



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109880

DfES Number: 521435

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/02/2004
Inspector Name Claire Moore

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Army Air Corps Preschool
Setting Address School of Army Aviation
Middle Wallop
Stockbridge
Hampshire
SO20 8DY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Army Air Corps Pre-School Committe 1072065

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Army Air Corps Pre-School Committe
Address School of Army Aviation (SAAvn)
Middle Wallop
Stockbridge
Hampshire
SO20 8DY

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 Army Air Corps Pre-School opened in 1970. The Pre-school is a community pre-school run by a voluntary committee of parents with support from the Army. It operates from five rooms on the first floor of a building on the army campus. There are toilet facilities on the ground floor. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 53 children from 20 months to five years of age years on roll. This includes 17 funded 3 year olds and 11 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times from 09:00 to 15:00. The group operates Monday to Friday, term time only, from 9 am till 3 pm.

Ten staff work with the children. All the staff except one person have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 in early years and childcare, and the remaining member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher 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 provision for nursery education at the Army Air Corps Pre-School is of good quality overall. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of topics and activities and monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals, but the assessments of where children are in their learning is not currently used to inform the plans. Staff encourage children in their efforts, ask questions to encourage children to think, and use a broad vocabulary to help children to develop language skills. They spend most of their time working directly with the children. Children have many opportunities to be creative through role play, construction, and to select paints and materials in art and craft, but they are not often given the opportunity to choose the end product.

The leadership and management is very good. Staff work well together as a team and support each other. Staff are highly qualified and their professional development is encouraged through a system of appraisals and ongoing training. The setting is committed to developing the quality of the education, through monitoring, evaluation, developing action plans and working with professionals.

The partnership with parents is very good. Information about children's progress is shared. Parents receive information through the prospectus, and informal discussion with staff. A daily communications book travels between home and the setting and is used to keep parents informed about their child. Parents are invited in to discuss the progress reports with the staff every half term. Parents are informed about the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Details about the topic of the week are displayed on a notice board.

What is being done well?

- Children's spoken language is developing well. Staff constantly encourage conversation with children, introduce new vocabulary and provide plenty of opportunities for developing language skills.
- Children experience counting, measuring and shape throughout their daily activities and develop good understanding of the use of numbers.
- Management and staff are committed to improvement through further training, appraisals, working with outside professionals, and self assessment.
- Children develop good relationships with adults and other children. They learn to co-operate and work together well by sharing resources in role play and taking turns. They all help to clear away at tidy up time.
- Children enjoy frequent opportunities to explore and investigate. They are

curious , interested and enthusiastic in their learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning, to show ways to adapt the activity to suit children who learn at different rates
- the opportunities for children to be creative in art and craft activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to develop the assessment system, share the assessments with the parents more often and encourage parents to contribute their observations from home.

There is now a communications book for each child and parents are invited in to share and discuss progress every half term. They are also invited to contribute to the report.

The group was also asked to ensure staff include rhymes and mathematical problem solving more often in their planning and during the sessions.

These activities have been included more frequently in the planning and carried through in delivering the curriculum.

They were also asked to ensure there is a greater emphasis on the exploration of the children's own creativity in more of the craft activities.

Children take part in an interesting range of art and craft ideas and use a wide variety of materials. They are now given a choice of colours when painting, and in cutting out activities they do the cutting themselves. However, in most of these activities the end product is not chosen by the child.

They were also asked to provide some resources for the children to investigate how things work and why they happen.

There is now an excellent range of resources, for example magnetic construction, dough extruder, electronic cash till, magnifying glass and computer.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to concentrate well in their activities. They sit quietly to listen and initiate activities. They relate well to other children and to staff. They are becoming very independent in their personal care, visiting the toilet independently and remembering to wash their hands.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's spoken language is developing well. They express their imagined experiences through role play situations. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories in a comfortable reading area. They are developing an understanding of rhyme and learn to hear and say the initial sounds in their names and other words. Most can recognise their printed names and some are able to write them. They make marks writing in role play situations, for example writing orders in a restaurant.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff make counting an integral part of daily activities. Children can count to five and some children to ten and beyond. They count and make comparisons between groups of numbers. They recognise numerals on a till and use various resources to learn about shape, measure and weight. They practise mathematical language when measuring and weighing.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show curiosity and interest in what they see, for example compost, exploring textures on cotton wool, smelling cress seeds and pancakes, using a magnifying glass to make things look bigger. They learn about the natural world through growing cress and bulbs and from visitors who bring in reptiles and mini-beasts. They design and build with construction toys and with recycled materials. They use telephones and a computer as an introduction to technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move confidently with control and co-ordination using climbing and balancing apparatus. They develop manipulative skills with a range of tools and materials such as pencils, scissors, paint brushes, play dough, knives to spread toppings on a pancake, and chopsticks. They understand the importance of good hygiene practice in keeping healthy and staff teach them about healthy foods.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children join in songs and rhymes. They enjoy exploring and mixing colour. They develop imagination and act out experiences by constructing with magnetic blocks, in role play situations, dressing up and improvising with available resources.	
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

- develop the planning by using assessments and adapting it for children at different stages in their learning
- provide more opportunities in art and craft for children to use their imagination and creativity.

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.