



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 115362

DfES Number: 580350

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/06/2004
Inspector Name Sarer Marcia Tarling

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Poppets Pre-school
Setting Address Upper Wickham Lane
 Welling
 Kent
 DA16 3AP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Sandra Neate

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

Poppets Pre-School is privately owned by Mrs Sandra Neate. The pre-school operates from St Michael's Church Hall in Upper Wickham Lane, Welling. It is situated at the lower end of Upper Wickham Lane opposite the horses field. The group has access to the church hall, a side room, storage rooms, kitchen and toilets. The pre-school is set up and cleared away each day as other community groups use the hall. The outside area is not secure, but is occasionally used for directly supervised activities.

Children attend from a wide catchment area and the local community. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 09:30 - 12:00 and 12:15 - 14:45 term time only. They are registered for 35 children aged 3 to 5 years for the morning sessions and 20 children aged 2 years 9 months to 5 years in the afternoons. No more than 12 children under 3 years of age may attend the afternoon sessions.

There are currently 56 children on roll who attend a variety of sessions during the week. This includes 32 funded 3-year-olds and 13 funded 4-year-olds. The group supports several children with special educational needs and there are several children attending for whom English is an additional language. Mrs Neate is a member of Bexley's EYDCP.

There are 8 staff employed, 7 of whom are qualified in early years and all staff have relevant first aid certificates.

How good is the Day Care?

Poppets Pre-School offers a satisfactory standard of care for children. It has an enthusiastic staff team with seven staff holding a recognised childcare qualification and one working toward gaining one. The environment is welcoming with displays of children's work and posters which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The pre-school provides a range of activities and resources which are set out prior to

children arriving, however insufficient and unsuitable chairs are provided and furniture is not all of child size. Staff make child observations, but these are not used as part of the planning process. The session is split into two with a combination of free play and adult directed activities. Large group activities for singing, stories and physical play are not always effective for all the children. However, children are enthusiastic, independent and play co-operatively in small groups. Although the large imaginative role play area is well resourced, it spreads too far over the hall and is not supported by staff.

Children's behaviour is managed very well and children with Special Educational Needs are supported. Staff are confident and aware of the procedure to follow with regard to child protection. There is a written risk assessment and good attention is paid to safety with all staff holding a certificate in first aid. Hand washing and drying facilities are inadequate. Mid-session children stop playing for refreshment time and staff tidy away and set out equipment. Children are divided into two groups and although they are encouraged to serve themselves from a choice of drinks, refreshments are not always in line with healthy eating guidelines.

Regulatory documentation is well maintained and the setting has good relationships with parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Following a recommendation made at the last inspection the pre-school now has a written policy with regard to sick children. The policy is available to parents and states clearly the policy and procedure for excluding children who are ill or infectious.

What is being done well?

- The pre-school is bright and welcoming for children, staff and parents. Display boards give information and examples of children's work and posters are displayed at children's level.
- A good risk assessment procedure is in place. High priority is given to safety issues and there are effective systems in place for the safe arrival and collection of children.
- Minimal behaviour management is required as the staff team have positive, consistent strategies in place which are dependant on the age and level of understanding of the child.
- The partnership with parents is good. Staff have a friendly, welcoming approach to the children and their families. An information leaflet, regular newsletters and an annual open day keep parents informed.
- Regulatory documentation is well maintained. Policies and procedures are comprehensive, well organised and available for staff and parents

What needs to be improved?

- the operational plan to include clear objectives on use of space, resources and equipment, how children are grouped and how staff are deployed
- the system for using child observations as a planning tool
- the provision of suitable furniture to ensure children can sit comfortably and reach equipment
- the provision of suitable hand washing and drying facilities
- the provision of healthy drinks and snacks.

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
3	Devise a system of how to use observations to help to plan appropriate activities for the next steps in children's play opportunities, development and learning.
5	Ensure that sufficient and suitable child size chairs, and appropriate height computer station, are available in order that children may sit comfortably and reach equipment.
7	Ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and that suitable hand washing and drying facilities are available.
8	Promote children's health, growth and development by providing a variety of healthy and nutritious drinks and snacks.
2	Review and update the operational plan to include clear information on staff deployment, the structure of the session, use of space and resources. Ensure that children are grouped appropriately with sufficient staff working directly with them to meet their needs effectively.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Poppets Pre-school provides a warm and caring environment for children. The standard of nursery education is acceptable overall but is limited by some significant weaknesses in mathematics, communication, language and literacy and physical development. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in their personal social and emotional development, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development.

The quality of teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff provide an interesting play programme and spend time making the hall welcoming and attractive to children. They support children at set activities, encouraging them to explore and investigate and offering appropriate praise and encouragement. Although staff produce detailed plans and record what children do, they do not have a sound understanding of the early learning goals or of how to help children progress through the stepping stones. Children's assessment records are not used effectively to inform planning.

Although the dedicated staff team work well together and the playleader continues to up-date her training and encourages on-going staff training, there are significant weaknesses in the leadership and management. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to their work and carry out evaluations of activities in order to make improvements. However, the systems in place are not sufficiently rigorous and have not identified weaknesses in the provision.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Staff have relaxed and informal relationships with parents who are given good information about the setting and kept up to date through newsletters. They have some information about the six areas of learning but no information about the early learning goals or stepping stones. Parents are able to speak to their child's key worker at any time and, in addition, are invited to an annual parents evening and receive a written report when their child leaves.

What is being done well?

- Staff support children's personal, social and emotional development well. They are kind and caring and foster children's self-esteem with appropriate praise and encouragement. Children who are worried or anxious are given good support and clear explanations about how the setting works; for example, when a member of staff drew a pictorial time-line to show a new child what would happen that afternoon before her mother came to collect her.
- Staff manage children's behaviour well, they have high expectations and children clearly know and understand the accepted norms within the setting. During free-play children are largely self-disciplined. They are kind and caring

towards each other and are polite and friendly to adults.

- Children enjoy playing in the extremely well resourced role play area which provides them with some good opportunities for spontaneous imaginary play. They are able to dress-up and invent games and are learning to share, take turns and negotiate with each other.
- Staff have formed good relationships with parents who appreciate their hard work and dedication. Parents know they can discuss their child with his/her key worker at any time and are invited to an annual parents evening where they can look at examples of their child's work and discuss their progress more formally.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and of how to use assessment to inform planning for children's progress in line with the stepping stones
- the deployment of staff to ensure that all areas of play are well supported
- the organisation of group times to ensure that they are effective for all children

What has improved since the last inspection?

Limited progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff have now provided a well resourced writing/drawing area which has a good selection of paper and drawing pads together with a range of pens, pencils and markers which are attractively presented on a row of tables. However the absence of any suitable seating for children results in the area not being used effectively for children to practice their early writing and drawing skills.

Writing materials are now provided in the role play area, however this area is large and children are not always clear where, for example, the home corner ends and the café or shop begins. Consequently children are not always given sufficient clues about writing for a purpose and do not always use these materials effectively.

Staff are not able to take children into the outdoor area on a regular basis because of restrictions imposed by the church and because the site is not fully secure. However, staff do take groups of children into the churchyard for project work. They also invite members of the local community, for example the community police officer, postman, dentist and local authority recycling officer into the group to help children learn about their community.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children settle well to play, they are confident and concentrate well at chosen activities, particularly those with adult support. Staff foster children's self esteem by valuing children's efforts and offering appropriate praise and encouragement. Children share and take turns, they are friendly and learning to become self-disciplined during free-play. However, children sometimes become bored and restless during group times as this part of the session is less well managed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident, fluent speakers who enjoy conversation. They enjoy chatting about their home and family and are able to re-call and re-tell past events from their lives. The well resourced writing area lacks appropriate seating so the area is hardly used. Older children are taught to read using a reading scheme, but children are not encouraged to use books for pleasure; staff do not routinely sit in the book corner unless they are timetabled to do so and books are poorly displayed.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Activities for 4-year-olds provide them with opportunities to explore numbers and counting and many are able to count reliably to 10 and can recognise and name numerals. Many activities help children explore shape. Staff do not effectively support activities which are provided to help children develop and practice their mathematical understanding. They do not introduce mathematical language, concepts, counting and calculation to children in daily routines and practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children play with natural materials such as sand, water and playdough each day and look at aspects of the natural world and living things in topic work and during outings into the churchyard. Children design, make and build using a range of commercial equipment and recycled materials. Routines help children to understand the rhythms of the day and topic work introduces them to aspects of the local community and the wider world. A computer is provided on a high table so access is limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are able to use a range of small equipment, tools and malleable materials with growing skill and dexterity. Children are able to climb and use wheeled toys. However, opportunities for physical play are limited to set days and the planning and organisation of this time does not ensure that children's large motor development is fully supported and children spend periods of time queuing for favourite pieces of equipment. Plans do not show how children will make progress in this area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have many opportunities for role play in the exceptionally well resourced role play area. They enjoy inventing their own games and are learning to share and negotiate with each other. However, these resources are not always well organised and staff interaction is limited. A range of media and materials for art and craft work is available and, although much of the art work is adult led, staff do encourage children to explore the materials for themselves when they have completed a task.

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's 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

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and of how to use assessment to inform planning so that children make good progress along the stepping stones
- review staff deployment and ensure that staff support children's play effectively in all areas
- review the organisation of group times to ensure that they are effective for all 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.