



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 258305

DfES Number: 519320

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	09/11/2004
Inspector Name	Fiona Stephenson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Pre-School Group
Setting Address	St Philip's Church Hall Evington Road Leicester Leicestershire LE2 1QJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Pre - School Group 1035526
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Pre - School Group
Address	St Philip's Church Hall Evington Road Leicester Leicestershire LE2 1QJ

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

The Pre-school Group opened in 1994 and is a registered charity. It operates from Saint Philip's Church Hall in the Evington area of Leicester City. Children have access to the main hall and lounge area of the church. The pre-school serves the local community.

There are currently 38 children from two to five years on roll, of these, three receive funding for nursery education. The group currently supports children with English as an additional language, and children with special needs.

The group is open Monday to Friday during school term times, and provides two sessions each day. The morning session operates from 09:15 to 11:45 and the afternoon session operates from 12:45 to 15:15.

Two full-time and four part-time staff work with the children. Four staff have recognised early years' qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a recognised childcare qualification. The setting receives support from the Leicester Early Years' Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

The Pre-school Group provides good quality care for children. All staff working at the pre-school have undertaken the appropriate checks, and are suitably qualified. There are good adult:child ratio's, with space and resources being used well. The equipment and furniture are in good condition, and all necessary policies and procedures are in place.

The setting has good health and safety systems. The premises are clean, well maintained and secure, and regular and thorough risk assessments are undertaken in relation to the use of equipment. Good hygiene and safety measures are adhered to, supporting the well-being of children and staff in the setting. Children are provided with a range of snacks at snack time, including nutritious snacks such as fruit. Staff have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures.

Staff have a very caring approach to children. Good attention is given to ensure children settle happily into the group, and to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Staff work well in developing children's understanding of different cultures and communities, and in supporting anti-discriminatory practice. They have a good understanding of working with children who have special needs. Children's behaviour is well managed, with good use of praise and encouragement to support this. There is a good range of activities on offer, although children's creative self-expression is less thoroughly accounted for.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are provided with good verbal information about the care needs of their child, and staff work well with parents to ensure children are looked after according to the parents' wishes.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the setting agreed to improve policies and procedures relating to health and administration of medication. The necessary parental permission has now been sought, and medication policies now clearly state when children are excluded due to ill health or infection. Also, appropriate administration of medication records are now in place. These changes have improved safety procedures and aspects of the partnership with parents. The setting also agreed to ensure the management committee went through appropriate clearance measures, and this has since been achieved, thereby complying with National Standards and ensuring the ongoing safety of children in the setting.

What is being done well?

- Staff demonstrate a kind and caring approach to children in their care, and manage children's behaviour well through positive behavioural techniques such as distraction, praise and encouragement.
- Children have a wide range of activities and resources to support them in their play and learning, and are engaged in purposeful activities throughout the session. Children with English as an additional language are well supported in the setting.
- The premises are clean, warm and well-maintained, and good security systems are in operation for the arrival and collection of children.
- Health and hygiene procedures are effective in promoting the good health of children.
- Staff work well with parents in ensuring the care needs of their children are accounted for.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children's creative self-expression, for example through water play and model making

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since the 1st April 2004 Ofsted have not received any complaints about this provider.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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
3	plan an increased range of opportunities for creative self-expression, for example through water play or by making models using discarded materials

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Pre-school Group provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy is very good. There are some very good aspects in mathematical provision.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff demonstrate a solid knowledge of the Foundation Stage, their curriculum and they utilise play opportunities well to support children's learning. There are generally good planning systems in place, but these are not wholly effective as they over-emphasise some aspects of the curriculum that are already covered in daily routines, and are insufficiently flexible to provide necessary consolidation in some areas. Extension activities for more able or mature children are not always clearly linked to the learning intentions. Assessments of children's progress are regular, but they are not always used effectively to ensure the next steps in children's progress are identified and supported in all areas. Many children attending the group have English as an additional language and staff support their language needs very well.

The leadership and management is generally good. The leader has a high commitment to the care and learning of children attending. She ensures that both herself and the staff team attend training and improve their knowledge of the Foundation Stage to support delivery of an effective curriculum.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are given verbal and written information about their child's progress, although there is a lack of information regarding the Foundation Stage, the curriculum and how children learn through play. There is also limited information provided to parents about the activities children are undertaking on a weekly basis nor the learning intentions of these, or how they can support their child's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children are progressing very well in their counting, numeral recognition and early calculation skills.
- Children are making excellent progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy, with children who speak English as an additional language are making particularly good progress in using language for communication.
- Staff manage children's behaviour very well. A wide variety of resources, a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities and good use of praise and encouragement, support good behaviour in the setting, and provide children with an excellent framework for raising confidence and levels

of self-esteem.

- Management and staff's commitment to improving and supporting children's learning is very good, and hard work has gone into improving their own understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

What needs to be improved?

- planning to ensure relevant and sufficient emphasis is given to clusters which are not covered through the daily routines, and the flexibility of plans to allow for consolidation of cluster areas to properly embed children's skills and knowledge
- the use of observation and assessment systems to link directly to the planning to ensure they effectively address the individual learning needs of each child. Identification of children's 'next steps' in learning to ensure all areas of the curriculum are addressed when setting 'targets' for children's progress.
- partnership with parents to provide parents with a clearer understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and learning through play; and how they can support and extend their child's learning in the home environment

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. The setting has developed a programme for communication, language and literacy to ensure children write for a variety of purposes, including writing their names. There is now a writing table in the setting with a range of writing implements. Children are encouraged to make marks with writing equipment and paper in role-play scenarios, and to write for a purpose in other activities. Older children are able to write their names. A programme for physical development has also been introduced and there are planned activities relating to physical play and development. However, insufficient time is given to daily play opportunities for children to use larger muscles and to develop skills such as throwing and catching. Children's progress in the development of such skills remains less clear than in other areas of the curriculum.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children happily and independently go to activities of their choosing and play with them for extended periods of time. Children new to the group have settled very well, and are participating well alongside other children. They have good relationships with staff and are developing friendships with each other. Behaviour is excellent, with children demonstrating a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour. They have good levels of confidence and self-esteem.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children demonstrate very good listening and speaking skills. At registration and story time they actively participate in question and answer sessions, demonstrating good understanding of what they have heard and seen. Children freely converse with each other when playing, using speech to explore real and imagined experiences. They make very good use of the writing table and mark making equipment, with older children writing their own names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children demonstrate excellent counting skills and numeral recognition, and are provided with many opportunities each day to extend and secure their knowledge in these areas. They are developing a growing understanding of early calculation through songs such as 'five little monkeys' and through routines such as counting out separately the number of staff and children, then combining to make a total. Children's understanding of shape, space and measure is less well re-enforced.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy playing and building models with a wide range of construction resources such as small bricks, although there are less opportunities for them to make models from recyclable materials and to experiment with joining and fixing. They have a growing awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate different living and made objects and materials, although learning is not always sufficiently secured.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move around confidently. They enjoy throwing and catching, although daily plans allow insufficient time for such activities. Children have a good sense of space and show respect for the personal space of others. They have a growing understanding of hygiene practices such as hand washing, and how they contribute to good health. There are limited opportunities for children to improve their small muscle control, for example over fastenings on clothing.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have many opportunities to explore media and materials through adult-led activities, although opportunities for creative self-expression in collage making and three-dimensional modelling are more limited. Children enjoy daily 'music and rhymes', and have favourite songs such as 'wheels on the bus'. They use their imaginations well in role-play, when painting and when using small world toys.	
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

- ensure relevant emphasis is given to clusters which are not covered through daily routines and that plans also allow sufficient flexibility to consolidate children's learning
- provide parents with clearer information about the foundation stage curriculum and the concepts of learning through play; also provide parents with a clearer understanding of how they can support their child's 'next steps' in the home environment
- make more effective use of the observation, assessment and planning systems to ensure the individual learning needs of each child are supported. Ensure the 'next steps' or targets set for children are clearly linked in with the assessment systems.

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.