



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 146753

DfES Number: 582882

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	06/10/2003
Inspector Name	Valerie Billington

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Offley Pre-School Group
Setting Address	Offley JMI School School Lane, Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3AT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Offley Pre-School Group 1053091
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Offley Pre-School Group
Address	School Lane Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3AT

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

Offley Pre- school opened in 1972. It operates from a purpose built mobile unit within the grounds of Offley JMI School in the village of Offley. The Pre- school serves the local community.

There are currently 13 children from 2 years 9 months to 4 years on the roll. This includes 7 funded three year olds and 1 funded four year old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:45, together with a lunch club between 11:45 and 12:45 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

6 full and part time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Two members of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher at Offley School and from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Offley Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children. Over 50% of staff are qualified although evidence of this needs to be available at the setting. Staff are deployed to meet the needs of the children who present as being confident and secure in their presence. However, procedures to deputise are not in place. The environment is warm and welcoming with the space provided used to enhance the children's learning. A range of resources is in place although those reflecting equal opportunities are limited. Most policies and procedures are up to date and in line with the National Standards.

Staff are aware of the potential hazards regarding safety and have taken steps to minimise them. Staff are active in promoting health and hygiene and all required documentation is in place. Children's dietary requirements are met and all are

treated with equal concern. Children with special needs are encouraged to play alongside their peers.

A wide variety of activities and experiences are provided enabling the children to develop in all areas of learning. The management of behaviour is consistent and age appropriate.

Staff present as having a good relationship with parents. Information is presented through newsletters, a notice board and verbally. However some written information needs to be updated.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The registration system now includes all the required information therefore complying with regulations.

An operational plan has been devised a copy of which is now given to all parents.

A fridge thermometer has been purchased therefore Environmental Health/ Food Safety regulations are met.

Daily risk assessments takes place ensuring the children's and staff safety.

Fire safety regulations were met at the time of registration. Fire equipment certificates are now available for checking.

The store cupboard is now locked so children do not have access to it.

Procedures are now in place for obtaining parental consent to administer medication and for recording the dosage given.

Written parental permission has been obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment should it be required.

All staff have attended first aid training ensuring that they are aware of the procedures for dealing with emergency situations. The group have been effective in improving their awareness of safety.

Staff records containing information regarding recruitment, qualifications and vetting clearances are still not in place and this needs to be addressed.

What is being done well?

- A wide range of activities and experiences are provided often relating to the children's own lives and surroundings.
- The environment is warm and welcoming with the children's own work displayed and labelled.
- Good use is made of the available space including the outside area and

school hall for music and movement.

What needs to be improved?

- the system of ensuring all staff receive clear vetting checks
- the procedures to deputise
- the maintaining of staff records
- the regulator details within the complaints procedure
- the information within the parents prospectus
- the information within the child protection policy.

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
1	provide evidence of staff vetting and clearances
2	ensure that procedures to deputise are effective and staff records are maintained
12	ensure that all details given to parents are up to date and that the complaints procedure includes the address and telephone number of the regulator
13	ensure that the setting child protection procedures comply with the local ACPC procedures

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at Offley pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in the areas of personal, physical and creative development. They make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Activities are planned using the early learning goals. Plans show the learning intention, how children will be grouped and how the adults will be involved. The effective use of resources and time provide an stimulating environment, supporting a variety of activities. Relationships between children and staff are good. Appropriate methods are used to manage children's behaviour. The supervisor has good knowledge of the early learning goals but some staff have less secure knowledge. They are not always aware of the learning intention of an activity and clear explanations of activities are not given, leading to some confusion for the children. Staff use open ended questions with the children but do not always extend this for the older or more able children.

Assessment is being developed that is linked to the stepping stones and these are used to inform planning. the pre-school operate a key worker system that is effective in identifying individual children's needs.

There is a commitment to improve the care and education for the children but there are some significant weaknesses. The committee deal with organisation and the supervisor leads the staff. However there are no systems to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the setting

The relationship with the parents is generally good. Parents are given information about the early learning goals but this needs updating. Children's progress is discussed informally with the parents but there are no opportunities for formal discussions. Parents are not always encouraged to share what they know about their child.

What is being done well?

- Relationships between staff and children are good. The staff provide good role models for the children to learn respect of themselves and others. Children's contributions are valued.
- Activities are planned across all areas of learning to provide the children with a varied and stimulating environment in which children learn with confidence.
- There are good opportunities for children to use language and develop their vocabulary, supporting their communication and thinking.
- Children solve simple problems through a range of everyday situations.

- Children are learning to move with confidence and take care when using a good range of resources.
- Planned activities give the children experiences in which they are able to express their own thoughts and ideas.

What needs to be improved?

- some staff's knowledge of the early learning goals in order that they know the learning intentions of activities enabling them to support the children
- systems to monitor the setting's strengths and weaknesses
- opportunities to develop the children's mathematical language in terms of volume and size
- the extension of children's knowledge of other cultures and beliefs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress with their action plan since the last inspection. The setting had to develop activities to support mathematics problem solving and calculating. There are now a range of activities in everyday situations to give children the opportunities to solve simple problems and calculate. There are still some missed opportunities to develop the knowledge of volume and size.

The setting had gain a greater understanding of the stepping stones and their relationship with the early learning goals. This can be seen in the planning. They also had to plan showing how individual children's needs would be met. Staff are beginning to use the assessment of children to inform planning but need to continue to develop this

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to concentrate and persevere through a range of varied and stimulating activities. The relationships between staff and children are good. Children are praised and are learning respect for themselves and others. They are learning right from wrong. The children are confident with opportunities to develop their skills in self care and independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are being given good opportunities to use language for communication and thinking. Their vocabulary is being developed and extended. Older children are beginning to recognise and link sounds to letters. Children are learning that words convey meaning in a range of ways through books, labels and for information. Children are given opportunities to make marks and develop skills that lead to writing. However, these activities are not extended for the older or more able children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are learning to count and recognise number up to 10 through a range of meaningful activities. They solve practical problems in everyday situations such as snack time and in games. Children are developing their mathematical vocabulary and the concepts of more, less and how many, relating these to addition and subtraction. Matching, sorting and sequencing activities are used to learn about shape. However, there are missed opportunities to use language for volume and size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn a sense of time and place through planned activities relating to themselves and their surroundings. They learn to construct and build with opportunities to join in a variety of ways. There is good use of technology supported by adults. Activities let children investigate and explore, for example, bread making but there are missed opportunities for the extension of these activities. Limited resources and activities do not support learning about other cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move with confidence and care using a range of equipment to develop co-ordination and balance. They make good use of space and use equipment with control and care. Children are learning about their health and their bodies through everyday activities. There is a varied range of large and small equipment. Children handle tools and materials with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colour texture and shape in many ways. Music is an integral part of the session through clapping, rhythm, singing instruments and recorded music. Imagination is being developed through role play and stories as well as art and music. Mostly children are expressing their own ideas and experiences through their own work.

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 staff's knowledge of the early learning goals so they are aware of the learning intention of activities and are able to give children clear explanations.
- develop systems to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting.
- plan activities to develop children's mathematical language for volume and size and to extend the children's knowledge of other 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.

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.