



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 223217

DfES Number: 539387

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	18/10/2004
Inspector Name	Judith Chinnery

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Hermitage Day Nursery
Setting Address	147-149 Hermitage Road Whitwick Coalville Leicestershire LE67 5EL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Elaine Blunt
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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

Hermitage Day Nursery was established in December 1999 and is located just off the A511 Coalville Bypass in the village of Whitwick, serving the local community and surrounding areas. The nursery is sited within a detached two-storey building, which has been converted and extended to provide a purpose-built facility.

There are currently 129 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 30 funded three-year-olds and four funded four-year-olds. The nursery supports children with special educational needs.

The nursery opens for five days a week throughout the year, between 07:30 and 18:00. Children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 27 staff working with the children, of these, 21 have early years qualifications, while six members of staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Hermitage Day Nursery provides good care for children. The staff team work well together to plan and organise daily routines which meet children's needs effectively. Personal greetings and attractive displays warmly welcome families into the nursery. The large variety of good quality resources support children's learning in most areas. Record keeping is thorough and accurate contributing greatly to the efficient and safe running of the nursery, while systems to keep up to date with new developments are being implemented.

Children are kept safe in the nursery through the vigilance of the staff and well maintained safety precautions. Hygiene practices are good, children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly, while accident and medication records are managed well. However, occasionally the temperature in some rooms of the building is not always as it should be. Children have good access to fresh drinking water and are

offered a variety of healthy and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs. Equality of opportunity is promoted well in the nursery, staff work closely with parents and others to meet the individual needs of children and ensure they are included in all activities. Staff have a sound knowledge of local child protection guidelines.

Staff use the Foundation Stage and Birth to Three Matters Framework effectively to provide a wide range of worthwhile activities for children. Babies are developing strong and secure relationships with staff while older children are developing sound skills in most areas such as maths, language, creativity and in using their imagination. Most children behave really well and are effectively supported by staff who set clear and consistent boundaries.

Partnership with parents is strong. Good systems exist for ensuring that parents are well informed about the provision and their children's care. Staff build good relationships with parents and are committed to providing care which meets their wishes.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- Children are able to play and move freely in rooms which are airy and well organised by staff.
- Staff have implemented the Birth to Three Matters Framework effectively, giving babies and young children access to a wide variety of stimulating experiences such as exploring paint and other tactile experiences.
- Children enjoy good relationships with staff, who support them well in enabling them to feel safe and secure.
- Comprehensive safety policies and regularly reviewed risk assessments contribute particularly well to keeping children safe.

What needs to be improved?

- maintenance of suitable temperatures in each room by early morning staff
- the ongoing and further development of systems to keep up to date with new developments in early years.

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
2	Continue to develop systems to ensure that staff keep up to date and implement changes arising from new developments in early years.
4	Ensure that each room is always maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Hermitage Day Nursery provides good-quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social and emotional development, as well as communication, language and literacy is well-planned and they make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff working in the pre-school rooms are relatively new to working to the Foundation Stage curriculum, and have worked hard to understand and apply the curriculum effectively to meet the individual learning needs of children, and work well as a team. Curriculum planning covers all cluster areas in each area of learning, although it is not wholly effective because it over emphasises aspects of the curriculum that are already covered in daily routines. Generally good assessment procedures are in place, although sometimes evaluations are not sufficiently linked into the child's learning intention, and there is a disproportionate emphasis given to the 'next steps' in some areas of learning at the expense of others.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. Management provide good support to the staff team in developing their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage. There are good mechanisms in place for curriculum planning, and a good awareness of the strengths of the setting, as well as areas for improvement. The leader is currently working on plans to ensure staff use routine and un-planned opportunities more effectively to support learning.

The partnership with parents is generally good. The parents notice board gives good quality information about the curriculum and weekly activities and topics. Parents are provided with progress reports and opportunities to attend parents evenings. However, reports do not always identify the 'next steps' in learning, nor identify how parents can further support their child's learning in the home environment.

What is being done well?

- Staff work well in supporting children to be independent, in promoting good behaviour, and in providing very good opportunities for children to talk in small and larger groups.
- Children are provided with a good range of opportunities and equipment to support mark making skills and early handwriting skills.
- Children have excellent opportunities to explore media and materials and enjoy making collages, models made out of recycled materials, and painting.
- An excellent range of activities is provided for outdoor play, and staff make good use of the outdoor environment to further learning opportunities in other areas of the curriculum.

What needs to be improved?

- assessments to ensure that equal weight is given to progress through the clusters in each area of learning
- staff's understanding of how to evaluate an activity to its learning intention
- information given to parents about the 'next steps' in their child's progress through the stepping stones, and how they can support learning in the home environment
- staff's use of routine and unplanned opportunities to extend children's learning
- provision of musical equipment to support children's understanding of instrumentation, and support to all children in learning about sound and rhythm.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The setting makes good use of a range of equipment that has been provided to give more challenge to four-year-old children who are physically skilled and able. There are now very good opportunities planned into the curriculum for older children to investigate and explore made objects, and to prompt them to ask questions about how and why things work.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very happy and settled in the nursery. They play well with the range of activities for extended periods of time. Children have very good relationships with nursery staff, and are developing good relationships with each other. They independently go to the toilet, wash hands and put outdoor clothing on. Behaviour is very good, and children are progressing well in learning about the importance of caring for each other and living things such as the rabbit and snail.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good speaking and listening skills and use speech well to communicate ideas. Staff identify and use new words to extend children's vocabulary. Children enjoy books and story time, and like activities linked into the story such as painting happy or sad faces after reading a story about a cat losing his smile. Children have very good opportunities to make marks both in the pre-school room, and in the outdoor environment, and more able children are forming identified letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good counting skills and can easily count to 10, with some counting beyond 10. Children have planned opportunities to explore early calculation through songs such as 'five currant buns', and to look at measure through measuring their own height. They match and sequence through the use of activities such as 'sorting bears'. Staff are not always effective in using children's spontaneous play or routines, such as circle time, to support children's mathematical learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have very good opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world and built objects. They enjoy, and are progressing well in their understanding of how to use intermediate communications technology. Children are gaining a good understanding of time and place, and good resources help support a growing awareness of different cultures and beliefs. Children have good opportunities to make models, however there is insufficient use of tools to extend more able children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Excellent use is made of the outdoor environment to help children progress in their small muscle skills as well as large muscle movements. Children move well and can slide, scramble, go through tunnels, ride bikes, run and jump. They have a good understanding of space and respect the personal space of others. Children's personal hygiene routines are good, however health and body awareness is not given sufficient consideration when assessing children's progress in physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children regularly explore colour, texture and shape through painting, collages, and junk modelling. They make good use of their imaginations when playing in the toy hospital or shop role play areas, and when using small world toys. Children have lots of opportunities to explore their senses. Some children enjoy weekly music sessions given by an external provider, however not all children have access to these and this is not effectively compensated for by using other musical instruments.

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 all cluster areas for creative development, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are sufficiently assessed, and that equal status is given to each area of learning when planning children's 'next steps in learning. Further partnership with parents by providing parents with this information, and information on how to support learning in the home environment
- continue to support staff's understanding of the curriculum, and how it can be effectively applied in routine and every day activities; as well as furthering their understanding of effectively evaluating activities to the identified learning intention
- provide children with increased opportunities to explore a range of musical instruments, and ensure all children are provided with regular opportunities to explore sound and rhythm.

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.