



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 139385

DfES Number: 517302

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	28/01/2005
Inspector Name	Janet Armstrong

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name	Lower Covey Day Nursery
Setting Address	Lower Covey Chapel Lane, Yetminster Sherborne Dorset DT9 6LJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Ms Julie Partridge
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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

Lower Covey Day Nursery has been established for approximately 15 years and is situated in the rural village of Yetminster, near to the town of Sherborne. The nursery is privately owned and provides full day care and out of school care for up to 63 children under the age of 8 years.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday all year round from 08.30 until 17.30. They serve the local community and surrounding villages and places are offered to children who come from a range of different backgrounds. They cater for children with special educational needs. No children currently attend that have English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of the government funding for three- and four-year-olds. There are currently 119 children on the register of whom 35 are funded.

The setting occupies premises attached to the proprietor's home and is set on two floors. The ground floor offers care for up to 26 children aged birth to 3 years, as well as an out of school club for up to 15 children after school and in the holidays from the age of 5 up to 11 years. The first floor offers a Montessori preschool for up to 22 children aged 3 to 5 years. Both floors use screens to create segregated areas within their rooms for different age groups and have their own kitchenettes, toilets and storerooms. In addition the Nursery has a sleep room, laundry room and main kitchen for preparation of meals. There is a communal playroom used by all the children. A lounge is available for selected children's television, usually at the end of the day, and there are two outdoor play areas available.

The nursery employs a full-time supervisor who is NNEB and Montessori qualified, and 17 members of staff who are all appropriately qualified in child care and education or currently working towards a qualification.

Support and curriculum advice is sought from the Advisory Teacher and the Early Years Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Lower Covey Day Nursery provides high quality nursery education with children making very good progress in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Clear plans show a broad and balanced curriculum that links an interesting range of activities to the steps within the six areas of learning. Good use is made of the Montessori equipment and resources to support the children's learning that are well presented and accessible. Staff are effectively deployed, motivated and interact well with the children. They use effective questioning to challenge the children's mathematical skills and support the children's confidence and personal independence very well through a range of different methods, such as large/small groups, 1:1, adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff do not always encourage the children to fully exploit the good range of creative resources available and the organisation of quiet time does not always successfully meet its aims. Staff manage children's behaviour very well. They are positive and consistent in their approach. Children with special educational needs are supported very well. Children's records of assessment clearly record their progress through the six areas of learning and are used to guide plans to meet individual children's learning needs.

Leadership and management is very good. There is strong management with reliable systems in place. They assess the effectiveness of staff, the partnership they have with parents and the quality of the nursery education to monitor the impact of the service that they provide for children and parents.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with detailed written literature about the setting, the links between the Montessori methods and early learning goals and how they cover them. There are strong lines of communication with parents to ensure parents are up to date and informed about their children's progress and achievements.

What is being done well?

- Children have good levels of confidence. They speak freely and confidently and initiate interactions with staff, other children and visitors to share experiences and routines.
- Children's personal independence is promoted very well. Children are able to take care of their basic personal needs, such as toileting, hand washing and getting ready for outdoor play. They independently choose their own fillings to make their sandwiches at snack time.
- Children have good number skills. They count, compare and solve simple number problems through their daily routines and planned activities to identify how many children are sitting down, how many are else where in the play

room and how many this makes in total.

- Children use ride on toys with skill and high levels of control and co-ordination. At speed, they manoeuvre in and out of obstacles and others at play, using the pedals to propel themselves.
- Children are involved in a good range of activities to develop their hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills, for example, one-handed tools. They operate hole punches, use small garden trowels to dig and use knives and forks independently at lunch time to cut up their food.
- Children with special educational needs are given excellent levels of support during the sessions to promote their development. The nursery works closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure individual needs are catered for.
- There is a very strong and positive partnership with parents. Parents are given detailed written literature about the early learning goals. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with themes and activities and ideas on how parents can support their children's learning at home. There are secure systems to share the children's records of assessment with parents on a regular basis.

What needs to be improved?

- the children's use of the good range of creative resources to further promote their imaginative development
- the organisation of quiet time after lunch.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. At that inspection the provider agreed to monitor the programme for creative development for balance and cover, particularly in relation to activities offered to encourage the children's free expression.

Children are now provided with a balanced programme to support their creative development. Plans identify a good range of interesting adult-led and initiated activities, such as exploring texture and 3-D through making a gingerbread house. Props and dressing up clothes are accessible to children throughout the session and changed regularly in line with the current theme, such as winter, pirates and medieval times. An art cupboard has been created giving children free access to a good range of resources to initiate their own art and design throughout the session. This has helped children to begin to develop their imaginations and express themselves creatively.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's personal independence and self-confidence is very good. They select and initiate their own activities, and take care of their needs during the session, seeking assistance from staff when needed. They have formed positive relationships with staff and each other as they begin to recognise the need for agreed codes when playing. They learn to share and take turns in their activities through positive staff support. Children are not sufficiently managed to support quiet time after lunch.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their language well to communicate and negotiate with others through daily routines and in their play. They learn in a print-rich environment, with displays and activities clearly labelled and enjoy books in a range of situations, showing an understanding of the structure of stories. They learn to distinguish one sound from another through regular activities and access mark making resources to practise their pre-writing skills and draw. Some are able to form recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently count up to ten and some beyond this. They develop good number skills through regular activities and daily routines as they recognise written numerals up to ten and solve simple practical number problems in a range of situations, such as four staff present and one visitor makes five adults. They learn shape, size and position through good adult support and use of Montessori equipment to sort and compare.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

An interesting range of planned activities help and encourage children to explore and investigate their environment and what is going on around them, such as melting ice and the growth of bulbs with and without water. They use modern day technology with confidence and enjoy taking photos on the digital camera. Children enjoy gardening and have a good introduction to the natural world, local environment and their own and other cultures through an interesting range of planned activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use the indoor and outdoor space safely as they negotiate furniture, obstacles and others at play. They show good spatial awareness indoors as they find floor space for their activities away from others, and outdoors using ride on toys weaving in and out of each other, using the pedals to propel themselves with skill. They use one-handed tools and materials with increasing skill to develop hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills, such as doing up nuts and bolts in construction.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore texture, colour and form through a good range of adult-led and initiated creative activities, such as clay modelling, painting and collage to create their ideas in line with the theme, such as igloos. They have free access to creative resources to initiate their own art and design, although they do not always receive sufficient support from staff to fully explore this area. Children enjoy dressing up and take on different roles as they pretend to go on a winter holiday together.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- further encourage the children to maximise use of the good range of creative resources
- review the organisation of quiet time after lunch.

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.