



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY286664

DfES Number: 542386

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 13/12/2004
Inspector Name Chris Gregson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Mersea Island School
Setting Address Mersea Island School
Barfield Road, West Mersea
COLCHESTER
Essex

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Mersea Island School & Nursery Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Mersea Island School & Nursery Committee
Address Mersea Island School
Barfield Road, West Mersea
Colchester
CO5 8QX

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

Mersea Island School Nursery and Wrap Around Care opened in 2004 and operate within the grounds of the Mersea Island School. The full day care facility operates from two adjoining nursery units with the wrap around care being able to use the multi-use hall, classrooms and library if needed. A maximum of 52 children may attend the provision at any one time. The provision is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00 during term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 38 children aged from 2 to under 8 years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a few of children with special educational needs, and would support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight staff. Most of the staff, including the nursery teacher, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two members of staff working towards a higher qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Mersea Island School Nursery and Wrap Around Care provides good care for all children.

The new management committee are developing an operational plan that is available for parents and staff to see the high expectations for the provision, but, some policies need updating. Children have access to a good range of quality child-sized furniture and can play, eat or rest comfortably through out their time in the provision. There is a good range of toys and resources for the various ages.

Staff have a good understanding of health and safety. There are effective procedures to ensure staff know about any allergies or dietary information from

parents. Healthy snacks are provided and children can bring a packed lunch or have a hot cooked school meal when staying across the extended day. Staff know how to apply first aid or comfort a child who becomes ill during the session. Parents are informed of, and staff know, the procedures for any child protection concerns. Staff know all the individual children and treat them with equal concern. Extra help is given, when needed, to enable children to reach their full developmental potential.

Staff are very supportive and provide excellent care for the range of children's ages. They observe and record children's progress to ensure they are developing. Children take part in a range of planned activities, but some children find it difficult to concentrate at whole group. Behaviour management is very good. The wrap around care facility for school age children provides a light breakfast or tea if needed. Staff provide appropriate play activities and allow children to make choices whether they rest, play or do homework. This provides a bridge between school and home.

Partnership with parents is good. They are given excellent information about their child's time in the nursery through their 'busy books'. Parents' questionnaires show that they find staff friendly and always having time to discuss any concerns.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff are very kind and supportive especially with the very young child. They provide lots of reassuring touches and appropriate cuddles to comfort a child finding it difficult when leaving parent. This helps children to settle.
- Staff listen and value what children say. They constantly talk to them and ask questions to make the children think about what they are doing.
- Staff are committed to training and have updated their qualifications. Providing an excellent team with a wealth of experience and good knowledge base.
- Children with special needs are provided with excellent individual support and specific resources are provided if needed. Staff work with parents and other professionals to ensure children development is fully supported.
- The wrap around care enables the younger child to stay for the full school day and the school age child to come before or stay after school hours. This provides a good service to families who need the extended childcare.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation of the whole group circle time to enable children who find this time difficult to concentrate or join in for the required period
- complaints statement in line with National Standards

- child protection statement to give contact names and phone numbers of the local police and local authority social services department. This should include the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints

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	Organise whole group activities so that children can fully participate, or for those who opt out, ensure that alternative suitable activities are available or the grouping of the children is reorganised to provide a richer experience.
14	Update documentation in line with recent changes. (This refers to the written complaint procedure and the child protection statement.)

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Mersey Island Nursery and Wrap Around Care provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social and emotional development is particularly well planned and they make very good progress in this area.

The quality of teaching is generally good with some very good aspects. Staff understand the Foundation Stage and how children learn through play. They plan activities and ask questions to make them think. Planning is being developed and provides challenging activities and identifies children's next step.

Staff form very good relationships with the children. They encourage children to try new activities and ensure they receive extra support when needed. Staff skilfully manage children's behaviour, encourage independence, value their work and offer lots of praise for achievement. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-led activities. Staff observe children's progress and record this on assessment records that continue into the reception class.

Leadership and management of the pre-school nursery are generally good with some very good aspects. The management committee have high expectations for the provision and encourage training. The head of early years accurately identifies their strengths and is planning areas for development including in-set training. Staff appraisals will be done in the future, but there is no overall system to monitor the quality of nursery education.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents fill in a book about what the child can do before they start. Staff value this and then build on what the child can do. Parents can also contribute to their child's 'busy book'. The pre-school are planning to start parents meetings where they share assessment records with staff. Yearly written reports and a child's record book called 'my special book' made up with photos showing how they learn are planned.

What is being done well?

- Children are able to access the small-enclosed outdoor play area for the majority of the session. Curriculum plans for the outdoors include activities to cover all areas. The larger fully enclosed area provides an area for larger physical equipment and will be developed to create a planting area for the future.
- Children have very good access to the PC. The physical set up, on a low level table where children can easily use the mouse and see the screen, is excellent and enables them to freely use this area. Staff are on hand to support and extend their learning while encouraging children to click on the

icons and move through the programmes or match items on the screen.

- Staff provide various opportunities for children to count or recognise shapes during activities such as construction with Magnetico or frogs threaded on laces. When playing a shape matching game with Christmas cards staff reinforce the child's learning by making reference to the shape poster elsewhere in the room.
- Plans show how activities, such as books at story time, are linked into activities such as cooking. For example, making gingerbread men linked to the story of 'the gingerbread man'.
- Staff plan interesting and exciting activities so that children learn colours through art activities such as dribble or bubble painting and when mixing paint and observing the changes in colour. Staff reinforce this learning at other activities by asking the colours of various objects.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to add and take away through practical play activities
- opportunities for children to hear letter sounds
- children's own creativity in craft activities,
- a system to monitor and evaluate the education programme.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very confident and concentrate at activities. They show staff their paintings with pride and a sense of achievement, enjoying their learning experiences. Children take turns and share at activities such as the PC or painting. Behaviour is good as staff remind children of the rules in the pre-school. Independence is strong as children freely choose activities and resources. Children are confident, secure and know their setting and happily sing Christmas carols.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children communicate using gestures and words. They know the conventions of conversation, listening and talking and string together phrases when excitedly describing their birthday presents. Children enthusiastically sing, but opportunities to hear letter sounds are limited. They hold books correctly and use books or leaflets to find information. Children self-register, on arrival, using named photos. They develop good hand eye co-ordination and mark-make or begin to write their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children confidently count using objects, spoonfuls of icing and action songs. They sort frogs onto number cards, however practical activities to add and take away and problem solve are limited. Children weigh ingredients when cooking jam tarts and see how tall the sunflower grows. They recognise shapes on the Christmas card game and use simple mathematical language when playing in the sand tray or when using PC programmes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children observe changes when balloons of water are frozen or colour is added to icing. They use magnifying glasses to look at fingerprints. They competently build and construct with man-made or recycled materials. They use the PC and use press buttons and turn keys in the home corner. Children talk about holidays, their family and the school play and visit the school pond, go to the beach and talk about their pets. Children learn respect for all people through topic work such as Hanukkah.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently inside or outdoors. They run, hop, climb-up and jump. They move over and balance on carpet stepping-stones. They move an imaginary car around a circuit developing an awareness of space. Children wash their hands after painting and before snacks, but health and bodily awareness activities are slightly limited. They use large and small equipment and safely use small tools. They shape playdough or clay with their hands or tools such as rolling pins.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children learn colours through art activities and feel textures through collage and craft work. However, children's own creativity is limited by pre-determined end products in craft activities. They enthusiastically sing action songs, Christmas carols and draw while listening to music. But, this is slightly limited. They use imagination at the vets and when constructing or painting. They know about their senses, feeling various craft materials and tasting pizzas or vegetable soup.

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

- develop opportunities for children to learn to add and take away through practical play activities
- provide more opportunities for children to hear letter sounds during their play
- devise and implement a robust system to monitor the quality of nursery education to ensure all aspects of learning are met.

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.