



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY272636

DfES Number: 511260

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/12/2004
Inspector Name Chris Gregson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Harwich Centre Pre-School
Setting Address Adult Community College
Main Road
Harwich
Essex
CO12 4AH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Tendring Adult Community College

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Tendring Adult Community College
Address Adult Community College
Main Road
Harwich
Essex
CO12 4AH

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

Harwich Centre Pre-School opened in 1980 and operates from two rooms within the Tendring Adult Community College in Dovercourt. A maximum of 37 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 and 13.30 to 16.00 for Pre-school, 09.00 until 11.00 and 11.15 until 13.15 for the Tweenies. The crèche is registered for a maximum of 14 children and will be opened according to demand.

There are currently 89 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 53 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and would support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 staff. Most of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Harwich Centre Pre-School provides good care for all children.

The operational plan includes policies and procedures to keep staff and parents informed of policies and practice in the provision. However, the hours children and staff attend are not fully recorded. Staff update their training and work happily with the different ages in either room. Children are provided with child-sized furniture and a good range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys. However, the book area in the pre-school room, where children rest, could be improved. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

Staff know about health and safety issues and have recently improved the security as children arrive and leave the session. Most of the staff have attended a first aid

course and all know how to comfort a child who becomes ill during the session. Effective procedures ensure staff know about diets or allergies and use this information to provide informed care for the children. Staff operate a key worker system and know the individual child. Extra help is given to enable children reach their full potential. Staff know, and parents are informed about child protection procedures.

Staff observe children's play and record this information to help plan activities. They provide a safe, secure environment so that children settle into the pre-school routine. Staff have a good understanding of behaviour management and skilfully support children's understanding of right and wrong across the ages.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents can speak to either the manager or staff before or after the session. Parents are kept fully informed about what is happening through very informative notice boards and information sent home. Staff work with parents to ensure children settle happily into the routines.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff in all areas of the provision are very patient, kind and caring. They listen and value what children say, they talk with them and ask questions to make children think about what they are doing.
- Staff work together as a well-established and balanced team with many years of experience and various qualifications. Staff update their training and attend short courses, sharing their knowledge within the team.
- The operational plan is very comprehensive and organised under the fourteen National Standards. This gives full information about the expectations of the management about how the provision will be organised and run. This is held in the office and available for staff and parents on request.
- Provision and support for children with special needs is particularly good. There is a valuable support for staff in all areas of the provision. An identified member of staff has additional training and works with outside professionals to provide support for the child and keep their family informed.
- Staff very friendly towards parents. Parents questionnaires show they are very happy with the care and support their children receive.

What needs to be improved?

- registration of children's and staff hours
- facilities for children in the pre-school to rest comfortably.

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

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	Ensure the times staff and children are present are accurately recorded.
4	Ensure children in the pre-school room have facilities where they can rest comfortably.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Harwich Centre Pre-school provides good quality nursery education overall. It is particularly well planned for their personal, social and emotional development and creative development and they make very good progress towards the early learning goals and generally good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a basic understanding of the Foundation Stage and form very good relationships with the children. Activities are planned to help children learn and staff skilfully support children by asking questions and encouraging independence, where possible. Children work alone, in a small group or together at circle time. Planning has been reviewed and staff discuss the child's next step and how to support their learning next.

Staff observe and record children's progress on assessment records, however there is inconsistency completing these. Staff talk quietly and remind children of expected behaviour within the provision. They have recently attended a refresher course to provide a whole school approach and, where children have difficulties, staff patiently support the children.

Leadership and management of the pre-school nursery are generally good. Management have high expectations of the staff and for the provision. The new pre-school line manager and deputy are fully qualified and attend short courses to up date their knowledge. They have been reviewing and updating the systems that have been in place for many years. This should lead to further improvements when the overall quality of teaching and education is monitored.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive excellent information about the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Information about the activities is clearly displayed on the notice board. Parents are given an 'activity at home' sheet to encourage them to be involved in their child's learning and they are encouraged to share their child's record of progress.

What is being done well?

- Planning for the outside is being developed and is particularly good. All areas of the curriculum are shown on the plans. Staff have attended recent training and plan to extend this further. Children are able to construct using wooden blocks and use their imagination and sense of space as they create and move them around the play area. They plant fruit and vegetables and watch how they grow and play drums so they can march in time to a beat.
- Staff are encouraged to attend training and support meetings for their professional development. Training is arranged for the staff on the premises when a whole group approach is needed, such as, managing children's behaviour.

- Children, with any block to their learning, are given an individual educational plan to help and support them. When a specific need is identified, before or after they start pre-school, staff work very closely with parents and other professionals to enable the children to progress and learn.
- Parents are encouraged to share their child's progress and take part in their learning. Ideas are sent home so that parents can share and extend the child's learning. For example, writing Christmas cards and bringing them into the pre-school to be posted in the large red post box.

What needs to be improved?

- more opportunities to hear letter sounds
- the book area
- more opportunities to add and take away in everyday practical play activities and solve simple problems
- the updating of the assessment records
- a system to monitor the quality of teaching and overall nursery education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the key issue identified at the previous inspection resulting in some improvements being made to the educational programme.

Staff have planned several activities for the Chinese New Year. They arranged for a Japanese au pair to come and talk to the children about his culture and traditions. Staff and children send in post cards from their holidays and they plan topic work 'all around the world'.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and concentrate at activities such as folders to take work home. They enjoy singing and doing actions in front of their friends at circle time. Children form very good relationships with each other and are quick to comfort a friend when upset. They know right from wrong and make others aware of social conventions. They are confident in the setting, talking to visitors and making links between home and pre-school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children confidently communicate using gestures and words. They hold conversations and string phrases together. They listen to stories and hold books and turn pages correctly at registration time, although the book area is slightly limited. Children sing enthusiastically and enjoy saying rhyming words. But, hearing letter sounds is limited. Children self-register on arrival, write their names using some well-formed letters and write during imaginative play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can confidently count up to ten and beyond through practical activities and action songs. Staff help them to count the spots on the dice and move up the board when playing games. They know their age and can recognise and write this number. Activities to add and take away are limited. Children know shapes, sort sizes, weigh using scales and confidently use mathematical language to describe and compare size and position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children observe and notice change through planned activities such as planting strawberries, using papier-mâché and blowing bubbles. They confidently construct inside and outdoors using wooden blocks and Quadro tubes. They use calculators, keyboards, push button phones and cash registers. Children know where they live and talk about past events at home and in the pre-school. Topic work develops respect and understanding of other people, cultures and faiths, but is slightly limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently around the inside and outdoors. The older age group goes into school gym for PE every week. Children move safely around and stop during musical statues and they know when they are hot or thirsty becoming aware of their own bodily needs. But, these two aspects are slightly limited. Children throw balls, travel through tunnels and jump on a trampet. They mould and shape playdough and clay using their hands and small tools, developing good hand eye co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children know colours and experience textures through various arts and craft activities, such as, firework patterns and collages. Children enjoy singing and play musical instruments. Staff support their spontaneous marching to a drum when several children join in, using items from the home corner. Children's imaginative play is well supported. They learn about their senses through planned experiences such as pasta in the water tray and guessing items in a feely bag.

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

- develop and improve staff's understanding of the importance of consistency and regular updating of children's assessment records
- devise and implement a robust system to monitor the quality of teaching and nursery education programme to ensure all aspects of learning are met.

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.