



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 110181

DfES Number: 517761

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/06/2004
Inspector Name Catherine Hill

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Starlings Pre School
Setting Address c/o Manor Field Infant School
Haydn Road
Basingstoke
Hants
RG22 4DH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Starlings Pre School 1039597

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Starlings Pre School
Address Haydn Road
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG22 4DH

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

Starlings Pre-School opened in 1993. It is situated in a self-contained unit in the grounds of, and attached to, Manor Field Infant School in Basingstoke. The pre-school has access to a safe outside play area and some use of the school playing fields. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently children from 2 years to 5 years on roll. This includes funded 3-year-olds and funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports 3 children with special needs. There are no children attending at present with English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 all week and from 12:30 to 15:00 on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Five members of staff work with the children. All staff are currently working towards early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. the group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Starlings Pre-school provides good care for children. Well organised staff plan and provide children with a good daily range of appropriately resourced activities. They maintain a welcoming environment where space is used effectively to meet children's needs. Documentation is in place to support practice although not all necessary detail is contained and practice does not always reflect written policy.

Daily safety checks ensure children play and learn within a safe, secure setting where staff sensitively support children. They have due regard to individual needs, including any special needs children may have. Staff access training to develop their knowledge and skills in all areas with some staff still yet to access child protection training.

Kind, caring staff ensure children have good daily opportunities to progress in all

areas of development. Children are at ease within the pre-school. They have excellent relationships with staff who take a continual interest in their welfare. Children are polite and behave well whilst playing independently or co-operatively with others.

Partnership with parents is positive. They receive regular information on pre-school practice. They are positive in their praise of the pre-school and particularly like the way children's individual needs are catered for.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Care, learning and play is good. Sensitive, caring staff give children very good levels of support. They plan and provide a good range of activities for children which allow them to make daily progress in all areas of development. Children are very happy and actively occupy themselves throughout sessions.
- Organisation of the pre-school is good. High staff ratios result in children being well supported throughout sessions. Staff use space effectively to provide children with varied play areas, with a good range of resources and equipment set out to support learning.
- Staff have excellent relationships with children. They are knowledgeable about children in their care and meet their needs on an individual basis. They sensitively support children with special needs and work with both parents and outside agencies to ensure needs are met and children are fully included in the group.
- Behaviour management is very good. Staff act as positive role models and provide a calm, stimulating environment where children are well occupied. Children have good manners and behave well during sessions.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge of child protection issues
- documentation to ensure: emergency medical consent is in place; full names are recorded in accident records; procedures for induction and contacting parents when children are sick are recorded; a statement regarding bullying is included within the behaviour management policy; Ofsted's details are given in the complaints policy; local police and social services contact numbers are given with the child protection procedures and that policy reflects practice.

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	Develop staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.
14	Ensure all necessary detail is recorded within documentation in accordance with the National Standards and guidance and that practice is consistent with written policy.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Starlings Pre-school is an acceptable provision and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff plan a varied range of activities for children which give them daily opportunities to progress in all learning areas. Keyworkers make regular observations of children's learning and use their records to inform future planning. Planning and assessment records, however, do not clearly show the stepping stone links in relation to children's learning. Staff use a range of teaching strategies effectively throughout sessions to aid learning. They use questions to make children think and demonstrate and explain activities. In most learning areas, however, they miss opportunities to further develop children's knowledge and skills. Behaviour management is very good. Staff act as positive role models and provide a very calm, caring atmosphere where children are actively engaged and well supported. Children are well behaved during sessions.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work effectively together to ensure sessions run smoothly and children are well supported. The management team are aware of areas in need of attention, for example documentation, and are committed to improving the provision.

Partnership with parents is generally good. They receive regular information on pre-school practice via newsletters, information displayed and daily verbal exchanges. They are positive in their praise of the group and particularly like the way children's individual needs are catered for. However, they have no formal opportunities to contribute to their child's future learning targets and information provided does not always reflect practice.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They are confident, relaxed and happy and actively occupy themselves playing and learning co-operatively with others.
- Children's have well developed reading skills. Daily use of name cards and exposure to key word labels displayed in the setting reinforces their skills. Staff foster children's interest in literature by regularly sharing books with them.
- Staff make regular observations of children's learning. They use their records and knowledge of individual children to plan the next steps in their learning providing good levels of support during sessions.
- Children's physical development is good. They have very good hand-eye co-ordination and show skill in manipulating resources.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for parents to formally contribute to their child's future learning targets
- opportunities for children to develop: their independence and social skills at snacktime; their vocabulary during everyday activities; their number recognition skills; their awareness of time and weather and their free creative expression by free access to a range of different materials
- documentation: to provide clear evidence of the monitoring and evaluation of practice by maintaining records of meetings, staff appraisals and policy reviews and by improving planning and assessment records to show clear stepping stone links to learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection is very good. Staff have extended resources to further stimulate children's interest and opportunities for learning which were issues raised in the previous inspection report. A new computer system is available for children to use with a varied range of software to support learning. Children have daily opportunities to access the computer and show skill in manipulating the mouse, for example, when completing a colour and shape matching programme. Children's imaginative play opportunities have been further developed by the purchase of a range of costumes. Children eagerly participate in role play activities and enjoy using dressing up clothes and shoes to get into character.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have very good relationships with staff and each other. They show friendship and consideration for others supporting each other during play. They have good manners, behave well and respond positively to staff requests. They are motivated learners who absorb themselves in activities and persevere until they have achieved. They independently repeat tasks to consolidate skills. Staff do not fully exploit opportunities to develop children's independence and social skills at snacktime.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy books and listening to stories. They understand that print carries meaning and recognise their names cards. Key word labels and regular opportunities to find their names cards reinforce their skills. They use picture clues as they sit and 'read' independently. They independently write their names on their work with some recognisable letters, looking closely at their name cards to remind themselves of letter formation. Some staff miss opportunities to develop children's vocabulary.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently to ten and beyond, for example, at register time children count to thirteen. They have very good opportunities to develop their calculation skills. Practical activities with the abacus and cars reinforce their learning. They know that combining two sets of objects makes the number higher. They are able to match colour and shapes, for example, when using computer software. Staff do not exploit opportunities to develop children's knowledge of written numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show an interest in their environment and the natural world and ask questions to develop their knowledge. They enjoy designing and making objects. They use meccano to make, for example, a swing and windmill. They concentrate well, choosing and joining appropriate pieces to make the finished article. They independently use the computer showing skill when manipulating the mouse and keys. Staff miss some opportunities to develop children's awareness of time and changes in the weather.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently and freely throughout the setting. They manoeuvre safely around each other and between activities. They have good hand eye co-ordination. They skilfully manipulate the computer mouse and direction keys, thread picture cards and throw and catch balls. They have good daily opportunities to reinforce and consolidate their fine motor skills using pencils, brushes and small scale construction.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy singing songs. They match actions to words, for example, when singing familiar songs. Their imaginative skills are well developed. They play co-operatively together in the role play area pretending to cook and make sandwiches. They have good observational skills. When playing Kim's games they remember the colour, shape and name of articles removed from a tray. Their opportunities for free creative expression using a range of different materials are, however, limited.

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 a system to provide parents with opportunities to formally contribute to their child's future learning targets
- provide opportunities for children to develop: their independence and social skills at snacktime; their vocabulary during everyday activities; their number recognition skills; their awareness of time and weather and their free creative expression by free access to a range of different materials
- maintain documentation to provide clear evidence of the monitoring and evaluation of practice and improve planning and assessment records to show clear stepping stone links to learning.

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.