



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 219885

DfES Number: 517907

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/11/2004
Inspector Name Jill Hunn

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Old Stratford Pre-School, Community Centre
Setting Address Deanshanger Road
Old Stratford
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK19 6NL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Old Stratford Pre School Playgroup 1033454

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Old Stratford Pre School Playgroup
Address Deanshanger Road
Old Stratford
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK19 6NL

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

Old Stratford Pre-School opened in 1989. It operates from the Community Hall on the outskirts of the village of Old Stratford in the extreme south of Northamptonshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term time. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and from 12:15 to 14:45.

There are currently 48 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from Old Stratford and surrounding villages.

The pre-school employs six staff. Three of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and a further member of staff is currently working towards a qualification.

The setting receives support from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The pre-school is currently working towards the PSLA 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation scheme.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Old Stratford Pre-School provides good quality nursery education which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals and very good progress in most areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good with some very good aspects. Most staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and how children learn. Planning is clear with learning intentions and staff roles identified. Staff plan an exciting range of activities which capture children's interest well and there are very few gaps in the curriculum. The programme generally challenges children well although they are not always able to freely select resources and make independent choices about their play and learning. Staff develop warm and trusting relationships with the children. They make good use of questioning to extend children's learning, respond to their interests and encourage them to try new experiences. Clear systems are in place to support children with special educational needs. Staff consistently encourage children and manage their behaviour successfully. They organise their time effectively and make very good use of the premises, particularly the outdoor area, to promote children's learning. Staff make regular observations of children's progress but the system used for assessment is not sufficiently linked to the stepping stones and the information gained is not always used to plan the next stage in learning for all children.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. Effective management systems are generally in place and the committee have developed supportive links with the pre-school. Staff are very committed, enthusiastic and work very well together as a successful team.

The partnership with parents is generally good. A wide range of good quality information is available to parents about the pre-school and the curriculum. Parents and staff regularly share information about children's progress and achievements.

What is being done well?

- Staff consistently praise and encourage children and value them as individuals. They give children time and space to pursue an activity without interruption and respond to their interests. As a result, children become confident, curious and keen to learn.
- Staff provide an environment which is rich in a variety of print and texts. They sign words when reading stories and sharing books with children. They encourage children to use their emerging writing skills during role play activities and to name their work.
- Children are challenged to refine and develop their physical skills during indoor and outdoor activities. They stretch, balance and move to music

during PE sessions, climb and slide using outdoor apparatus and successfully use a range of tools and small objects.

- Staff make very good use of the available space to provide a wide range of activities for children. They make excellent use of the outdoor area and equipment to develop children's skills. Children are able to access the outdoor area at each session and are provided with raincoats and umbrellas for use in wet weather.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to select activities and resources for themselves
- opportunities for children to find out about features of their local environment
- the system for observation and assessment of children's progress so that assessments are linked to the stepping stones to show children's progress towards the early learning goals
- planning, so that information gained from observations and assessments is used to plan the next stage in learning for all children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the three key issues raised at the last inspection. Two specialist members of staff have been appointed and have attended appropriate training, relating to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Clear systems are now in place to identify and support children with special educational needs. The management and organisation of story time has been adapted to meet the needs of three-year-old children. The grouping of children for story time has been revised, stories are now more matched to the age and stage of the children and resources are used, such as puppets, to further engage younger children's attention. The system of planning activities has been developed since the last inspection so that it covers all six areas of learning and identifies learning intentions. Parents now complete an 'All about me' booklet when children join the pre-school and are invited to add their written comments to children's profiles which enables staff to build on what children already know. The system for assessment of children's progress has been reviewed but is not sufficiently linked to the stepping stones to clearly show where all children are in their learning. The process of linking assessments into the planning has been developed but does not yet include planning the next stage in learning for all children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They are confident. They try new activities with enthusiasm, persevere and they concentrate well. Children form strong relationships with adults and peers. They seek out others to share experiences and work together. Children behave well and are polite with some children managing the behaviour of others. Children successfully develop their personal independence but do not sufficiently select and use activities and resources independently.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak confidently to each other, staff and other adults. They listen well in group situations, respond to questions and express their ideas. Children enjoy a range of fiction and factual books and recognise their names from cards. Older children successfully link sounds to letters. Children attempt writing for different purposes. Younger children make marks with older children writing recognisable letters, with some writing all of their name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Three-year old children are successfully developing their number recognition and counting skills to ten with four-year-old children beyond. Children compare groups of objects and begin to sequence numbers up to ten. They are developing their understanding of simple addition and subtraction through practical activities and songs. Children explore capacity with sand and water play and make patterns during craft activities. They use language to describe size, shape, weight and position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children investigate a range of interesting objects and materials using all their senses. They learn about growth by planting bulbs and observe what happens when ice melts. Children competently use computers and programmable toys to support their learning. They begin to differentiate between past and present events. Children develop an awareness of their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. However, they do not sufficiently find out about features of their local environment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move with confidence, control and co-ordination. They experiment with different ways of moving. They develop new skills as they are challenged to stretch and balance, for example, when enacting building a snowman during PE sessions. Children show respect for other's personal space when moving around the premises and during activities. They develop an awareness of how to keep healthy. Children use a range of large and small equipment skilfully and with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children express their creativity with a range of colours, textures and materials. They work in two and three dimensions and on a large and small scale. Children sing a repertoire of songs and action rhymes and move to music. They use musical instruments to make sound patterns and listen to different styles of music. Children express their ideas and feelings and make connections in their learning as they play alongside each other in a variety of role play situations.

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

- further develop the system for observation and assessment of children's progress so that assessments are systematic and informative and sufficiently linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Make sure this information is used to plan the next stage in learning for all children
- provide further opportunities for children to select and use activities and resources independently and to learn about their local environment.

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.