



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221549

DfES Number: 520587

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	24/11/2003
Inspector Name	Caroline Valerie Novak

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	ACE Nursery School
Setting Address	37 Parkside Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 1JE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of ACE Nursery School
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	ACE Nursery School
Address	37 Parkside Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 1JE

## 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

ACE Nursery School opened in 1966. It is run by a parents co-operative and operates from five rooms in a four storey building in the centre of Cambridge. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 77 children from two to six years on roll. This includes 19 funded three year olds and 2 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is able to accept children with special needs, although currently there are none on roll. The group supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. The nursery day is from 08:45 to 17:30. Within those times various sessions are available.

Nine members of staff work regularly with the children. Eight have early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## 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 ACE Nursery School is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas.

Teaching is generally good. Adults use their sound knowledge of how children learn to plan a range of activities for children to experience. They provide an attractive environment, with well-defined areas for children to engage in different activities, working alongside the children to help them become confident and form good relationships. However, curriculum planning is not yet informed by assessment and opportunities for children to extend their learning through everyday routines are missed. Children's behaviour is generally good, though some large group activities, such as chat time, do not meet the needs of all children; at these times, learning is hindered by the unsettled behaviour of some children.

A satisfactory system is in place to identify and support children with special educational needs, so that they can make good progress, and a range of strategies help children with English as an additional language to communicate.

Leadership and management are generally good. Regular staff meetings enable the staff to share ideas and exchange information. Relationships are good, and staff work well together. A well-structured system allows for delegation of responsibilities according to qualifications and experience. However, there is no system in place to monitor the effectiveness of the education provision or practice in the nursery, to identify areas for further development.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are well informed about the foundation stage, activities, and routines. They take an active part in the organisation of the nursery and approach the staff to discuss their children's progress. They receive regular written reports but their comments about children's achievements outside the nursery are not used to help plan the next steps for progress.

### What is being done well?

- Children are confident, independent learners. They choose and initiate their own activities from the wide range on offer in each area of the nursery. They share resources and negotiate with each other, respecting each other's needs. They move from one area of the building to another to take part in activities, negotiating the stairs competently.
- Staff form very good relationships with children and their families. They show genuine interest in what children say and do, listening intently and treating their comments seriously. They respect children as individuals and enable them to pursue their own interests and make their own decisions. Adults

present themselves as good role models, teaching children to be caring and considerate by following their own good example.

- Adults provide an attractive and welcoming environment to help children and their families feel confident in the nursery. They display children's own work attractively in all areas and positive images of all members of society help children to learn about different cultures and lifestyles.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- adults use of everyday routines and activities to enable children to extend their learning across all areas of the curriculum spontaneously, and in meaningful contexts, such as writing their names on artwork, counting and calculating at circle time or selecting tools and resources in the art area
- curriculum planning using the early learning goals and stepping stones, so that plans provide sufficient detail to enable adults to make effective use of the activities to promote and extend learning for all children
- assessment of children's progress using the stepping-stones, so that it is clear how children are progressing towards the early learning goals and future planning offers appropriate challenges that build upon what children already know and can do
- the system for assessing the effectiveness of the educational programme, so that areas for further staff training and development can be identified.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The nursery has made generally good progress with the key issues identified at the last inspection.

Parents are now provided with curriculum information so that they know how the activities provided will help their children to progress towards the early learning goals.

Children now have more opportunities to learn about cultures and beliefs that are different from their own through access to a wide range of resources, art and craft activities and music.

Children are able to access a satisfactory range of everyday technology, such as telephones, calculators, electronic cash register and a camera, to support their learning.

The areas for assessment have been expanded to include the area of creative development. However, the nursery's interpretation of knowledge and understanding of the world does not encompass all of the 'aspects' for the area of learning shown in the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident to initiate their own activities and conversations. They show high levels of self esteem and form good relationships with each other and adults in the group. They concentrate and sit quietly at self chosen activities, such as exploring the effect of adding water to sand, and they share resources at activities, co-operating with each other well. However, some children become unsettled at large group activities, such as chat time when they are not actively participating.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children interact and speak clearly, using a wide range of vocabulary. Children with English as an additional language use their home language as a stepping-stone to explore new words with a key adult. Children know about initial sounds and recognise some written words, such as their name. They enjoy looking at books and make up their own narratives as they play together in the home corner or with small world toys. Opportunities to extend writing for a purpose in more able children are missed.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use numbers and counting in their play. They recognise written numerals and are beginning to show some understanding of simple calculations as they work out how many white and brown cups they have. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe size and shape, and recreate simple patterns. They use their developing knowledge of mathematics to build 'curved' and 'straight' train tracks. Some opportunities for them to learn about calculating through everyday activities are missed.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children design and build large constructions, such as 'dens', from a range of materials, selecting their own resources. They discuss the different colours and sounds of musical instruments and notice difference in textures of materials. They use everyday technology such as telephones and calculators in the role play area. They talk about their families and home with understanding. Children learn about each other's cultures and beliefs through using a range of appropriate resources and music.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and imaginatively, indoors and out, and use a wide range of equipment, handling large and small items with control. They ride bicycles, balance and climb in safety. They show an understanding of how their bodies work, and know that milk is "good for you". They use a range of techniques to shape dough and construct rockets or dinosaur houses from duplo. However, opportunities to develop physical skills by selecting and experimenting with tools in the art area are missed.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore textures and colours playing with natural materials or painting pictures. They experiment with sounds using their voices and enjoy using musical instruments and singing songs. They dress up in role play situations and use their imagination to act out their narratives with the small world track or zoo. They discuss the taste of pasta when it is cooked and how it feels to their touch. They make 'robot wars' with duplo and make up their own stories in the hairdressers shop.

**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 the system for curriculum planning with sufficient detail to help staff know how the activities contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals, so that they can take advantage of opportunities to promote children's learning through everyday routines and activities. Use the stepping stones to identify learning objectives that cover all of the 'aspects' in each of the six areas of learning, and show staff roles and resources for activities. Use children's assessment records to inform planning and show how activities will be adapted for more or less able children, as well as those who speak English as an additional language.
- Develop a systematic approach to observing and assessing children's progress, so that records can be effectively used to identify the next steps and build upon what children already know. Ensure children's progress records relate to the stepping stones and cover all of the 'aspects' in the early learning goals. Include parent's observations of what their children do outside of the nursery, so that planned activities provide appropriate challenges for all children.
- Develop a formal system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education. Use the assessments to identify areas for further development and staff training needs.

*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.*