



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 254332

DfES Number: 500973

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	04/12/2003
Inspector Name	Marianne Gascoyne

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Valley Farm Nursery School
Setting Address	Valley Farm Sharrington HOLT Norfolk NR24 2PE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Claire Elizabeth Rivett
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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

Valley Farm is a well established privately owned Montessori based nursery school situated in a farmhouse in the rural village of Sharrington close to the market town of Holt. Children who attend come from within a twenty mile radius of Sharrington.

There are currently 24 children aged from two to under five years on roll. This includes sixteen funded three year olds and three funded four year olds. The nursery supports a small number of children with special educational needs. There are no children currently attended who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is jointly managed. One of the managers has a Montessori Diploma and the other is due to complete a level three qualification later this year. It operates Tuesday to Friday from 9.00am until 3.00pm during term-time only.

Support is received from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Valley Farm Nursery School provides satisfactory care for children. An attractive environment is created by use of photographs and displays of children's work and children are keen to attend and, together with their parents, feel welcome. Staff work well together and children are confident and secure in their care. Current procedures have not ensured the vetting procedure has been completed for all staff. Children are well occupied by the range of resources available. However, the organisation of the setting does not enable children to always access resources to ensure all their needs are met particularly with regard to the younger children.

Staff have an awareness of safety while allowing children to explore and investigate in the garden within clear boundaries. The premises are not, however, always used effectively to ensure risks to children are minimised. Children are not always being encouraged to practise good hygiene procedures in the daily routine with the emphasis being placed on independence.

Activities provided are interesting and children's play and learning is encouraged and developed by the staff. Children work and play together enthusiastically well supported by the adults. Good relationships are in place; children are kind and caring towards each other and are well behaved. Staff know children well and work with parents and other professionals to meet the individual needs of them all. However, children do not always have sufficient access to the full range of resources to provide for all aspects of their development and book area positioned in the corridor does not encourage children to use the books unless asked to do so by an adult.

Parents' contributions are welcomed and valued by staff who use the knowledge and talents of parents to enhance the provision and opportunities given to children. Parents feel well informed and involved in the nursery school.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery school was asked to ensure staff and household members completed forms for statutory checks and this was done. They were asked to provide confirmation that the necessary vehicle documentation was in place and copies of documents were sent to Ofsted. An action plan was required regarding first aid training. A plan was written and a course is to be held shortly. The nursery was asked to bring the child protection and behaviour management policies in line with National Standards. The policies have been updated but the behaviour management policy still does not provide clear guidelines with regard to bullying.

What is being done well?

- Staff are friendly, lively and have a sense of fun which adds to the children's enjoyment of their time in the nursery. They are interested in the activities being offered and want to take part. Good relationships are in place and children enjoy conversing with staff and sharing experiences from home. Children are happy and secure.
- Good role models are provided by staff and children are polite, caring and well behaved. Children involve each other in activities and play well together. They share and take turns willingly.
- Parents are very enthusiastic about the opportunities provided by the nursery for their children. They willingly offer help and support to the nursery and value the homely environment provided.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities provided for children to sit and look at books in comfort to encourage their use
- the range of activities available throughout the day to provide for all children's developmental needs
- the use of the bathroom to ensure children gain an understanding of good

hygiene practices while their dignity and privacy is respected.

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	Ensure there are sufficient vetted persons present for all sessions to ensure that any person who has not been vetted is never left unsupervised with the children.
2	Improve the organisation of the setting to ensure that children have access to a broad range of activities to support all aspects of their development.
4	Provide opportunities for children to sit undisturbed and in comfort to look at books
7	Make sure children's dignity and privacy are respected when using the toilet and good hygiene practices are in place.

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 Valley Farm Nursery School is acceptable and of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in their mathematical development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and plan a wide variety of meaningful activities to develop children's learning. They provide a purposeful environment, challenge older/more able children and their enthusiasm ensures children are eager to take part in the learning opportunities provided. They are helping children to learn to concentrate, listen and have confidence to contribute by providing interesting group activities. They do not, however, make effective use of all the registered space to ensure children have easy access to the full range of activities.

Long term planning is used to ensure a balance across the early learning goals and short term plans clearly show the learning intention. Observations and assessments are used effectively to inform planning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The very experienced owners/joint managers work well together to create a lively, fun environment where children are happy and eager to learn. They have a clear commitment to improvement and value inspections in contributing to this process. The third member of staff is encouraged to access training but appraisals do not take place to help in the monitoring and evaluation of the provision.

There is generally good partnership with parents. They contribute skills and other resources to the setting thus making practical contributions to their children's learning. The Molly Mouse diary links home and nursery and is used effectively by parents to help children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Parents contribute to their children's assessments and are given good information about the early learning goals on an ongoing basis.

What is being done well?

- Children are developing good conversational skills and use language well encouraged by the skilled questioning of staff. They are confident emergent writers adding their names to their drawings and drawing representational pictures.
- Many opportunities to develop an understanding of mathematics are provided throughout the nursery day. Children are learning to count and calculate in enjoyable play situations. They particularly delight in taking part in a story designed to help children's understanding of addition and subtraction.

- The large garden provides many opportunities for children to practise their physical skills. They are able to take risks within a controlled environment, climbing small trees, balancing planks and swinging with the rope. They pedal bicycles with skill, negotiating a path and avoiding objects.

What needs to be improved?

- the access to resources to help develop children's creativity and provide opportunities to express and communicate their ideas through role-play and imaginative play
- the opportunities given to children to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world and develop their creativity through self-selecting resources to explore different ways of cutting, joining and building in two or three dimensions for their own purpose.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made with the key issues identified at the last inspection. The resources available for role-play and imaginative play are still not given a priority in the setting. The planning has improved and clearly shows what children are expected to learn from the activities provided. Parents are now given clear information about the educational programme when their child starts and as a on-going process.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's confidence and self-esteem is nurtured through the use of praise and encouragement. Good relationships are in place and children involve each other in their play. They are being helped to understand other children's feelings and care for other children. Children are polite, co-operative and behave well in response to staff expectations. Their independence is encouraged in their personal care but they lack opportunities to take the initiative in activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children converse confidently with adults and children when taking part in activities together. They recognise their name when self-registering and are learning to sound out the letters when, for example, writing labels. Adults model writing and provide encouragement for children to write for a purpose in play activities. Some of the older/more able children are starting to read but children do not spontaneously access books or use them for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are given many opportunities to develop their understanding of mathematics through play and adult led activities. Older more/able children are able to count to ten and beyond and children are learning to recognise written numerals. They are being introduced to calculation, for example, when sorting dinosaurs and taking part in a story. They are able to talk about how old they are and their age on their next birthday. There are many opportunities to sort and order or create patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Many opportunities are provided for children to learn about their environment and culture, and that of others, through planned activities and discussion. For example, they talk about the different types of homes Santa will visit. Children are able to investigate when cooking and mixing paint. Interest in technology is being fostered and older/more able children are competent in use of the computer. Opportunities for children to design and construct from self-selected materials are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Good use is made of the garden and a range of large and small equipment is available to develop children's physical skills and provide interesting opportunities for them. Staff provide ropes and planks to offer challenges for older/more able children. Children are competent in the use of small tools and show good hand/eye co-ordination, for example, when threading beads or using Montessori equipment. Opportunities are sometimes missed to develop children's understanding of healthy living.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children paint and draw creatively and there are many examples of their representational pictures around the room. They enjoy musical experiences which are offered in different forms including musical instruments. They make their own to use in the Christmas performance. They join in enthusiastically with songs and sing rhymes spontaneously. Opportunities to develop their creativity and express and communicate ideas through everyday imaginative play experiences are not maximised.

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

- Provide well organised resources and opportunities for children to use their imagination in play activities.
- Enable children to self-select tools and materials to explore, design and build in two or three dimensions.

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.