



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 226235

DfES Number: 584541

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/10/2003
Inspector Name Georgina Walker

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Charles R.C. Pre-school
Setting Address Bosworth Road
Measham
Derbyshire
DE12 7LQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name St Charles R. C. Pre-school 1024547

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Charles R. C. Pre-school
Address Bosworth Road
Measham
Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE12 7LQ

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

St. Charles R.C. Pre-school opened in 1982. It operates from a mobile classroom, with associated facilities, in the grounds of St. Charles R.C. School in the village of Measham. The children also have access to further toilets and the computer room in school, a safely enclosed outdoor play area and the school field. The pre-school serves the village and the surrounding rural area.

The pre-school is registered to care for 21 children each session. There are currently 45 children from two-and-a-half to five years on roll. This includes 19 nursery education funded 3-year-olds and 18 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children who speak English as their first language, but also have an additional language, currently attend the pre-school. Staff have experience of caring for children identified as having special educational needs.

The pre-school opens five days each week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.00 to 12.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 9.00 to 11.30 on Tuesday and Thursday. There are afternoon sessions from 12.30 to 15.30 on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and from 13.00 to 15.30 on Wednesday afternoons. The sessions on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are for children aged four.

Five members of staff work with children throughout the week. Four members of staff usually work each morning and three each afternoon session. Three members of staff have National Vocational Qualifications in Childcare to level 3. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years' Development and Childcare Partnership and works co-operatively with the school.

How good is the Day Care?

St. Charles R.C. Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children aged 2 and a 1/2 to 5 years. Some documentation has not been sufficiently updated, adequately collated, and does not contain all the necessary information. However, the children

are well cared for and educated by qualified and experienced staff, in purpose built premises. The site is well maintained, safe, and secure.

There are policies and procedures to maintain safety; children have a good awareness of personal safety within the playroom and outside, and when walking to the school. Behaviour management and children's interpersonal skills are good, as staff create a calm environment in which children learn and are purposefully occupied. Children's individual needs are met with regard to dietary and care needs, and cultural differences are acknowledged and respected.

Staff provide a good range of activities and are constantly updating their play planning. Children have opportunities to learn about festivals from around the world.

Four regular staff and a relief staff member work with the children. They attend ongoing training and meet weekly to discuss future activities, the development of the children and to cascade training. Good induction processes and these weekly meetings ensures staff have opportunities to be informed of new practices and share the development of the pre-school.

The partnerships with parents are satisfactory. Whilst they are provided with written information about the services, it is not yet in an easily accessible format. Some documentation does not incorporate the required parental signatures as proof that they have been made aware of all aspects of the playgroup routine and have seen documentation relating to their child.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to update some documentation to ensure it complied with the National Standards with regard to records of staff, the complaints and child protection procedures. These three now meet the Standards, although the staff are unaware of current child protection guidance issued in September 2003.

Play provision was to be extended and this continues to be ongoing. The staff have acquired additional resources and plan an extensive range of themes and topics for children to develop their experiences and learning.

Safety requirements have been addressed to ensure the children do not have access to potential hazards in drawers and that in the event of a fire the fire control equipment would be in working order and is checked on a regular basis.

The outdoor play space was to be safe, secure and well maintained. This area has been fenced and staff complete ongoing risk assessments to ensure the children can play and learn in safety.

What is being done well?

- Children have opportunities to develop emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities on an individual basis by accessing the wide range of

activities presented.

- Children are happy and purposefully engaged in play and learning. Their welfare and development is promoted by the good staff role models, who create a calm atmosphere.
- Children are cared for in premises which are safe, secure and suitable and provide a welcoming environment. Their work is valued and displayed around the premises.
- They change the displays in the role play area, which shows four rooms in a house, when discussing the layout of their own home.
- Children are cared for by suitably qualified or experienced staff, employed by the committee through a good recruitment policy. They are encouraged to access ongoing training and to cascade the information to their colleagues at weekly staff meetings.

What needs to be improved?

- the ongoing vetting of all relevant persons, committee, childcare and domestic staff who have contact with children
- the operational plan which requires updating, collating and is to be made available to parents
- the presentation of books to encourage use by all children
- the writing of children's names consistently in the accepted format
- the records of when all fire evacuation practices take place
- the detail recorded in accident, incident and medication records, with parental signatures on all documents relating to their child, ongoing evaluation and storage of the records when a child has left the pre-school
- the contents of the first aid box
- the statement of child protection arrangements in accordance with the September 2003 guidance.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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
1	Ensure all relevant persons, committee, childcare and domestic staff who have contact with children are vetted.
2	Update and collate the operational plan and make it available to parents.
3	Remove inappropriate books from the shelf and ensure the remainder are well presented to encourage use by all children.
3	Consistently adopt good practice and example in writing children's names.
6	Make a record of when all fire evacuation practices take place.
7	Record more detail of accidents and injuries, and include significant injuries which occur when children are not in pre-school care. Ensure that parents are aware of and sign all documentation kept on their child and that there is an ongoing system for the retention of documentation.
7	Ensure medication documentation contains all relevant details.
7	Ensure the contents of the first aid box are in accordance with current training and advice.
10	Ensure the statement and practice relate to the current Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.
12	Ensure parents are formally aware of all aspects of the pre-school routine and sign documentation relating to their child.
13	Obtain current procedures booklet and update the statement of child protection arrangements accordingly.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals overall. Their progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good, with children demonstrating good interpersonal skills and an understanding of what is right and wrong. Children's progress in physical development is also very good as children have access to an excellent range of resources, including large equipment. Staff provide a wide range of themes and topics and children learn about their surroundings and the wider community, celebrating Diwali by making collage pictures, tasting food and listening to music.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Over the past year staff have increased resources, researched activities and developed planning. They work very well as a team, have formal meetings weekly to discuss planning, children's development and assessment records, but they do not currently formally evaluate activities to plan for children's future educational needs. However, the plans make clear the learning intentions. Staff have a sound knowledge of special educational needs, but are still insufficiently knowledgeable of the early learning goals generally.

Leadership and management at the pre-school is generally good. All staff are committed to the improvement of children's care and education, which is demonstrated through their commitment to improving their own knowledge and through their regular meetings and discussions.

Partnerships with parents are generally good. They receive some information regarding the provision, although this is not all up-to-date. Information about their child's progress is shared regularly, but not always consistently. However, many parents are involved in their children's learning and the life of the group by joining the committee, helping with topics, or by making and bringing in resources.

What is being done well?

- Children are forming strong relationships with each other, play co-operatively and demonstrate a good understanding of what is right and wrong. They have a developing sense of the wider community and the world around them through the resources they use daily and the topics planned by staff.
- Children move with confidence and an awareness of safety around the resources and play areas. They demonstrate good control and co-ordination skills when using the excellent range of small and large equipment. They carefully balance monkeys on string which is tied across the water play tray and when outside balance themselves as they cross the strip of blocks on the ground.
- Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, where their creative work is valued, regularly displayed around the playroom or in the role

play corner, and is also used as a resource for discussion.

- Staff are committed to increasing their own curriculum knowledge and to ensuring the children's learning is broad, balanced and relevant.

What needs to be improved?

- access to a range of books which are in good order, well presented, properly used and respected, and their use encouraged for enjoyment and research
- mathematical activities to develop children's knowledge and experiences especially with regard to calculating, shape, space and measurement
- children's consistent access to a variety of information and communication technology equipment
- music and imaginative role play activities to ensure children's creative development is not limited to exploring media and materials
- staff training, in order to develop their understanding of the early learning goals, how to effectively evaluate the activities provided and plan for children's future needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The improvement to the setting since the last inspection is generally good. The pre-school were asked to develop planning to include learning outcomes for all activities, especially knowledge and understanding of the world. They were to include ideas to extend topics with depth and challenge. In the programme for communication, language and literacy, the pre-school was asked to introduce children to letters of the alphabet, make books more accessible and encourage their use. Staff were required to develop a suitable and manageable assessment system to monitor children's progress and ensure it covered all areas of learning.

Changes in management has provoked a new action plan being raised. Assessment documentation has been introduced which is completed quarterly and enables staff to reflect on children's progress towards the early learning goals. Planning has improved, particularly in activities which promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world and the learning intentions are now clear. There is sufficient breadth and challenge within the activities overall. Evaluations of planning have not yet occurred.

Children now have access to a range of resources, including occasional use of information technology. Properly planned themes and topics enable children to learn about how things work and how the wider community live. Children are becoming competent in recognising letters of the alphabet and their associated sounds. They are able to relate sounds to the letters related to their own names and attempt writing during free play and in formal activities. However, children are not yet using books effectively and the range of literary resources does not induce interest.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn, becoming purposefully engaged in the activities. They are confident to try new experiences, including tasting unusual food, discuss issues, ask questions and express their feelings. They show respect for each other and resources and help to tidy away prior to "tuck time". Children are developing independence and confidence to contribute in large groups, sharing their news.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children negotiate with each other to share resources and suggest play ideas in the role play corner or the play house outside. They repeat letters, sounds and new words learnt during activities and respond to staff questions regarding the sound at the beginning of their own name used as an activity after story time. They are not encouraged to use or respect the books due to poor presentation. They see text around the rooms and many write their own name during free and structured play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have access to a range of resources and activities to develop their mathematical knowledge. They count when prompted to do so during free play. Their mathematical understanding and experiences are not fully developed as formal activities are not sufficiently planned and extended by the staff. Activities with regard to calculating, shape, space and measurement are limited, but children compare sizes after drawing round each other's shadows and recognise light and dark patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have opportunities to explore, investigate, design and make from a wide range of resources. They have planned access to "feely bags" and are beginning to use battery operated cameras and phones. Their access to a variety of information and communication technology resources is not consistent, although they use the school computers. Children are developing an understanding of time, place, culture and beliefs from the increasing range of resources, themes and topics provided by the staff.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move with confidence and an awareness of safety. They have regular opportunities to develop throwing and catching skills and run on the school field. Children demonstrate good control and co-ordination skills when using balancing and climbing equipment. They are skilled in using small equipment, such as scissors and the mouse for the computer, and effectively join construction kits together. Children understand the importance of staying healthy and how their body changes when hot.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore a wide range of media and materials on a daily basis to create in two and three dimensions. They use their imagination during role play, in the shop and to purchase food. However, their imaginations are not extended through music or by acting out stories. Children respond to experiences using all of their senses, during such topics as tasting food, which some say is "too hot and spicy"!

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

- ensure children have access to good quality books which are well presented and their use encouraged and respected;
- continue to access training in order to further develop staff's understanding of the early learning goals, how to effectively evaluate the planned activities and plan for children's future individual needs, particularly in the areas of mathematical and creative development;
- increase children's access to information and communication technology.

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.