



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 204101

DfES Number: 584687

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	13/12/2004
Inspector Name	Amanda Jane Gray

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Tops Foundation Pre-School
Setting Address	The Community Centre Salcott Crescent, Wick Meadows Estate Wickford Essex SS12 9NR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Karen Pamela Hughes
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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

The Tops Foundation Pre-School opened in 1997. It operates from the community centre on Wick Meadows Estate in Wickford. The pre-school serves the local community. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. the group opens five days a week during school terms. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 12:00 to 14:30.

There are currently 84 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these, 70 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school terms. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 12:00 to 14:30.

The pre-school employs twelve members of staff, eleven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

The Tops Foundation Pre-School provides good care for children.

The manager and staff are committed to expanding their knowledge through training, which provides children with a richer experience. There is a comprehensive staff induction and appraisal system in place, which ensures staff support and ongoing development. A comprehensive operational plan ensures effective deployment of staff and good use of space and resources. The premises are child centred, clean, and well maintained. There is a wide range of suitable toys and play materials available to provide stimulating activities and play opportunities for children. Records are well maintained, comprehensive and accessible to parents.

Staff have a good awareness of health and safety and are vigilant about this at all

times. All staff are first aid trained and are collectively updating their certificates. Risk assessments of the premises are carried out on a regular basis. Staff promote the good health of the children and take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. However, the sick child policy does require revision. Children are provided with snacks and meals which are healthy and nutritious. Staff have knowledge of child protection issues and are supported by a comprehensive policy and procedure.

Staff plan and provide children with a calm and relaxed environment in which to play and learn. There is a broad range of activities available. Children are valued, respected and listened to by staff, who ensure that individual needs are met. Staff value good behaviour and use lots of praise and encouragement with the children. Strategies for dealing with behaviour are appropriate to children's ages and stages of development.

The group is successfully working in partnership with parents. Good information is provided about the provision and parents are kept informed of their children's care and education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to provide evidence of staff CRB checks and ensure staff were appropriately vetted. All staff now have evidence of checks.

The group also agreed to devise a system for registering staff and children's arrival and departure times and to complete a risk assessment of the premises. Both points have been addressed.

The group also agreed to obtain written permission for emergency medical treatment and to update their child protection policy and procedures. Both points have been addressed.

What is being done well?

- Children make decisions, explore, investigate and relate well to one another. They are involved and interested in their play.
- The play equipment is stimulating and offers children with sufficient challenge. Children are involved in a broad range of activities that support their imagination and creativity.
- There is a good rapport between staff and children resulting in a calm, relaxed and fun setting. Children are treated with care and respect by staff.

What needs to be improved?

- the sick child policy and procedures.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

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
7	Revise the policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious, to make sure it includes procedures to be taken should a child become ill whilst attending the group.

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 The Tops Foundation Pre-school is very good. It enables children to make very good progress in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff use every opportunity to develop children's learning in all areas of learning and are aware of their individual stages of development. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and planning is comprehensive. Staff ensure activities are extended for more able children and that the curriculum is well planned for and effectively delivered. Children's assessments are sufficiently evaluated against the stepping stones and are used to formulate future planning. Children's work is valued and used to good effect on displays. Staff have a good rapport with children and provide them with interesting and challenging activities. Staff work well as a team and ensure sessions are well paced, keeping children engaged and interested. They are skilled in allowing children freedom to develop independence and revisit activities to consolidate skills.

Leadership and management is very good. Ongoing training is available which staff are encouraged to attend, ensuring that the nursery keeps up with trends and developments. The registered person manages the group and also works directly with the children, ensuring a hands on approach whilst knowing each child and family well. The group has a proactive and outward looking approach and welcomes new ideas. The registered person and staff team are committed to the improvement of care and education for children. Plans, themes and children's development are evaluated by key workers and the staff team as a whole to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education provided.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents have access to good quality information regarding the curriculum and activities offered. Staff encourage parents to become involved in children's learning.

What is being done well?

- The room is well prepared and invitingly laid out, enabling children to start playing straight away. They have free choice for much of the session and work and learn at their own pace. Staff's enthusiasm shines through, creating a highly motivating learning environment.
- Children are developing well in the area of personal, social and emotional development. They are taught to be polite and kind to others and are extremely well behaved as a direct result of staff's high expectations and sensitive handling.
- Children have exceptional concentration skills, patience and manners. Staff promote these qualities well.

What needs to be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● exploration of various forms of ICT● opportunities for children to develop their creativity.

What has improved since the last inspection?
<p>The group has made very good progress since the last inspection. They agreed to extend the children's individual recording and assessment files by clearly indicating the next steps in their learning. The group have developed written records to indicate how children have achieved skills, these are used to filter back into plans to build on children's acquired skills.</p> <p>The group also agreed to provide opportunities and activities within the weekly programme which further extends the children's awareness of a range of healthy practises in relation to eating, sleeping and hygiene. The group promote hygiene and healthy eating well and have introduced activities that help children observe the effect of physical play on their bodies.</p>

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn, eager to try new activities and confident to ask for help and support. They are settled and show a sense of belonging. Children follow instructions and are polite and can share well. They show interest particularly when looking at new things. Children take pride in their achievements and have good self esteem. They talk freely about their home and families and are developing good personal independence. They are very confident.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use language confidently for a range of purposes. They talk alongside each other in play, initiate conversations and take part in larger group discussions. Children are developing good pre writing skills, encouraged by frequent opportunities for purposeful writing, especially within role play. Children are linking sounds and letters and enjoy using books. Writing and reading is encouraged and children have opportunities to use writing as a means of recording and communicating.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show a lively interest in numbers both in the planned mathematical activities and spontaneously through their free play. They count up to and beyond ten and can recognise numbers of personal significance. There are lots of opportunities to develop an understanding of simple addition and subtraction, through action songs and good questions from staff during play. Children are showing an awareness of symmetry and are beginning to use sequencing in their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show curiosity and interest in their play environment and are eager to explore and investigate. They look closely at similarities and differences, and ask questions about how things work and why they happen. They are developing a good sense of time, and many will talk about what they have done at the weekend or last night. Children have some opportunities to explore information and communication technology. They explore the natural world and local community with enthusiasm.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Regular opportunities are planned to help children develop their physical skills through activities both inside and outside. Children are adept at running, jumping and climbing. Children have good hand eye co-ordination which is practised through using tools and manipulating small objects. They move well and with imagination, often moving spontaneously to music. They have a good awareness of space and are beginning to show clear preference for their left/ right hand.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have daily access to creative play and explore colour well. They learn that different media can be combined and used. They listen to music, and staff use music sessions on a regular basis to explore sound patterns and rhythm with children. There are good opportunities for role play and children enthusiastically initiate their own scenario's. Children talk about what they are making, often entering into a dialogue about their intended creations.

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, however, consideration should be given to improving the following:
- extend the activities provided for children to explore various forms of ICT
- consider providing opportunities where children can participate in well planned activities to work with artists, musicians, dancers and other creative people to encourage them to develop confidence in their own creativity and to work in new ways.

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.