



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 134711

DfES Number: 512708

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/01/2005
Inspector Name Jill Milton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Ambrosden Village Pre-School
Setting Address The Village Hall Annex
Merton Road
Bicester
Oxfordshire
OX25 2LZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Ambrosden Village Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Ambrosden Village Pre-School
Address Village Hall Annexe
Merton Road, Ambrosden
Bicester
Oxfordshire
OX25 2LZ

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

Ambrosden Village Pre-School is a voluntary group managed by a committee of parents and carers. It was established in 1974 and operates from an annex to the village hall in Ambrosden. The children have access to an outdoor play area. The group takes civilian and forces families and attracts children from Bicester and the surrounding villages.

The group opens on weekday mornings during school term time from 09.10 to 11.45 and up to 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 19 children on roll, of whom 10 are in receipt of nursery education funding.

There are four members of staff employed at the group, only one of whom has appropriate early years qualifications. The other three members of staff have plans to gain qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

Ambrosden Village Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children. The experienced supervisor leads the setting, however, the levels of staff qualification are below the required limits. Staff have drawn up an action plan to address this situation. The small numbers of children attending the setting receive a lot of attention from the adults and the sessions generally run well. The staff make an attractive environment that is colourful and interesting for the children and good use is made of low-level displays and accessible resources. Staff store the children's records securely and they have appropriate written policies in place.

Staff ensure that access to the pre-school is controlled carefully and when they identify hazards, they deal with them appropriately. However, there are no systems in place to regularly monitor safety within the setting. Staff are aware of child protection issues and know how to address any concerns. Children have good access to fresh drinking water and staff introduce them to healthy eating. Staff care for children who are unwell, though they are sometimes lax hygiene issues and the

first aid box is not appropriate.

The children take part in a broad and balanced variety of activities in which they show interest and enthusiasm. Staff are attentive to the care needs of children but sometimes do not stretch their learning. Staff make all children welcome, using resources and activities to promote diversity in a positive way. Some staff have experience in supporting children with special needs and new staff are attending training to develop their knowledge. Staff share strategies for managing the range of children's behaviour.

Staff develop a satisfactory partnership with parents. They provide good written information to families about the pre-school and make effective use of the entrance lobby to share their knowledge with parents. However, some opportunities to talk to parents are not used very well.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Staff have completed all the actions that were raised at the last inspection. They made an action plan to show how the pre-school would comply with the required level for staff qualifications. Although staff did complete training courses as planned, there have been further changes and the pre-school does not currently have the required number of staff with appropriate qualifications.

Staff have successfully drawn up a complaints procedure and they are now better informed of how to address child protection concerns. Both these areas of information are shared with parents and they are better informed.

Staff maintain an accurate record of children's attendance in case of an emergency evacuation of the building. Staff note the condition of the steps leading up to the pre-school and cordon them off if there are safety concerns. These particular issues have been addressed, however, some safety issues remain.

What is being done well?

- Staff organise the space and resources well to make an attractive and interesting place for young children. They make effective use of low-level units to divide the room into areas for play and there are ample resources available to support development.
- Staff manage the range of children's behaviour effectively. They offer frequent praise to the children and encourage their efforts at persevering with difficult tasks, such as a challenging jigsaw puzzle.
- Staff provide helpful introductions to healthy eating with the children. They make good use of topics and activities where children have made simple dishes with fruit and vegetables. Children enjoy using a drink dispenser to access drinking water at any time during the session.

What needs to be improved?

- the way in which staff assess the safety of the pre-school
- staff monitoring of the contents of the first aid box
- staff attention to hygiene.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
6	Introduce regular risk assessments to identify and address potential safety issues.
7	Ensure that the first aid box and its contents comply with Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Ambrosden Village Pre-School provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and with physical and creative development. There are some significant weaknesses in the area of mathematics.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff show a generally good awareness of the early learning goals in the way they set out the activities and organise the morning sessions. They plan the curriculum carefully to take into account all six areas of learning and ensure that the children have a good variety of resources to play with each day. The shortcomings in teaching arise since the staff do not use effective methods and questions to extend the children's learning in some areas. The adults are caring towards the children and are helping them to become part of a group. Their knowledge of each child helps them to provide care but they do not monitor the children's learning very well. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and have a consistent approach to guidelines.

Leadership and management are generally good. The staff respond positively to advice from other professionals and help in practical ways when they add to the resources of the pre-school. The staff work well together to create a pleasant environment and they evaluate what they do through discussion. Inexperienced staff do not always receive guidance in how to help children learn through play.

Partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents can access plenty of information about the pre-school and they have good opportunities to take part in children's learning at home. However, the staff miss moments to talk to parents and share their knowledge about how the children are achieving.

What is being done well?

- Children are progressing well with their personal, social and emotional development at the pre-school. Staff are able to give the children good support with their time and attention and the children are gaining confidence at being part of a larger group.
- The staff value the children's creative efforts when they paint or draw and this has a positive impact on their self-esteem. The children express their own ideas and the staff label and display their work on a notice-board entitled 'The Art Gallery'.
- The children have good opportunities to progress with their physical skills as they use a range of tools and resources. Staff do not rush children at activities and they have time to try new tasks at their own pace, such as

using scissors.

- Staff display a good range of written information for parents in the entrance to the pre-school. This includes, not only details of the plans and activities taking place in the setting, but also useful sources of help for families within their local area.

What needs to be improved?

- staff interactions with children to extend their learning through play with more effective questioning techniques
- the way that staff monitor the children's development and share the information with parents
- the opportunities to help children progress with early mathematics as they play
- the support given to children when they are learning to write their names
- the support given to more inexperienced staff in how to develop children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There has been generally good progress since the last inspection. There were two areas of concern. Staff now introduce the children to the shape and sounds of letters very well. They focus on a new letter each week and the children, helped by their parents, bring in pictures to illustrate the sound. This has a positive impact on children's early literacy.

The other area that required attention was the assessment of children's development where there has been limited progress. Staff have introduced a new method to record development but the system is not working effectively and remains an area for improvement.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing independence and confidence as they choose activities for themselves. They are gaining social skills as they play alongside their peers and some are starting to share games. Children behave well in the setting and they respond to praise from the adults. Children are enthusiastic about what is happening during the morning, eagerly fetching coats for outdoor play. They are learning to respect others and know to care for new children to the pre-school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening to stories and they sit quietly at group times. They share conversations with staff and their friends during play and they are developing a good awareness of the shape and sounds of letters. Children identify their own names well, though they lack proper support when they attempt to write them. They are starting to understand that writing has a purpose as they make signs for a story tree of favourite books or when they play in the home corner.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident at counting and they are learning to recognise numerals. They make a number line of bears and count carefully by themselves. Children playing with the planned activity receive adult help, such as matching by size or colour. However, during play, for example with dough or construction toys, there is little emphasis on mathematics. Staff miss chances to help the children develop an understanding of simple calculation or to use mathematical language.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are becoming aware of time and change and they are active during the year planting vegetables and herbs. The children are eager to share information about their families and proudly display pictures of their pets. Staff introduce the children to customs from around the world as well as those celebrated in the village. Children access technology and construction materials regularly. Staff do not often stimulate their thinking with questions about what they are experiencing.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move with confidence and control in both the indoor and outdoor areas. They extend their skills during outdoor play where they access a good range of equipment, with ample room to stretch and run. Children show a good awareness of space as they find their own area for floor puzzles or take part in action songs. They are also developing their co-ordination and manipulative skills well. Staff offer them a good range of opportunities to use tools and construction toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
<p>Children have good opportunities to express their own ideas and the staff encourage their efforts with positive comments. They experience different colours and textures with planned activities. The children really enjoy their play in the home corner area where they are starting to express their imagination and share games with their friends. Boys and girls both engage in 'feeding the baby' and 'ironing the clothes'. Children are learning songs and exploring the use of musical instruments.</p>	

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

- improve the way staff support children's learning through play, by using effective questioning to encourage them to think
- complete dated observations of children's development on a more regular basis and explore ways of sharing the information with parents
- make better use of mathematical language when children play, supporting their understanding of simple calculation, shape, position, size and quantity
- provide more appropriate support to children as they learn to write their own names.

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.