



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 150061

DfES Number: 537376

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	02/02/2005
Inspector Name	Patricia Joan Latham

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Hobbyhorse Pre-School
Setting Address	The Old Canteen, Russell First School Russell Street, Stony Stratford Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK11 1BT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Hobby Horse Pre-School 1032469
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Hobby Horse Pre-School
Address	21 Calverton Road Stony Stratford Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK11 1LE

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

Hobby Horse Pre-school opened in 1984 and now operates from a converted school building in the grounds of the local First school in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday morning from 09.15 to 11.45.

There are currently 31 children aged from 2 years to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and surrounding area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four full time, and one part time, members of staff. Three have an early years qualification and another is working towards relevant qualifications.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Hobby Horse Pre-school provides high quality nursery education, which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and update this with regular training courses. They plan the curriculum to cover all areas and aspects of learning, offering a good balance of free choice and structured activities linked into interesting themes. Staff support children well at activities, questioning them effectively to challenge their thinking and to extend their knowledge. Activities are differentiated to meet individual learning needs and work undertaken with children who have special educational needs is a strength of the group. Staff manage children's behaviour well, giving clear explanations and lots of praise to encourage children to work together well. They make good use of time and resources to maximise children's learning. Regular observations of children's attainment are made which are recorded against the early learning goals. This does not enable ongoing progress through the Foundation Stage stepping stones to be easily identified.

The leadership and management of the pre-school are very good. Staff hold regular meetings and follow a clear operational plan. Roles and responsibilities are delegated and staff work as a team. Activities are planned well in advance and have clear learning objectives set. These are evaluated effectively to highlight areas for improvement and staff liaise with other professionals to enhance the provision.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are given good information regarding the provision. Notices and regular newsletters keep them informed of activities offered and they are invited to share their skills within the group. They have access to their child's records and key workers are always available to give feedback regarding progress.

What is being done well?

- Staff support children with educational needs very well. Those with very little communication ability are enabled to express their needs and join in all activities. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies to meet any individual need.
- Staff use interesting themes and topics to link activities and motivate children to learn. Using the theme of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' book, children observe the life cycle of a caterpillar into a butterfly, make their own flap book and models of caterpillars.
- Time is used wisely while children take part in routine activities to maximise learning. At snack time, as they wait for each other to sit down after washing hands, they select a book to look at.

- Staff encourage children to play well together and to understand the need for group rules. During group story time, children are offered a cardboard apple to hold to remind them to sit quietly so others can hear.
- Children's imagination is fostered through a range of creative activities. Whilst making a dragon mask, children think what a dragon might eat and, when listening to a story about a dragon, children enjoy listening to staff pretending to roar and frighten them.

What needs to be improved?

- observational recording of children's attainment against the Foundation Stage stepping stones to enable ongoing progress to be easily identified.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are eager to do activities and concentrate when completing tasks, persisting to complete a train track and get it exactly as they want; they work well together to overcome problems. They understand the need for group rules, putting aprons on for water play and lining up to go outside. They are developing independence, confidently choosing their own activities and resources. Children behave well and show care and consideration for others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use language well to describe their ideas and are developing a broad vocabulary. All are able to communicate their needs. Children recognise familiar words, such as their name, and the more able are beginning to link the sound and shape of letters. Children enjoy books, handling them appropriately. All children are practising emergent writing and understand that writing carries meaning, making their own books and writing letters to Santa.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children count and recognise low numbers confidently. They are beginning to understand basic calculation, reciting number songs and working out how many 'fat sausages' are left. Children can recognise and name basic shapes and colours, matching and sorting by size and shape. They recreate pattern and use mathematical language appropriately when weighing and measuring objects.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children observe and examine objects and features of their environment, visiting the public library and examining different vegetables. Children understand how to use basic technical equipment, such as tape measures, and use differing materials to design and construct, making masks and musical shakers. They gain an understanding of time, discussing events in their lives and have a growing knowledge of their own culture and those of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have control and co-ordination over their bodies, climbing, balancing and jumping. They have a good understanding of space around them, steering bikes expertly. Children use small and large tools and equipment with skill and accuracy, cutting dough with scissors and using knives to cut fruit. They are gaining an understanding of how their bodies grow and keep healthy through observing good hygiene.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore colour and differing mediums such as sand and corn flour. They enjoy music and song, listening to song tapes and dancing to music. They use imagination in art and role play, drawing a picture of fireworks and pretending to take dolls to a party. Children freely express feelings and use their senses to distinguish things, finding things in a 'feely bag' and smelling Chinese noodles.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- how observations of children's attainment may be recorded to easily identify ongoing progress through the Foundation Stage stepping stones.

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.