



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101857

DfES Number: 545628

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 18/11/2004
Inspector Name Sue Davey

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Beachley Barracks (Little Scamps)
Setting Address Families Office
Beachley,
Chepstow
Gloucestershire
NP16 7YG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Beachley Barracks (Little Scamps) 1987894

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Beachley Barracks (Little Scamps)
Address Families Office
Beachley
Chepstow
NP16 7YG

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

Little Scamps Playgroup and Crèche opened in 2000. It operates from the army barracks in Beachley near Chepstow. The single storey building consists of two main play areas, an office, kitchens and toilets. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15 term-time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 41 children on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. They are taken from families of army personnel and the local community. The group can support children who speak English as an additional language and children who have special needs.

Seven staff work with the children. The supervisor and deputy have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. All other staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification at level 2 or 3.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Little Scamps Playgroup at Beachley Barracks provides a good standard of education overall and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are motivated and keen to improve their skills. They provide an attractive learning environment and make good use of the limited resources. Planning shows that although all areas of learning are covered in each session, some aspects are neglected. Staff interact well with children. They ask appropriate questions and encourage their spontaneous play. Children are generally well behaved in response to staff's positive approach. Staff know the children well and record observations of their progress. However, this information is not used to plan the weekly activities.

Leadership and management of the group is generally good. The committee chairperson oversees management of the group while the supervisor has day to day responsibility. The playgroup staff team are led by the deputy supervisor who holds weekly meetings to discuss and plan activities. The supervisor regularly observes practice. She carries out staff appraisals, discusses strengths and weaknesses and identifies training needs. However there is no system to monitor the educational provision.

The playgroup's partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are encouraged to help out with the sessions but it is not a requirement of the group. In response to parent's request, weekly activity plans are given out as well as being displayed in the playroom. Parents have access to their child's development files at any time and information is transferred to the next setting should the child move on to another location. Parents are asked to give details about their child at the start of the placement. However this is very brief and does not refer to their educational development. Staff talk to parents on a daily basis and set up open days to encourage their interest in the group.

What is being done well?

- The staff's commitment to improvement and personal development through training is very good. They are enthusiastic and keen to explore new ideas which benefit the children.
- Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundations Stage. Curriculum plans clearly show which stepping stones children work towards during focused activities.
- Children have good access to a range of writing materials. Staff recognise the importance of allowing children to develop their early writing skills without pressure and in meaningful situations, such as pretending to make

appointments in role-play or writing letters.

- Children's creativity is well fostered. They independently explore available resources including art materials, small world and role-play. A visiting company regularly provides music and movement sessions which all children enjoy.

What needs to be improved?

- children's access to natural materials and interesting objects to explore and investigate
- organisation of the daily routine to support children's need for physical exercise
- involvement of mathematics throughout the session to encourage calculation and problem solving
- planning of resources and activities to take account of children's developmental needs and to make sure that various aspects of learning are not overlooked.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable as this is the first education inspection since registration.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children settle quickly and show interest in the materials provided. They are keen to participate in adult-led group activities. Children have a strong group identity as families often move to new locations together. They are confident and have high self-esteem. They interact well with each other and adults, although their ability to listen to instructions is limited. Most children manage bathroom routines well. They spontaneously select toys and materials and persevere at a chosen task.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children use spoken language to converse with each other and make their needs known. They describe what they are doing and explain their roles in imaginative play. Children listen to stories being read and join in with a familiar refrain. They choose books independently and sometimes use reference books linked to the topic. Children learn to read their own name by associating it with a picture symbol. They practice early writing skills and attempt to write significant letters from their name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children use numbers in their conversations. Some children count up to five saying one number name for each object. Counting beyond five is often by rote. Children recognise numerals and sort shapes into numbered groups. However, little attention is given to calculation or using maths to solve practical problems. Children experience volume and capacity with sand and water activities. They describe objects as big or small and use blocks to construct new shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children find out about various aspects of the world and explore different cultures. They share the experience of having a father posted abroad. Children learn about insects and nature. For example, they watched butterflies hatch before releasing them outside. They enjoy cooking activities and help prepare ingredients. Children are learning to operate simple programmes on the newly acquired computer. However, they lack opportunities to investigate and examine different materials or objects.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children are physically active and energetic. They run, jump, crawl, climb, dance and enjoy outdoor play. However, organisation of the daily routine is not always sympathetic to their need to expend energy. Children work with malleable materials to develop hand muscles. They use scissors safely and demonstrate good pencil control when drawing and writing. Children manipulate small items such as threading shapes and positioning small world figures.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children freely explore paint and collage materials. Some children have a clear idea of what they are making and give meaning to their work. They sing songs, play musical instruments and dance. Children use small figures to invent imaginary worlds. They engage in complicated role-play, often dressing up to assume a role. An area is set up to enhance the current topic, such as, a vets or hospital. Children express care and concern for example, when pretending to treat a sick animal.	

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

- make sure that planning accounts for all aspects of learning within the Foundation Stage and is based on what children need to learn next
- provide interesting resources and activities for children to investigate and explore, either independently or as part of an adult-led activity.

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.