



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402271

DfES Number: 517422

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	13/01/2004
Inspector Name	Sheila Harrison

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Beechoak Farm Montessori Preschool
Setting Address	Church Lane High Beech Loughton Essex IG10 4AJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Beechoak Farm Montessori Preschool 3270365
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Beechoak Farm Montessori Preschool
Address	Church Lane High Beech Loughton Essex IG10 4AJ

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

Beechoak Farm Montessori Pre-School opened in 1996. It operates from a converted farm building on the edge of Epping Forest. The nursery uses five rooms for the children, two of which are upstairs. The nursery has a small farm attached where the children can have supervised visits. It serves the local area.

There are currently 79 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 24 funded 3 year olds and 10 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports no children with special needs and one child who speaks English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 and 13:00 until 16:00. A breakfast club operates between 08:00 and 09:00, a lunch club from 12:00 until 13:00 and an after school club operates from 16:00 until 17:00. Full day care is available from 08:00 until 17:00.

One part-time and ten full-time staff work with the children. Seven staff have a recognised early years qualification and three staff members are currently working towards an early years qualification. The pre-school follows the Montessori teaching philosophy and two members of staff are trained in the Montessori method.

How good is the Day Care?

Beechoak Farm Montessori School provides satisfactory care for children aged 0-5 years

The nursery provides a warm welcome and the staff have trusting and friendly relationships with the parents and children. They foster a sense of belonging through the successful settling in procedures. It is a generally safe environment with sound health and safety procedures.

The broad range of resources are suitably organised. Children have the choice of the pre-determined activities provided by the staff, a secure routine, and plenty of

opportunities to exercise outside.

An experienced cook provides nutritious and varied meals with a system to ensure the children's dietary needs are respected. However, children's independence is not fully extended within the lunch time. Some attention is paid to good hygiene practice. Children appear happy and well behaved.

The team works well together, they share a common purpose and are committed to evaluating their practice. They are conscientious and use their time to the benefit of the children.

There is an effective, two way partnership with the parents. They have many positive comments about the nursery including how well the children have settled and progressed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to provide an action plan to ensure the person in charge has a level three qualification, a record of visitors, a risk assessment and permission to seek any emergency medical treatment.

The leader has changed and the joint proprietor has a suitable qualification. The register has space for visitors and this is generally completed. A risk assessment has been carried out and reviews are regularly undertaken as part of the operational plan. Parents give permission for emergency medical treatment when they sign the update prospectus.

What is being done well?

- Staff have an effective working relationship with the parents and are aware of the importance of accurate communication on a daily basis. There are regular development reports, parents evenings, and social occasions to ensure parents are fully informed about the nursery.
- Children have abundant opportunities to play outside. They move freely with pleasure and confidence, spending time with their friends and siblings. They observe the weather and have some opportunities to visit the farm animals and birds on the premises.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of the routine, grouping of the children and deployment of the staff.
- security of the fencing
- hygiene practices regarding hand washing

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 must take the following actions by the date shown**

Std	Action	Date
4	ensure that the fencing is secure.	22/02/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
3	review the organisation of the routine, grouping of the children and deployment of the staff to ensure that the needs of the children are effectively met to encourage their independence and development.
7	ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing

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 Beechoak Farm is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. The staff have some knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They have a suitable framework for planning linked to the early learning goals, which is shared and generally understood by the staff. The Montessori teachers present the Montessori learning materials to support the children's development. There is a secure routine with ample access to the outside, but this is not specifically used to extend the learning environment.

Children have access to a range of interesting and worthwhile activities. Staff encourage the children's concentration and listening skills, with opportunities for children to talk about their work and families. They praise and encourage the children in their play, helping the children to understand what is acceptable behaviour.

Suitable systems are in place to support the children identified with special educational needs. However staff feel less confident to support children with English as an additional language.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff team have worked hard to support each other and to contribute to the running of the nursery through regular team meetings including discussions on new ideas and information. The manager supports staff striving to obtain an early years qualification and in attending short courses and cluster meetings. She has arranged for a qualified teacher to visit for support.

The partnership with parents is generally good and contributes positively to the children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child and to be involved in their child's learning. There are regular parent evenings and three monthly written reports linked to the Foundation Stage.

What is being done well?

- Staff manage the children's behaviour carefully. They act in a consistent manner using positive methods of rewards and praise, enhancing the children's development to share and take turns. The staff are skilful role models using appropriate praise and encouraging good manners.
- Staff encourage easy and trusting relationships with the children, they foster the children's self confidence, extending their learning through effective interaction and knowing children and their families well.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning for the outside play time.
- activities to encourage the children to express their ideas and practise their skills through communication language and literacy, creative play and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- strategies and resources to support children with English as an additional language.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made limited progress since the last inspection. Children have plenty of time to practise their physical development outside, but staff have yet to plan and assess using the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage in this area.

Children have access to a computer and are competent to use the basic drawing programme. However, they do not have access to a printer, which would allow the children to see the final product and extend their learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have established good relationships with the adults and their peers. They show consideration for each other, having valuable chances to spend time in the garden with the young children. Staff act as good role models, helping children develop a sense of right and wrong. Children extend their independence, which could be further encouraged within the routine of the setting. Staff support children to talk about their families and acknowledge family celebrations.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk confidently to each other and adults. They enjoy listening to the trips home with "Bengy Bear." They link sounds of letters with their names through their name cards and the "letter of the week". Children are encouraged to handle books correctly. There are enough books within easy reach of the children but some are uninspiring and jaded. Children have the capacity to practise their pre-writing skills, but few chances for meaningful writing in a variety role play situations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are counting to ten and above as they add the numbers of boys and girls at circle time. They use subtraction during number rhymes, but opportunities are missed within snack and meal times. They take pleasure in the mathematical language within favourite stories, and take turns playing sort and match games. They discuss the practical uses for shapes in the environment, but there are few chances to discuss capacity and weight. Children have access to the Montessori equipment.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children develop an understanding of time discussing the calendar with staff. They experience the weather conditions by stamping in puddles, feeling the cold wind, and occasionally caring for the animals at the small nursery farm. Children use technology with the computer, and experiment with the magnets in a fishing game, but little chance to practise with other types of machinery. Children consider their festivals but have limited opportunities to extend their knowledge of other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have valuable opportunities to exercise outside. They enjoy sit and ride toys, running and playing with balls and hoops. Staff are generally involved to support and encourage new skills such as throwing and catching. However, there is limited discussion on the changes that happen to their bodies when active. The children climb the stairs safely and with confidence. Children are encouraged to hold pencils, use scissors and they are proficient with the use of their knives and forks.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have the opportunity to explore their senses with the use of the Montessori sound boxes, but have few chances to listen to varied types of music. They observe and experience different weather conditions and are exploring colours through colour crayons and the box of colour shades, this skill is reinforced at story time with a discussion of grey. Role play activities are varied and interesting, but there is a lack of suitable artefacts and staff support to extend the children's learning.	

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 planning for the routine and the time the children spend outside, linking it to the Foundation Stage. Give the children time to reinforce their learning.
- extend the activities to encourage the children to express their ideas and practise their skills through communication language and literacy, creative play and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- develop strategies and resources to support children with English as an additional language.

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.