



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY236111

DfES Number: 584672

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/11/2003
Inspector Name Ann Hilary Guy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Linslade Child Care
Setting Address c/o Linsdale Lower School
Leopold Road
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 2QU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name MRS SANDRA RIDGE

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

Linslade Childcare opened in its present location in 2002. It offers full daycare for children aged from two to eight years. Children up to the age of 12 years can attend the group before and after school and during the holidays.

The facility is open all year round from 08:00- 18:00. At the time of inspection 144 children attend the provision throughout the week. Their hours of attendance vary to suit the needs of the parents. Two children have special educational needs and one has English as a second language. There are 15 children in receipt of nursery funding, of whom all are three-year-olds. The children all live in the local area and most attend the local Lower School.

The nursery is based in its own building within the grounds of Linslade Lower School. It has two large airy rooms and access to outdoor play space, when it is not in use by the school.

There are 14 staff working with the children on a regular basis, plus other holiday cover staff. Almost 50% of the staff are suitably qualified with one staff member currently awaiting final assessment in order to gain a level 3 qualification. Staff receive support from a development worker and teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, together with support from other professional bodies in relation to children with special needs.

How good is the Day Care?

Linslade Childcare provides a good standard of care for children. Effective use is made of the staff, space and resources, especially with the older children in the after school provision. Staff use a sound set of policies and procedures, which they understand and consistently implement. High priority is given to the safety of the children both in and outside the building. In all aspects of the provision, children with special needs are well supported and fully included in all activities.

The staff work well as a team and provide opportunities for learning from a wide

range of activities, although sometimes these lack stimulation and challenge, particularly in the playgroup. There is a good variety of stimulating activities available to the older children in the after school club and holiday club, within a relaxed, friendly environment. Staff have good relationships with the children and are skilled at dealing with occasional instances of challenging behaviour in a positive, firm manner.

The facility has a very good relationship with the parents. Regular newsletters, daily informal discussions and an informative notice board, all help to keep them well informed and aware of what is happening within the various groups.

What has improved since the last inspection?

non applicable

What is being done well?

- The standard of care offered throughout the facility is very good. Within the group, when school age children attend, staff are skilled at offering the right amount of freedom and interaction to support their play.
- Staff ensure all children who attend the centre are safe and well cared for, with established routines in place to promote good health and hygiene.
- There is a strong emphasis on equal opportunities throughout the facility. Children with special needs are well supported and a policy of full inclusion is actively implemented.
- Groups for the older children offer a wide range of activities where they can choose their own games and make decisions about what and where they want to play, within a clear set of boundaries.

What needs to be improved?

- the child protection policy, to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff.

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
13	Ensure the child protection policy includes the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

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 Linslade Childcare is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in communication, language and literacy and mathematics development.

The quality of teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the early learning goals. They have begun to develop a framework for planning and a suitable assessment scheme. However, at present these are not effectively used to provide sufficient meaningful activities designed to challenge and motivate the children, particularly in some aspects of learning. Little forward planning takes place which has an impact on learning across all areas of the curriculum, in particular literacy and numeracy.

Staff are kind and friendly towards the children and use praise to encourage them in their play. Children have ample opportunity to play freely but opportunities to become involved in more purposeful activities are limited. Staff do not question effectively or adapt activities to meet the needs of all the children. Suitable systems are in place to support children identified as having special educational needs.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. The setting is committed to improving the care and education offered. However, there is limited monitoring and evaluation of the educational programme, which impacts upon any changes made.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are given sufficient information about the group and are encouraged to contribute to its running. Daily informal discussions encourage the regular sharing of children's progress, together with open evenings.

What is being done well?

- Children are developing confidence and are demonstrating a developing use of imagination in their play.
- Physical and creative play is effectively promoted through a wide range of activities both inside and outside the building.
- Staff are skilled at developing children's language and effectively model and reinforce the children's vocabulary.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning of stimulating, meaningful activities designed to help children make progress, particularly in aspects of communication language and

literacy and mathematical development;

- the book corner, to create an environment for children to explore a variety of print and books;
- opportunities for the children to make choices in their learning and develop greater independence.

What has improved since the last inspection?

An assessment scheme is now in place, that has been written around the six areas of learning and the stepping stones, which enables children's level of achievement and rate of progress to be clearly monitored. A planning system has been developed, however it is difficult to follow and staff were unclear as to the learning objectives expected from the activities. The programme of knowledge and understanding of the world has been improved and includes activities related to the local environment and opportunities to learn about living things. Very limited improvement has been made in the promotion of aspects of communications, language and literacy and mathematical development and this will remain a key issue. A sound policy for special educational needs and English as a second language is in place which includes full inclusion and integration within the setting. Suitable staff support is offered when needed.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children' confidence and self- esteem are promoted by a staff team who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They are able to choose between the pre-selected activities and can select creative resources for themselves, although they are unable to select any other resources and there is little extension for the more able children. They are beginning to take care of their personal needs. Children behave well and are learning to share, take turns, and be polite and considerate to others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate using gesture, signs and speech. They listen to stories and enjoy sharing books with adults, knowing words carry meaning. The independent use of books for pleasure and information has not been extended. Children recognise their first names and some can write these but there are limited opportunities for children to begin to link letters and sounds. There are varied opportunities for emergent writing, but children are not being helped to develop this further.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are beginning to count to ten and recognise shapes, colours and sizes. Their understanding of number is reinforced during routine tasks such as working out the date, or counting the number of children present. However the older or more able children have very few opportunities to begin to explore comparison and simple calculation in their play. They have many opportunities to explore shape and create patterns, but fewer to explore weight and capacity appropriate to their ability.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The outdoor school field and environmental area are used well to stimulate children's interest in the natural world and the features of the locality. They collect objects, observe the weather and talk about familiar sights. Both planned and spontaneous opportunities are taken to enable children to explore, observe and extend their knowledge and understanding, for example glitter in glue and observing baby snakes. Children are able to make models from construction kits.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Good use is made of the outside area to enable children to develop their skills such as balancing on stilts, riding tricycles, throwing and catching. they use tapes for music and movement. Staff are skilled at supporting and encouraging children to develop new skills. Children demonstrate developing skills and control when using their hands to draw, cut and build.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to freely explore a wide range of two and three dimensional materials. They have regular opportunities to sing, sometimes using musical instruments. Some children contribute to this very enthusiastically. Children draw freely and are learning to apply paint in a variety of different ways. They are developing the use of their imagination through small world and role play, although the quality of play varies according to the support they are given.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Improve planning to incorporate stimulating, meaningful activities designed to help the children make progress in all areas of learning, but particularly in personal social education, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
- Develop a suitable environment in which children can explore a variety of print and books.
- Develop a system that enables children to make choices and become independent learners with access to a variety of equipment and materials.

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.