



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY271008

DfES Number: 537132

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/10/2004
Inspector Name Julie Youngman (TCCI)

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name Downside Children's Pre-School
Setting Address Chaul End Lane
Luton
Bedfordshire
LU4 8EZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Shagufta Anwar

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

Downside Children's Pre-School opened in 2003. It is privately run and operates within the grounds of Downside Lower School. The Pre-School is registered to provide sessional care and out of school care for 40 children from 3 years to under 8 years and opens from 09:00 to 15:30 during term time and all day during school holidays. Downside Children's Pre-School is in receipt of funding for 3 and 4 year olds.

The Pre-School uses the main hall, two separate class room areas, and has use of a laundry room, kitchen and music room. There is a secure outside play area which consists of a covered section, a hard and soft play area.

The provision employs six staff, four of which hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Downside Pre-School provides good quality nursery education overall. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in Communication, Language and Literacy and Mathematical Development. Well planned activities linked to topics and drawing on diverse local resources enable children to make very good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a good knowledge of the early learning goals and stepping stones in all six areas of learning. Staff plan a variety of opportunities enabling children to participate in many worthwhile and appropriately challenging activities by including some stepping stones in each activity. A good balance of free play and small group work is provided. Some staff miss opportunities in early literacy and mathematical development and do not have sufficient skill in the use of phonic sounds, encouragement of independent writing, assisting children to write correctly or extension of use of numbers. This limits children's development in these areas. Staff form excellent relationships with children, supporting children with English as an additional language very well. Excellent displays of photographs are used well to record the children's learning. A new assessment system is being developed.

The very good leadership and management of the group is a strength of the provision. Staff appraisal is used well to promote staff training and the leader is committed to their improvement. Staff meetings are held regularly for planning and monitoring of the programme.

Partnerships with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are made welcome to settle their children and are well supported by staff. Daily conversations help inform parents about their children's abilities and some information about progress. Plans of activities are displayed but there is insufficient detail on the areas of learning to help parents understand the educational programme.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and motivated to learn. The frequent opportunities for conversation and good relationships between staff, children and parents promote self-confidence and self-esteem. Staff extend children's understanding based on their own lives and experience, supporting children with English as a second language very skilfully.
- Children share and take turns very ably. Children show consideration for each other at snack time and help to tidy up.
- Topics, activities and celebration of festivals are well planned to promote

children's knowledge and understanding of the world, learn about community and help them begin to understand a range of cultures.

- Resources and equipment are made available for children to choose freely and express themselves when designing, creating or moving around. Children are encouraged to mix and use resources imaginatively.
- Managers lead the staff very well to ensure the foundation stage curriculum is fully covered.

What needs to be improved?

- Staff skills in teaching some aspects of writing, reading, mathematical development, early literacy and the phonic sounds of letters.
- Opportunities for children to begin to write independently, record their own work and record numbers.
- Information to parents in the prospectus setting out the six areas of learning and showing how the stepping stones are used in planning the activities.
- Involvement of parents in the new assessment system.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn to take turns and share easily. They are encouraged and supported by very good relationships with staff. Children help each other at snack time and participate in the routine of tidying up. Children are confident, motivated and independent learners, showing pride in their work and good self-esteem. Strong links with the community and celebration of a diverse range of festivals promote very well children's sense of belonging.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk well about activities, learn new words and meaning in conversation with staff. Children enjoy the good range of dual language books, stories and rhymes. Labels around the room stimulate interest in reading. Opportunities to make marks, represent the varied activities and form letters correctly are limited. Letters on displays are not always correctly modelled and some staff do not show children how to write their own names correctly. Letter sounds are not always correctly used.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn to count, name shapes and use mathematical language through many practical activities such as making cups of tea in the play house. Children use the good range of activity resources to promote their knowledge of counting, shapes and quantity. At snack time children begin to use mathematical language to solve problems. Children are not always encouraged to use the reference displays around the room to extend their use of numbers and mathematical ideas.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn through a wide range of well planned activities. Children use many natural materials collected locally and welcome doctors, dentists and police to visit from the community. Excellent photos record children's experiences and extend their knowledge of time and place. Children build, construct and design well in two and three dimensions. They learn to use tape recorders through everyday play and regularly participate well with staff at the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move around the setting confidently, play exuberant ring games safely and move imaginatively to musical instruments. The good variety of outside equipment allows them to balance, climb and travel in a variety of ways on the large equipment and run with balls. Children regularly use tools skilfully for Playdoh and wood. They talk knowledgeably about staying healthy in cooking activities and baking bread and at snack time when eating fruit.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children enjoy the good range of well planned activities linking painting, shapes, colours and textures with topics. They are able to choose glue, crayons, glitter and three dimensional material freely to express their imagination. They play imaginatively with dressing up clothes, the farm, zoo and roadway toys. Well planned music and movement and a good variety of freely available musical instruments help children explore sound and develop singing, rhyme and movement.

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 that all aspects of writing are encouraged, demonstrated appropriately with correct use of upper and lower case letters and that phonic sounds are used appropriately when children are learning about letters of the alphabet
- ensure display materials are used consistently to promote understanding of numbers and written numbers
- provide more information to parents about the six areas of learning in the prospectus; show details of the stepping stones and aspects of learning in individual learning areas in plans of activities
- continue to develop a comprehensive assessment system, linked to all six areas of learning and stepping stones and involve parents regularly

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.