



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 205292

DfES Number: 510281

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	28/04/2004
Inspector Name	Rachel Wyatt

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Northleigh Ascension Nursery
Setting Address	Ascension Church Hall Somers Park Avenue Malvern Worcestershire WR14 1XA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Pamela Palmer
------	-------------------

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

Northleigh Ascension Nursery opened over 35 years ago. It operates from a church hall in Malvern Link, with access to an outside play area in the hall grounds. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 55 children from 2 years, 6 months to under 5 years on roll. This includes 25 funded 3-year-olds and 18 funded 4-year-olds. Support is available for children with special needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:30, apart from on a Tuesday when sessions are from 09:00 to 12:00. Children can attend for a variety of sessions, including part-days.

Eight part time and full time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The nursery has close links with Northleigh C of E Primary School and the adjacent church. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and representatives regularly attend local partnership group meetings. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Northleigh Ascension Nursery provides good care for children. They are settled and relaxed in the inviting environment created by the careful layout of activities, use of displays and strategically placed furniture. Routines and activities are well organised to provide a stimulating but secure atmosphere, and which enable children to play in pairs and small groups with the support of attentive adults who know them well. Appropriate documentation is in place with a few omissions regarding the uncollected child procedures, a written risk assessment and displaying emergency evacuation procedures.

Staff have a sound knowledge of the nursery's health and safety procedures. They

ensure that areas used are clean and safe, and promote children's awareness of safety and their independence in seeing to their self-care needs. Children's independence is also well fostered during enjoyable and social snack and lunch times.

Children have opportunities to engage in a very good variety of activities and topics. The range of toys, resources and equipment provided for these topics and activities is excellent, and they really promote children's ideas and imagination. Whether in a space rocket or an office, children engage in sustained and involved role play. Displays, posters and a range of fiction and non-fiction books encourage and extend children's learning and awareness of topics and activities. Children are busy, relate well to others and enjoy playing together and joining in large group discussions. They are familiar with nursery rules and respond to the adults' clear expectations and calm, consistent manner.

The nursery provides parents with a helpful range of information about the provision including access to a handbook of policies and procedures, photographic evidence, displays of children's work, a newsletter and information about activities. Parents are involved in their children's learning through the book share scheme and help with resources and fundraising.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the setting agreed to actions regarding the security of the premises, ensuring staff checks were in place, and developing an action plan regarding meeting requirements for toilet facilities and heating in that area.

Good progress has been made in addressing all of these actions. The front door is secure and staff monitor children's arrival and departure times. Children are carefully supervised outside and notices remind anyone visiting about closing the gate. Appropriate checks have been completed on the staff and relevant records are available on site. The nursery has worked closely with representatives from the church to draw up plans to develop the toilet area. Work is scheduled to begin soon to refurbish that area, including providing a toilet for the disabled, with improved heating and nappy changing facilities.

What is being done well?

- Staff are dedicated to creating a bright, welcoming and stimulating environment for children. They carefully set up activities and make effective use of furniture and displays to create an attractive layout. Children can see what is available and quickly settle to play. The effective organisation of sessions gives them time to explore different activities.
- Children are very busy, calm and settled. They are interested and concentrate well on activities and discussions. Children relate well to others, they are confident speakers and are very sociable.
- Children experience an interesting range of topics and activities with a good balance across all areas of play and learning. Activities provide them with

differing degrees of challenge, opportunities for structured and free play, and to engage both in independent and co-operative play.

- Staff positively acknowledge children's individual needs, they know the children and their characteristics well, and give them positive support and encouragement. There are appropriate procedures in place for observing and assessing children, and for liaising with parents and other agencies about any special needs. All children benefit from the adults' close involvement in, and interaction with them during, activities and discussions.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

An excellent range of toys and resources enhance topics and activities. Children find the toys and equipment stimulating and interesting and they enable children to have real, involved and meaningful experiences. In particular, realistic toys and equipment in role-play areas stimulate children's ideas and encourages their sustained imaginative play.

What needs to be improved?

- the uncollected child procedures to cover actions to be taken in the event no one arrives to collect a child
- the availability of the setting's own written risk assessment and record of any actions to take to minimise identified hazards
- the accessibility of fire evacuation procedures.

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
2	Expand the nursery's uncollected child policy to include procedures to follow in the event that no one comes to collect a child.
6	Consider displaying the setting's fire evacuation plan so it is readily

	available to all adults.
6	Develop a written risk assessment specifically for the nursery, highlighting key hazards and any actions to minimise these.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Northleigh Ascension Nursery provides very good nursery education. Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning. They are busy and purposeful, thoroughly enjoying learning. They relate well to others and play co-operatively. They are energetic and creative.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff provide an excellent range of exciting activities and experiences in a stimulating and well-resourced environment. They give children appropriate support, whilst ensuring their ideas and thinking are fostered and extended through discussions and effective questions. Children are encouraged to try out new experiences and to be independent, for example referring to books and displays to find out more about space. Adults have clear expectations of children's behaviour and intervene calmly to resolve any incidents. Children are responsive and well behaved. Staff regularly observe and assess children's progress, but currently records are not directly linked to the stepping stones, and are not formally shared with parents until their child's last term at the nursery.

Leadership and management are very good. The manager and staff work together to monitor and review the effectiveness of the nursery's educational programme. Good use is made of staff appraisals, evaluations, training, and liaison with other providers and their early years' mentor teacher to improve aspects of their provision. Recent changes to the organisation and management of some activities and routines have had a positive impact on children's behaviour, social skills, role-play and their appreciation of aspects of information technology.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents have access to helpful information about the Foundation Stage, including displays, photographs, topic updates, and a newsletter collated by a parent. They can be involved in their children's learning via the book loan and reading schemes, helping with fundraising and providing resources for topics.

What is being done well?

- Children have a secure understanding of letter names and sounds, and of numbers and counting. They enjoy activities involving letter and number recognition and often independently comment on letters, words, letter sounds or count and identify individual numbers. Children use both descriptive and mathematical language as they play.
- Children are confident, articulate and inquisitive. They enjoy group activities and also learning in pairs. They take an active part in discussions, sharing ideas and experiences and demonstrating good recall.
- Adults work well together to plan, organise and manage a very good range of stimulating activities for children which introduces them to the wider world

and beyond. Through diverse topics and activities they can for example, act out being an astronaut, pretend to be office workers, play with programmable toys, and make models out of a variety of construction items or materials.

- The manager and staff are dedicated to providing a welcoming and inviting environment for children and the layout and resourcing of activities is excellent. The very good range of toys and resources engage children's interest, promotes their ideas and gives them real, meaningful experiences. Staff are also proactive in reviewing the organisation and management of activities and routines, and recent changes have had a positive impact on children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the way children's progress records relate to the stepping stones and are shared with parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery had two key issues and very good progress has been made in addressing these. The first key issue concerned improving the programme for language and literacy by providing more opportunities for children to communicate with early writing in every day situations and to write their names. Children have good opportunities to practise mark making and writing, especially in role play areas such as the office where pencils, note pads, diaries and also a typewriter are available. Children are also encouraged to write their names on their work.

The second key issue related to developing the partnership with parents by supplying more information about the educational provision. The welcome information given to parents includes an outline of the six areas of learning, details about observation and record keeping and how parents can access their children's progress records. In the entrance hall to the premises the nursery has developed displays to provide a visual explanation of the six areas of learning. These include examples of children's work, descriptions of the curriculum areas and an interesting and comprehensive set of photograph albums covering all aspects of the curriculum.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are eager to take part in activities and to join in discussions. They are confident to participate in large group activities or to learn independently. They are very sociable, interacting during play, sharing books, helping each other out and exchanging ideas. They are busy, well behaved and developing an awareness of the importance of sharing and turn taking. They are gaining independence in seeing to their personal hygiene and self-care needs including at snack times, and in dressing.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making good progress in recognising letters, some words and relevant letter sounds. They often discuss these in their free play and whilst looking at books. Children are confident at mark making, forming recognisable shapes, letters and words. They enjoy opportunities to write in familiar contexts such as on their own work or during role-play. Children are attentive listeners and confident speakers, using descriptive language, engaging in discussions and chatting as they play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a very secure understanding of counting. Many count up to ten and some children count up to larger numbers. They are making very good progress in number recognition and show an interest in looking at and discussing numbers during play. Children recognise different shapes, compare different amounts and sizes, and enjoy simple problem solving activities. They join in number rhymes and use mathematical language during activities and discussions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children make often complex models out of a variety of materials and equipment. They explore and experiment with different materials and media. They are confident to use equipment and programmable toys in realistic contexts which develops their understanding of the uses of information technology. They really enjoy finding out about the world around them and beyond, taking an active part in topics, looking at reference books, acting out roles, and talking about what they have learnt.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are energetic and physically confident. They move freely and often creatively, showing an awareness of space. They scoot and pedal wheeled toys, and use large physical play equipment well, demonstrating good balance and co-ordination. Children have good pencil control and competently use scissors, brushes and other tools. They have good hand-eye co-ordination, handling different media well and fixing together a range of construction toys and puzzles of differing degrees of difficulty.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are very imaginative. They engage in sustained role play, acting out their own ideas and scenarios. They sing enthusiastically, play musical instruments with a growing awareness of different rhythms and levels of sound, and move rhythmically to music. Children are creative using different media to express their ideas. They chalk, draw and paint expressively and often describe aspects of their art work.

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, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- the procedures for recording children's progress to link more closely to the stepping stones, and the ways in which these can be shared more regularly with parents.

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.