



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY234843

DfES Number: 537195

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	02/03/2005
Inspector Name	Anne Gunston

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Bears Pre-School
Setting Address	St Leonards Village Hall Jenkins Lane St Leonards Buckinghamshire HP23 6NW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Little Bears Pre-School
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Little Bears Pre-School
Address	109 Lynton Road Chesham Buckinghamshire HP5 2BP

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

Little Bears Pre-School was originally established approximately 17 years ago; the management of the setting by its current committee began 2 years ago. It operates from the Village Hall in the small rural village of St Leonards, Buckinghamshire. The children have access to a hall for play and a secure outdoor play area. Toilet and kitchen facilities are available on the premises.

There are currently 24 children on roll; this includes 20 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time from 09:30 until 12:00. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are seven staff who work with the children. The leader and deputy are suitably qualified, two other staff members are working towards relevant early years qualifications.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Little Bears Pre-School offers good quality nursery education. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff show awareness of the early learning goals and implement a broad range of activities. They listen and respond to what children say, in most instances their questioning challenges and extends learning. Systems are in place to provide support to children with special educational needs or English as an additional language. In some areas, resources are limited and children's access to them restricted; this impacts on their ability to be fully independent, develop information and technology skills, improve imaginative play and develop creativity. Management of group activities prevents children developing awareness of space and inhibits their independent appreciation of books. Assessments completed on children do not inform future planning.

Leadership and management is generally good. A clear management structure exists; all staff are aware of their roles and show commitment. The committee and supervisor support staff's development well, by encouraging further training and providing opportunities for them to share newly gained knowledge or skills. Systems are in place for monitoring the staff's performance. The pre-school does not have procedures to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education, with particular reference to the use of space and resources.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. Parents are given good information on the pre-school aims and objectives by means of a prospectus. They receive regular newsletters, information is displayed on the noticeboard making them aware of topics. Few formal opportunities exist for parents to be informed of their child's progress towards the early learning goals or to share information. Plans do not show how knowledge gained by staff informs planning for individual children.

What is being done well?

- Children display a great deal of confidence, they are secure and willingly contribute to conversations. They are able to show pride in their own achievements as they know that staff will also take time to value and appreciate these. Children understand what is acceptable behaviour, they are able to stand up for their own and each other's rights and learn to care for their environment.
- Staff work well as a team, they share all necessary tasks and to ensure the activities are prepared well in advance of children's arrival. They show commitment to continuing to improve the pre-school environment, particularly with regard to creating stimulating, safe outdoor play opportunities for the children.

- Children show sound understanding of good hygiene practice; they are independent in use of toilet and washing facilities and recognise why they need to wash their hands. Staff consistently promote a healthy eating regime and offer choice to children each day whilst talking to them about the importance of good eating habits. Children can recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active, for example, they describe feeling tired or dizzy after spinning around on the spot.

What needs to be improved?

- the systems for monitoring educational provision, and use of assessment to inform future planning and communication with parents
- opportunities for children to practice emergent writing skills, recognise familiar text and learn to fully appreciate books
- management of large group time to enable children to be able to concentrate and participate, and to develop an awareness of space
- improve availability of resources to develop children's skills in information technology, imagination in the role play area and during art and craft activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This section is not applicable as this is the pre-school's first nursery education inspection. Although established many years ago, the group has only recently registered as it operated with parents present and was not in receipt of funding for nursery education.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making good links between their experiences at home and at pre-school; staff show continued interest in the children's lives and establish friendly, positive relationships with them. Children's behaviour is good; they understand the difference between right and wrong, and show sensitivity and care for each other. All children have a positive approach to their time at pre-school and enjoy activities prepared for them. During large group activities children's concentration lapses.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children link sounds with letters and are confident speakers. They have opportunities to recognise their names and label work. They show interest in books, treat them with respect and enjoy stories. Their enjoyment of books and listening skills are not fully promoted, daily routines often cause disruption. Staff miss opportunities to encourage children to write or recognise common words, writing materials not consistently available in the role play area, resources are not well labelled.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children can count reliably and are very willing to do so; they are confident in use of numbers up to 10 and use mathematical language easily in their everyday conversations. Staff take up most opportunities to familiarise children with numbers and introduce the concept of addition and subtraction, for example, by frequent use of number rhymes and songs. Children show good awareness of shapes and patterns, they talk about making correctly shaped and sized boats to suit the occupants.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a well developed sense of time and place; they are able to recall past and present events in their lives. They talk confidently about themselves and families, and show good awareness of their community. Staff plan and provide many activities to increase children's knowledge of the wider world, and encourage them to explore varied natural and man-made materials. Children use information technology infrequently as resources are determined by staff.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently during free play and planned activities, they demonstrate control over their bodies and show good co-ordination. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop skills in climbing, tunnelling, jumping and throwing. Children follow good hygiene procedures and show awareness of the need to care for themselves. They are developing skills in using a range of equipment, although these cannot be selected independently by them. Children do not judge available space well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children join in well with singing sessions and are given opportunities to experiment with the sounds of musical instruments. They can match their movements to music, for example, wiggling hips and clapping hands in time. Creative activities are planned and resources are available to enable children to take part in role play. Children's imagination in these areas is not fully developed as their access to art and craft materials is determined by staff and the role play area is uninviting.

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

- evaluate the provision for nursery education with particular reference to use of space and resources
- improve communication with parents to ensure they are fully informed on their child's progress towards the early learning goals, are further encouraged to share information on their child and ensure this knowledge is incorporated into planning of future activities
- improve the use of assessments to ensure children's individual needs are identified and ensure planning reflects this.

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.