



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 650031

DfES Number: 584343

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/02/2005
Inspector Name Julie Ann Birkett

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Billericay Methodist Pre School
Setting Address Western Road
Billericay
Essex
CM12 9DT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Billericay Methodist Pre School Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Billericay Methodist Pre School Committee
Address Western Road
Billericay
Essex
CM12 9DT

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

Billericay Methodist Pre School opened in the 1960's and is committee run. The pre-school operates from two rooms in the church premises. It is situated close to the centre of Billericay.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 32 receive funding for nursery education. Children generally come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children who have special educational needs.

The pre-school employs 11 staff. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification..

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for pre-school education at Billericay Methodist Pre School is good. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage. They use both long and short term plans to deliver a range of activities and experiences to consolidate and develop the children's skills and learning. Planning is generally effective, but does not always show how the range of children's abilities will be met across all the six areas of learning. Staff make regular observations and record the children's progress. These records are not directly linked to the stepping stones and it is not evident therefore, how the children make progress against them.

Staff create a comfortable and calm learning environment. Sessions are well organised to enable children to have time and space to enjoy both their own independent play and adult led activities. Staff are actively involved with the children and are interested in what they say and do. Staff respond spontaneously to children's ideas and conversations. Staff and children develop warm relationships and all work together in good humour. Children's behaviour is good in response to the consistent and caring management by all staff.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee liaise regularly with staff who feel supported in their roles. Staff have regular meetings and discuss pre-school issues daily. The staff are a strong team and complement each others strengths.

Partnership with parents is good. Home links are formed initially by parents completing an information sheet about their child. The prospectus and displays inform parents about the Foundation Stage. Newsletters include the next planned learning intentions so that parents can support children at home. Children's assessments records are available for parents but there are no formal systems in place to share these.

What is being done well?

- Staff are warm and caring. They talk and listen to the children attentively. They ask meaningful questions, which encourages the children to listen, think, predict and suggest ideas. Children contribute eagerly to conversations, drawing on their own experiences and knowledge to reflect on and discuss topics and issues which, ultimately, reinforces their learning.
- Staff effectively use spontaneous opportunities to extend the children's own ideas and learning. An example is, a small group of children were drawing their own pictures and began to discuss them. As a member of staff talked with them about their ideas they began to make up a story. The member of

staff encouraged this and took it one step further by helping the children to create a story board with the cut out pictures. The children 'read' the story to the whole group later in the session.

- Children are provided with a range of resources and the time to develop their own imaginative play. They choose freely from a range of small and large imaginative role play equipment. They are able to relive and relate their own experiences through familiar objects as they pretend to cook pizza in the home corner, buy food from the shop or take cars to the petrol station. They are comfortable with this play, which encourages security and develops confidence and language skills.

What needs to be improved?

- children's progress records and the sharing of these with parents
- curriculum planning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school have made generally good progress overall in addressing the three key issues identified at the previous education inspection.

Now children now have opportunities to practice letter and sound recognition, for example, when a member of staff helps a child write their name she sounds out the letters. There are also planned activities for example, letter of the week. Children now have access to a 'writing' table each day where they can develop their emergent writing skills. Also planned opportunities are provided, for example, when making lists or taking food orders in the Chinese take away. Some everyday opportunities for further practice with learning to form letters are not always developed sufficiently. Curriculum planning now also includes practical activities for children to record number for example, when making charts about their favourite pet.

Less progress has been made in addressing the second key issue. Staff do make frequent observations of the children's attainments. While assessment records have been changed to include early learning goals, these are not linked directly to the stepping stones of learning, which is the pathway towards the goals. Some of the assessments levels are very advanced for what would normally be expected for this age range. The current system does not easily show how children are progressing against the stepping stones and therefore is not very effective in informing the future planning for individual children's next steps.

Good progress has been made in addressing the third key issue. Now children enjoy a range of planned activities to increase their knowledge of a range of cultures and religious events. At the time of the inspection children were completely engrossed in their play in the Chinese Restaurant and with the dressing up clothes. They were learning about the wider world in a very practical, first hand way.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are happy and settled and eagerly participate in pre-school life. They concentrate well and take pride in finishing a task for example a panda puzzle. They share and take turns and play co-operatively. They have some opportunities to demonstrate their growing independence when they wash their hands or fasten dressing up clothes. They are aware of their own needs and feelings and show concern towards others. Children learn about the wider world through many activities and experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and enthusiastic speakers and express their ideas as they play, talking about real and imagined experiences. They listen to stories and respond with enjoyment. They are able to reflect on and recall stories and suggest endings. They handle books well. They have opportunities to learn letter sounds and link these to the written letter. Children learn to recognise their own names. Children practice their developing writing skills when making lists or letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children reliably count one another or how many buttons on a Chinese coat. They learn to recognise and name numerals, particularly those of personal significance like their ages. Children match and name shapes when using a shape and hammer set. They compare length and height when making play dough worms or brick towers. They learn about different measuring systems mostly through planned activities. Children begin to understand simple addition and subtraction while they sing number rhymes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use available tools well as they cut, shape, fold and join paper and play dough. They comment on change when they talk about the weather and growing up. They explore and investigate natural and man-made objects as part of planned topic work and through some everyday experiences. They design and build with construction toys or when junk modelling. They have regular access to a computer and other simple technology equipment at times for example a popcorn maker or paper shredder.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children develop large motor skills as they use the climbing frame or pedal bikes around the hall. They develop a sense of space when they choose somewhere to sit on the carpet or move around to let a friend join them at the table. Many daily opportunities are provided to develop the children's fine motor skills. They demonstrate good hand eye coordination when using tools and equipment such as paintbrushes, scissors and pencils. They learn about healthy living through some planned topics.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore colour, form and texture through free and guided art and craft activities. They learn to mix colours and make representational pictures. They join in with singing and remember a range of songs and rhymes. Children enjoy dressing up and using the range of props provided for free role play. They show good imaginative skills as they play with the puppets and in the home corner. They use their senses when food tasting, cooking and using textured materials and fabrics.

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 curriculum planning to show how less able children will be supported and more able children challenged to ensure that the children continue to make progress across all the areas of learning
- Review the recording system for children' s progress to ensure that they are more clearly linked to the stepping stones of learning. Clear links will enable all staff to see quickly what the child already knows so that future curriculum planning builds on this and helps the children take the next steps in their learning. Develop more formal systems to share this information 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.