



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 139333

DfES Number: 512171

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/12/2003
Inspector Name Mary Daniel

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Dorchester Community Nursery School
Setting Address York Road
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1QA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Dorchester Community Nursery Sch 301124

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Committee of Dorchester Community Nursery Sch
Address York Road
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1QA

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

Dorchester Community Nursery School was established over 30 years ago and operates from a purpose built building, situated near the centre of the main town of Dorchester. The nursery has sole use of the premises and the accommodation comprises an entrance hall, kitchen and office, a main play room and adjoining smaller room and toilet facilities for staff and children. There is an outside grassed area, a tarmac area, part of which is covered, a copse, a safety bark surface area with static climbing frame and slide, and an enclosed garden which is used by the children for growing and planting. This is a community nursery, and places are offered to children who come from a range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds.

The nursery is registered for sessional care to accommodate 32 children age from two to five years. The nursery is open term time only, Monday to Friday from 09.15 until 11.45 and from 13.00 until 15.30 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Lunch time sessions are offered on Monday, Thursday and Friday.

The nursery operates under their own constitution and is managed by a parent/trustee organisation. They employ a full-time head teacher, who is a qualified primary school teacher and six members of staff, most of whom are appropriately qualified and fully experienced in early years childcare and education. The nursery is in receipt of government funding and currently has 23 funded three year old children on roll. The nursery cater for children with special needs and those who have English as a second language. Support and curriculum advice is given to the nursery by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Dorchester Community Nursery School is of good quality and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The standard of teaching is very good. Staff are dedicated to helping children learn, form good relationships with them. They show a clear awareness of the stepping stones and maintain effective teamwork in use of a well organised planning system. Staff offer meaningful and interesting opportunities which help to consolidate what children know and supports their development, however some improvement could be made in using more everyday practical experiences, to extend children's learning. All children are valued and included within the group, and their special needs met appropriately. Staff provide an exciting and well structured play environment, effectively using a good range of resources, and allowing for group and independent play. Children can access writing tools easily and become involved in a variety of interesting structured art and craft activities, but these do not always allow for independent expression. Staff act as good role models and promote good behaviour very well through use of praise.

The leadership and management is very good. There is a clear structure to support the nursery, and staff development is promoted with a thorough induction and appraisal system in place. All staff are encouraged and involved in ongoing training opportunities. Staff take on individual responsibilities for particular issues such as planning or special needs.

Partnership with parents is generally good. There is clear information about the setting available and parents are kept informed of events within the nursery. Staff form good relationships with parents and are available to discuss issues, but parents evenings have not been well attended, and sharing of children's progress formally is limited. Parents are able to loan the nursery story boxes and books to use with their children at home.

What is being done well?

- Staff are committed and work well together as a team. They are qualified and experienced and are familiar with the early learning goals. They all become involved in planning of activities, contributing to all aspects of the curriculum.
- The play rooms are bright, attractive and inviting for children. Space is used effectively to provide a rich, learning environment and resources are organised well to allow easy accessibility and freedom of choice for children.
- There is good provision for children with special needs and staff liaise well with parents on suitable care and provision for each child. All children are very well supported with integration and their needs are recognised and respected. Activities are aimed to encourage children to participate at their

own level of ability and gain achievement.

- Children's behaviour is very good. Staff give a positive approach to behaviour management, maintaining consistent and appropriate boundaries, and support children in being kind and sharing with each other.

What needs to be improved?

- the extension of activities to provide additional challenge for the more able children, particularly with linking sounds with letters.
- the opportunities to encourage children to use their own imagination more in planned art and craft activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to improve the partnership with parents, by keeping them well informed of their child's progress on a regular basis, recording and acting on any information given by parents about their child's learning and encouraging parents to become more involved with the activities within the nursery. They were also asked to increase the opportunities for children to talk about their families, and past and present events within their lives.

The nursery have worked to address these issues by inviting parents to watch their child in action in the nursery, and keeping them informed of activities through newsletters and discussion. Some parents have visited the nursery, and an end of term meeting is planned. Parents are kept regularly informed of how they can access their child's developmental records and are invited to discuss these records at their convenience. Staff have also provided separate sheets with the children's records to record parents comments on their child's learning at home, although these have not been regularly used.

Children are encouraged to talk about their own lives during circle time and they make books about themselves and their families, developing a good sense of time and place. During the millennium year they were involved in making a time capsule which is buried in the grounds of the nursery, and special books about their lives including a family tree.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children become absorbed in their play and work very well together in activities. They regularly use good manners, and learn to respect one another. They listen attentively at circle time and show confidence to speak in a familiar group. Children behave very well and begin to learn right from wrong. They can select resources for themselves and are motivated to learn, secure within their peer group. Children enjoy learning about their own community and happily celebrate events together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children listen and respond with enjoyment to stories and songs. They play within an environment that is rich in print, and learn that print can carry meaning, as they choose resources from clearly labelled containers. Children use the writing table frequently and begin to form recognisable letters, although have limited opportunities to link sounds with letters, through everyday situations. They use language confidently to describe their experiences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very confident in using numbers in a familiar context, and they use size language appropriately when describing their dolls as big or little. Interesting cooking activities support children in their awareness of quantity as they use spoons and scales to measure out ingredients. They use play resources competently to help in counting e.g. the egg timer. Children learn about simple number problems as they enthusiastically sing nursery rhymes and songs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children actively learn about living things as they enjoy planting their own seeds and bulbs. They become engaged in constructing with a wide range of objects. Children discover their environment and confidently say the names of where they live. They show interest in other cultures and beliefs through a range of imaginative activities, information and story books and in wearing the different dressing up clothes. They ask why things happen and how things work and show an interest in technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use their imagination in movement and move with control and co-ordination. They show dexterity and competence in using small and large equipment. They enjoy riding the bikes around the marked track in the playground and begin to manage to adjust their speed and stop. This area is being developed to extend children's skills. There are good opportunities for them to develop their hand-eye co-ordination and they use pens and crayons

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use their imagination well in the different role play areas taking turns in being the shopkeeper or customer in the shop or hairdressers. They use puppets to make up a show and make up stories with the small world people. Children respond happily to a range of music and enjoy dancing and making different sounds on the instruments. They explore colour and texture through interesting experiences, although some structured craft activities may not allow for development of free expression.

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

- extend activities to provide additional challenges through practical everyday opportunities for the more able children, enabling them to express and extend their ideas fully, whilst practicing and developing their existing skills.
- provide further opportunities for children to use and develop free expression within planned craft activities.

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.