progress since the last inspection to address the four key issues raised.

Additional musical resources have been acquired to enhance opportunities for children to listen, respond to and make music. Children are able to freely access musical instruments throughout the session and have regular opportunities to move imaginatively to music. Staff have developed a wide selection of cassettes for children to listen to, including music from a variety of cultures. Children are able to see numerals displayed around the room and have access to a wide variety of play resources, such as telephones, clocks, keyboards and computer programmes to support their awareness of numerals. Children have good opportunities to initiate their own activities. They are able to access a range of resources and equipment during each session to support their play and are encouraged to make their own suggestions. Staff encourage them to move freely between different play areas, including the outdoor area. With regard to children's assessment records, staff have accessed support from the curriculum advisor at Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. This has helped them to develop and implement an effective system for monitoring and assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals in each area of learning.

Staff have taken positive action to address the issues raised which has had beneficial impact overall on children's learning and development.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are highly motivated and eager to learn. They are interested in the activities and interact confidently with both adults and peers. They select their own activities and move freely between different play areas. Children show care and concern for others and learn to take turns during group activities. Very good standards of behaviour are maintained. Through discussion and planned activities children are developing respect for their own culture and beliefs and those of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children engage easily in conversation with others and are developing a wide vocabulary. Children are able to read and write their names independently and more able children write some letters of the alphabet in response to letter sounds. They enjoy mark marking and learn to write for different purposes in role-play activities. Children listen with interest to stories during group activities and have access to a wide range of books; however, they do not often select these independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count in sequence to at least ten and learn to use number in everyday situations. They are developing their awareness of addition and subtraction through songs and rhymes but have fewer opportunities to develop their awareness of, and use of language, when comparing two numbers. Children use a range of mathematical vocabulary to describe shape, quantity and position and are able to sort and match objects according to given criteria, such as colour and size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk about their own lives and recount past and present events. They use their senses to explore the natural world and to describe changes which occur when heating and melting materials. Children use a range of technology resources, including the computer, to support their learning. They have regular opportunities to visit and learn about the local community. A wide range of tools and materials are not freely available when children are designing and making.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn to move confidently and imaginatively around the environment both indoors and outdoors. They have regular opportunities to practice a range of skills, including climbing and balancing, and are developing good co-ordination. They are learning about the importance of keeping healthy through a good diet, exercise and personal hygiene routines.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have regular opportunities to play musical instruments and listen to music from other cultures. They move imaginatively to music and explore different sounds and rhythms. Children engage enthusiastically in role-play activities based on first hand experience and imagination. Children use a range of media to explore colour and texture, although, they are not able to freely select from a wide variety of tools and materials to communicate their ideas.

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

- extend opportunities for children to freely select from a wide range of tools and materials during creative activities and when designing and making
- further encourage children to independently select books and reading materials during play activities and extend children's awareness of, and use of language, when comparing two numbers.

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.