



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127492

DfES Number: 515248

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/04/2004
Inspector Name Malini Parmar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Rainbow Pre-School
Setting Address 149 St. Richards Road
Deal
Kent
CT14 9LD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Tracy Hawkes

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

Rainbow Pre-school opened in 1992. It operates from the Godric Centre in Deal. The Pre-school has access to one room, toilets, a kitchen and an outside area. The Pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 31 children on roll. This includes 16 funded 4-year-old children and 4 funded 3-year-old children.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week. None of the children are on the special needs register and none of the children speak English as a second language.

The Pre-school opens five days a week term time only. Sessions last from 09:00 to 12:30.

Five staff work with the children. Four have early years qualifications and all attend short courses. The Pre-school receives support from a Pre-school Learning Alliance fieldworker and a teacher from the Early Years Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Rainbow Pres School Nursery provides a caring, welcoming environment for children. The educational provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement.

The overall quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff provide some worthwhile opportunities. The open snack bar is effective in promoting children's independence and children have daily opportunities for physical exercise. Staff generally ask useful questions to children to extend their thinking. However, their lack of knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage does not ensure children's progress along stepping-stones towards the early learning goals. The sessions are not carefully planned and children have the same play opportunities throughout the week. There is an uneven balance between adult directed and child-initiated activities and over direction limits children's opportunities. Staff plan activities around a monthly theme, however a lack of sufficient organisation and co-ordination between them leads to inconsistencies in the opportunities provided and implementation of the educational programme is not fully effective. The use of assessments to inform planning is evolving. Children generally behave well, however the organisation of the free play session does not support the needs of all the children and their behaviour changes. There are systems in place to support children in with Special Educational Needs.

Leadership and management has significant weaknesses. Staff are provided with regular opportunities to attend training. The system for evaluating the settings strengths and weaknesses and that of the educational programme is informal.

Partnership with Parents is significantly weaknesses, parents report they are happy with the service and receive some information about the programme. However, parents do not have regular access to developmental records and they are not fully encouraged to become involved in the programme of education.

What is being done well?

- Children demonstrate their independence at the snack bar, they successfully determine when they wish to have their snack and confidently make choices from a variety of foods on offer. They complete the cycle and tidy up after themselves.
- Children have daily opportunities for physical exercise both indoors and outdoors.
- Staff employ open-ended questions to support children's thinking.
- Children enjoy looking at books and participate with enthusiasm during the interactive story times.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage, to plan a coordinated programme of daily opportunities
- the balance between adult led and child initiated activities
- the effective use of assessment to identify children's next steps; in order to inform the planning
- opportunities for parents to learn about the full range of the activities provided and about their children's attainment and progress within the six areas of learning
- the leadership and management of the setting; to have systems in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and support.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to:

improve the programme for mathematics by providing more opportunities for children to solve problems in practical situations

improve the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world by ensuring that the children have more opportunities to explore features of living things, natural and made objects

The group have made some improvements in these areas however taken overall progress is limited.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children demonstrate their independence at the snack bar, they successfully determine when they wish to have their snack and confidently make choices from a variety of foods. During adult led activities children work collaboratively, taking turns, sharing resources and generally behave well. Some children persevere in chosen activities for example, completing puzzles. Over direction limits children's progress and children receive mixed messages due to inconsistent opportunities and expectations.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate effectively and clearly, making conversation with friends and adults alike. They have daily opportunities for song. Children enjoy listening to stories and contribute their thoughts and ideas during the interactive story times. They ably select their names daily. There are insufficient opportunities for children to link sounds and letters through planned practical activities. Children receive inconsistent opportunities to attempt writing for a variety of purpose.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children receive opportunities to count during the session for example at registration and numbers are displayed in the environment. Children learn an awareness of shape for example when completing puzzles and receive some opportunities to solve simple problems during activities, such as songs. Many spontaneous and everyday opportunities to demonstrate the meaning of numbers or use mathematical language are missed. Insufficient activities are planned to support children's learning in this area.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Planned activities are used to stimulate children's interest in the natural world for example planting seeds and observing the weather. Children clearly enjoy using telephones, but have limited opportunities to use other programmable toys. They receive regular opportunities to talk about past and present events in their lives. There is a programme of regular visitors to the nursery. Children receive insufficient opportunities to find out about their local environment, for example through trips.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move freely and safely. They have opportunities to refine and strengthen their small and gross movements through the daily routine, for example using scissors. Children demonstrate dexterity and agility. They receive daily opportunities for exercise and children show skill when manoeuvring around objects to stay safe. Insufficient planning of these opportunities makes it difficult to assess their effectiveness. Opportunities to raise health and bodily awareness are missed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children clearly enjoy the daily opportunities for songs, music and role-play. Children receive insufficient opportunities to freely experiment with a variety of materials and communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings and opportunities provided are limited by over direction during some activities. Children enjoy playing in the "fire station" although the quality of their play varies with the amount of support they are given.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage, to plan a coordinated programme of daily opportunities
- improve the balance between adult led and child initiated activities
- use assessment to identify children's next steps; in order to inform the planning
- provide opportunities for parents to learn about the full range of the activities provided and about their children's attainment and progress within the six areas of learning
- ensure a system is in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting.

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.