



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY281631

DfES Number: 517453

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	02/02/2005
Inspector Name	Carol Mansell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Mill Lane Pre-School Association
Setting Address	URC Hall Mill Lane Broxbourne Hertfordshire EN10 7BQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Mill Lane Pre School Association 1023359
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Mill Lane Pre School Association
Address	58 Baas Lane Broxbourne Hertfordshire EN10 7EL

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

Mill Lane Pre-School opened in 1964 and operates from three rooms within the church hall. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The Pre-School is open Monday to Thursday from 09:15 to 12:00 term time only. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children aged from 2 years 9 months to 3 years 4 months on roll. Of these 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The Pre-School employs 7 staff. Five of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a qualification. The Pre-School have Qualified Teacher Involvement and are members of the Pre School Learning Alliance. The Pre-School have completed the Herts Quality Standards.

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 Mill Lane Pre-School is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of activities, showing an understanding of what children can learn. However, they have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Planning ensures staff introduce children to most areas of learning. Children's assessments are in place, although these do not provide a clear and systematic record of children's progress. Staff have built warm relationships with the children, foster feelings of security and build children's confidence. Children behave well and respond to direction from staff. Staff develop children's language and literacy skills, but further opportunities could be provided for children to use their initiative with mathematical problem solving and to access information regarding different cultures.

Leadership and management is generally good. The dedicated manager and committed long term staff are a positive strength of the group. The manager includes the staff team in the curriculum planning. She encourages staff training in areas of their personal interests, but these do not necessarily reflect the needs of the group as a whole.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are satisfied with the settling-in procedures which work well. They are able to view their children's files at anytime and there are regular opportunities for them to speak to their child's key worker to discuss what children have done in the session. However, parents receive limited information regarding the Foundation Stage.

What is being done well?

- Relationships between key workers and their groups are well fostered to ensure the children have a feeling of security and develop their confidence to support aspects of their learning.
- The development of children's communication and listening skills. Children are confident speakers and listen well to stories and direction for games and activities, they are also learning simple Makaton signs.
- Children's physical development is progressing well with the use of indoor and outdoor areas and equipment, particularly with the introduction of parachute activities.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered. This enables the children to feel settled, happy, secure and confident in their key groups. Children are learning to share and play co-operatively. They are aware of routines and know what is expected of them. This impacts positively

on behaviour and feelings of security.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, particularly the stepping stones, in order to provide an effective learning environment for the children in all areas
- the use of children's assessments to keep an accurate record of their progress and achievements
- parental information regarding the Foundation Stage
- opportunities for children to explore self chosen activities, an understanding of different cultures and beliefs and mathematical problem solving.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The preschool has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

A number of key issues were raised at the last inspection which have partially been addressed. They are as follows:

To extend the range of phonic and handwriting activities to include writing their names. Children are involved in many activities that encourage handwriting skills and name recognition. The younger children are given opportunities for mark making.

To build up collections of natural materials, such as shells and stones and to increase the resources available for mathematical problem solving. Children are given opportunities to explore natural materials. However, resources to encourage mathematical problem solving are not within the children's reach for independent learning.

To adopt a formal system for identifying training needs. Staff have attended a number of courses including Child Protection, but these do not fully reflect the needs of the group as a whole.

To provide written curriculum information for parents. This is an area which continues to be weak and information available to parents about the Foundation Stage is limited.

To ensure planning includes ways of promoting children's understanding of equal opportunities and cultural diversity, such as, increasing resources for imaginative play, extending book provision and developing opportunities for discussion. Children are accessing resources for imaginative play and a range of books are available in the book area. However, opportunities for discussions are still limited.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are happy and confident in their environment. They have developed good relationships with staff and their peers and talk confidently to visitors. They are learning to share and work collaboratively. Their independence is fostered in areas, such as, snack time and role-play activities. However, there are few child led activities to promote independence skills. Children are confident users of simple Makaton signs. They are aware of the boundaries and manage their behaviour well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well; this is demonstrated at small group time, for example snack and story time activities. Children recognise their own names and are confident mark makers. They speak enthusiastically about past events and enjoy imitating adults in the group. The children enjoy joining in with singing and ring games. They have limited opportunities to explore and experiment with self chosen activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a growing concept of numbers and counting, confidently showing an interest and displaying their knowledge in both large and small group work and spontaneously within the activities in which they are involved. Children are well supported by staff in recognising size and shape, for example, when using the parachute. However, there are few opportunities for children to explore problem solving.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children and their parents participate together in a 'Knowledge and Understanding Treasure Hunt' in their local area. Malleable materials such as playdough, paint and sand are manipulated well by the children. They are developing an interest in themselves and are starting to distinguish between past and present events. However, they have few opportunities to explore and investigate objects and materials, or to develop a sensitivity and understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use a range of equipment both inside and outdoors to develop large and fine motor skills competently. They confidently run, jump and throw using the outdoor area and participate in games for example 'What's the time Mr Wolf'. Children adeptly move around the setting pushing prams and shopping trolleys confidently around the play area. They skilfully build with the construction blocks and train track. They move vigorously with the 'warm up' tape at the start of each session.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enthusiastically take part in adult led activities. They confidently use their imaginations during a range of familiar role play experiences in the home area. Children are building a repertoire of songs and enthusiastically join in with singing and action rhymes in the large group time. However, children do not choose resources independently and this hinders their self-expression and imagination.

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 staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance to the Foundation Stage and use it effectively to help children make progress in all areas of learning
- develop a suitable system to keep an accurate record of children's progress and achievements towards the early learning goals and use these to inform future planning
- formalise the information provided for parents to inform them about the Foundation Stage and to enhance their children's learning at home
- plan and provide activities and everyday opportunities to ensure children have opportunities to develop their own initiative, extend their understanding of early mathematical problem solving and their understanding of different cultures and beliefs.

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.