



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109589

DfES Number: 522675

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/11/2004
Inspector Name Dinah Round

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Postman Pat Pre-School
Setting Address Scout Hall, Canford Heath
Sherborn Crescent
Poole
Dorset
BH17 8AP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Postman Pat Pre-School 1032255

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Postman Pat Pre-School
Address Scout Hall
Sherborn Crescent, Canford Heath
Poole
Dorset
BH17 8AP

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

Postman Pat Pre-school opened in 1982. It is a committee run group which operates from two rooms in a scout hall in Canford Heath, Poole. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Children attend the pre-school from the local area, and a maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time.

The group is open from Monday to Friday from 09.00-15.00 term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions including a lunch club. There are currently 47 children aged two to five years on roll. Of these 30 children receive funding for nursery education. The group support children with special educational needs.

There is a team of seven staff working with the children including the manager. Four of these hold an early years qualification and two staff are working towards a qualification.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Postman Pat Pre-School is of good quality overall and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good and staff have good relationships with the children. They plan a varied range of activities through different topics, however these are not always appropriate for the children's stages of development. Staff have recently introduced a new system for monitoring and assessing children's progress linked to the Foundation Stage. However staff do not have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage which means there are weaknesses in children's mathematical development. The group have a wide range of equipment and resources which are effectively rotated to provide different choices for the children.

Staff manage children's behaviour well, supporting children in good behaviour through regular praise and encouragement. Children are confident and well behaved.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator liaises closely with parents and professionals, to make sure children with additional needs are supported in the group.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. The staff have clear roles and responsibilities within the day to day running of the group, and take turns to organise the weekly planning of the activities. The on-going communication between the staff, and regular staff meetings means they work well as a team. The group welcome the support and advice from the Early Years Advisory Teachers, however there are limited systems in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the activities.

Partnerships with parents is generally good. Parents are kept up-to-date through newsletters, parents notice board and a new pre-school website. They are welcomed into the pre-school and staff are available to discuss children's achievements, informally, at either end of the sessions. Planned topics are shared with parents, however there is little extension about how to continue at home.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident, settled and forming good relationships in the group. They are co-operative and behave well.
- Children speak confidently in both small and large groups and to each other. They listen well to instructions and to their peers.
- Staff work together well as a team. They make good use of the space and resources to offer children a wide variety of activities and experiences.

- The group have good relationships with parents. Parents feel that they are well informed about their children's progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- the teaching methods to ensure the learning opportunities are appropriate for the children's stage of development.
- the opportunities for children to use numbers and to count for themselves in everyday situations, and to use positional language and solve simple problem solving
- children's opportunities to explore and learn about living things.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection staff were asked to: improve their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, and their teaching skills to encourage children's learning; increase activities to support children's mathematical development, and improve opportunities for children to extend their writing skills.

There are significant weaknesses in the progress since the last inspection. Although the group has increased its mathematical resources and equipment, the staff's lack of understanding of the Foundation Stage means these are not always used effectively to help children progress. Children have access to writing tools on a regular basis, however the full opportunities to extend children's mark making skills are not promoted.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are settled and confident in the group, and some concentrate for a considerable length of time such as when constructing their models. They are developing their independence such as when pouring their own drinks at snack time, however some activities are too adult-led. Children are forming good relationships and work together happily in small groups. They behave well taking their turn at circle time and snack time, and are co-operative when tidying up.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing an enjoyment of books, they select books independently handling them with care. Staff make good use of props to involve children during group story time. Children speak confidently and listen well to adults and their peers, responding enthusiastically to their names during circle time. Many children can recognise their own name cards, but the children have few opportunities to practise emergent writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children count well with adults in some activities such as the number of steps in 'What time is it Mr Wolf', and the pieces of cake at the playdough table, but have few opportunities to use numbers and count independently. There is a wide selection of mathematical resources that incorporate size, shape and quantity, however a planned shape activity was too difficult and the children lost interest. Children have few opportunities to learn about simple problem solving.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore and investigate materials through regular cooking activities such as when making biscuits and peppermint creams, however there are few opportunities to learn about living things through planned or naturally occurring activities. Children have regular access to computer programmes to support their learning, and many do so with increasing skill and control. Children are learning about their own environment and cultures of other people through planned topics.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move with confidence and co-ordination showing good awareness of others such as when running with streamers, galloping with a hobby-horse outside. They are developing skills in climbing and balancing through access to a range of large equipment. Children show good control when using small tools such as glue spatulas, pencils, paint brushes. They are taught about staying healthy through different topics.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore a wide range of media and materials through planned activities such as sand, water, clay, paint, shaving foam. Children use their imagination well in the different role play situations, such as the 'doctors' and 'dentist', however some creative activities are too adult led and do not allow children to freely express their ideas. They are learning about their senses through topics such as tasting different foods. Children have access to musical instruments to explore sound.

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

- Improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- Use teaching methods that ensure learning opportunities are appropriate to the children's individual stage of development
- Provide opportunities for children to use numbers and to count for themselves in everyday situations, and to develop their understanding of positional language and simple problem solving.

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.