



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 123566

DfES Number: 581193

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/07/2004
Inspector Name Anneliese Fox-Jones

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Home from Home Day Nursery School
Setting Address 52a Bernard Street
St. Albans
Hertfordshire
AL3 5QN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Linda Collins

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

Home from Home Day Nursery School opened in 1989. It operates from four rooms in a purpose built nursery, set in central St Albans. The nursery serves mainly the local area of St Albans.

There are currently 48 children on roll from 6 months to 4 years. This includes 14 funded three-year olds and 3 funded four-year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports two children who have special educational needs. No children attend who have English as an additional language.

The nursery operates daily from 07:15 to 18:45, all year round. The nursery is on two floors with the children's areas on the ground floor and the office and staff areas upstairs.

Twelve full time staff work with the children. Nine staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. Three staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Home from home Day Nursery School provides satisfactory care for children. They offer a warm, welcoming and friendly environment where all children are valued and included.

There is an adequate range of toys and resources prepared for children daily. Staff have a good awareness of safety and address potential hazards, through health and safety handbooks. Staffing arrangements, with regard to ratios, at times include trainees under 17 years old.

The nursery is purpose built, with attention paid to detail, to provide a homely feel and ensure children's safety and independence. Staff pay attention to the children's needs for hygiene, sleeping and feeding, with effective hygiene practices in place, such as hand and face washing and set routines for brushing teeth. Meal times are

sociable experiences for all children to integrate together. Healthy snacks and meals are provided, particular attention is given to suit the children's individual dietary needs. Staff are on hand to support the children when necessary and spend time sitting with them and interacting in a calm and sensitive way.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff and parents regularly exchange information. An informative and comprehensive file is available for existing and new parents. Staff share information about the children on a daily or weekly basis. The Parents and Staff Association keeps parents involved within the setting and enable their suggestions to be raised and acknowledged. Most of the necessary procedures, consents and documentation are in place.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, a number of actions were identified. Behaviour management and child protection policies have been extended, however, this still does not include any allegations made against staff. A lock has been fitted in the toady tots room to ensure safety of the electric meter cupboard and the nappy changing procedure has been reviewed to ensure a minimum of two changes a day as well as changes as and when required. An additional first aid box has been issued. The seating at meal times has been reviewed to enable a family orientated environment with enough space for the children and staff. Spare mattress supplies are available and replaced if necessary. Ofsted details have been added to the complaints procedure, although the telephone number is still not included. The children's registration system was reviewed to ensure all children's attendance is logged regularly, although accurate times of attendance are still not recorded.

What is being done well?

- There are effective procedures for identifying and monitoring potential hazards. Health and safety handbooks are issued to room key workers which are also regularly monitored by the health and safety officer. Children's safety and security is given high priority.
- Children are provided with a varied and nutritious range of snacks and meals that promote children's health and development. The nursery values the homely environment and ensure meal times are sociable experiences for the children, as they all come together.
- The nursery builds effective working relationships with parents and keeps them informed about their child's progress and events, particularly through the use of daily sheets for the younger children and weekly sheets for the older children. There is a warm, welcoming and safe environment for both children and their parents. A Parent and Staff Association enables parents to be involved in the setting socially and through formal meetings. The setting is committed to the improvement of care and education and regularly uses questionnaires to welcome suggestions from parents.

What needs to be improved?

- staffing arrangements to ensure trainees under 17 years of age are not included in the ratios
- documentation, consents and procedures.

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
2	Ensure trainees under 17 years of age are supervised at all times and not included in staff ratios.	30/07/2004
2	Devise written procedures for lost or uncollected children.	30/07/2004

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

Std	Recommendation
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.
7	Keep a written record, signed by parents on the same day, of all accidents involving children.
13	Ensure the child protection policy includes procedures if allegations are made against a staff member.
14	Ensure the daily register includes accurate hours of children's attendance.

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 Home from Home Day Nursery School is of good quality overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in the area of personal social and emotional development and generally good progress in four other areas of learning. However, there are serious weaknesses in the area of creative development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are keen to learn but some have limited knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They plan a range of practical activities with clear learning intentions. However, the resources are not always made available to children to use their imagination, therefore inhibiting the children's opportunities to express their own ideas through paint, water and music.

Staff know the children well and have formed good relationships with them. The daily routine enables the children to develop social skills and gain independence. Staff help children's language development through providing regular opportunities for discussion. Children are encouraged to respect one another and staff have high expectations of their behaviour. All children are included in activities and staff have clear plans which cover the six areas of learning. These do not demonstrate how activities will be adapted for children with a special need or for children learning at different rates.

The leadership and management of the nursery is generally good. The nursery have recent staff changes, and the manager has worked hard in forming good relationships and has effective strategies for team building. She recognises the need for staff to commit to training. She acts on advice and has clear aims and objectives to further improve the teaching within the nursery.

Partnership with parents is very good. Information is regularly exchanged and parents are involved in their children's learning through discussion, a parent association, nursery to home books, noticeboards, newsletters and regular meetings.

What is being done well?

- Parents are kept very well informed of their child's progress. Parents are able to borrow books to take home to help with their child's learning. They learn about topics and themes through the planning, noticeboard, newsletters and regular meetings. A successful parent's association has been formed which all parents are able to participate in, share views and ideas.
- Children relate well to one another and adults and are encouraged to respect other's feelings. They are confident and very involved in the daily routine. Good behaviour is promoted and the children are given clear and consistent boundaries. Staff's calm and polite manner sets a good example for children.

- Staff develop the children's language through regular opportunities for discussion. They value what the children have to say and introduce them to new words. Letter recognition takes place throughout the day, such as finding their name and copying it onto a board at registration time. Resources are clearly labelled.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunity for children to freely access resources to enable them to use their imagination and creative skills
- the staffs knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- the planning of activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. A key issue was raised for staff to help children to use a correct pencil grip and generally form letters correctly. This was monitored through close supervision of teacher input, who worked with the principle to provide consistent practice. Training was given to new staff working in this area of learning and resources were closely checked and monitored, ensuring appropriate sized pencils etc were in place.

A key issue was raised to record informal evaluations of activities and use this information to inform planning. Evaluations are now completed regularly into the children's personal profile book. Evaluations are written recording the children's progress around activities. This information is regularly shared with the parents and used to inform weekly and monthly plans. However, these still need to demonstrate how activities will be adapted for children with special educational needs, or who learn at different rates.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and join the group happily. They are encouraged to join in activities and choose resources. Children confidently take care of their personal needs, such as washing their hands and using the toilet. The children are well behaved and have formed good relationships with adults and each other. They are able to share and take turns and are encouraged to respect others feelings.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children communicate with staff through discussion, signs and gestures. They have regular opportunities to share books, take part in discussion both individually and in groups. Children have opportunities to recognise print, on labels throughout the nursery. Children can recognise their names and many children are able to write them using well formed letters. The opportunities for children to write for different purposes, such as, during role play are more limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children regularly take part in number counting and can confidently count in sequence from 1-10. They are able to recognise and identify numbers and understand the consequence of bigger and smaller and solve problems of shape and size when they construct with large bricks and negotiate bikes outside. There is limited opportunity to explore weight and measure through sand and water play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn about the outside world through nature walks, collecting bugs and using natural resources. They learn about different cultures, countries and beliefs through books and celebrating festivals. There are limited resources to extend the children's learning such as the use of maps. Children regularly access the computer and children confidently know how to use it. Programmes are used to extend the children's learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have opportunities to develop large motor skills, through riding bikes, pushing, climbing, kicking balls and throwing bean bags in outside play. More challenging activities such as balancing and stretching through music and movement are more limited. Children's fine manipulative skills are developed through using tools such as scissors, pencil sharpeners, placticine and dough. Children are encouraged to help pour their own drinks out at lunch and snack time.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
------------	------------------------

Creative activities are very adult led. There are opportunities to freely use crayons and pencils, although generally ideas are initiated by the adults. Children can access paints and sand but not at regular intervals or freely to express their own ideas. Lack of free play inhibits the use of the role play area. Children can freely access the puzzles and have opportunities to participate in singing. The use of musical instruments to recognise and explore sounds is limited.

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 the daily routine and resources allow children opportunities to use their imaginations to help develop their creative skills and to express their ideas through regular use of paint, sand, water and music
- develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- ensure planning identifies how activities can be adapted to suit children who have special educational needs or who learn at different rates.

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.