



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 141848

DfES Number: 530320

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/03/2004
Inspector Name Patricia Joan Latham

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Playzone Day Nursery
Setting Address Langland Road
Netherfield
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK6 4NP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Milton Keynes Council Learning and Development

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Milton Keynes Council Learning and Development
Address Saxon Court, 502 Avebury Boulevard
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK9 3HS

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

The nursery has been registered since 1998. It is part of a chain run and managed by Milton Keynes Council. The nursery is situated in a purpose built building in Netherfield close to central Milton Keynes. The children who attend come from Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.

The three and four year olds have use of their own separate area which comprises of two rooms and toilet facilities, with an enclosed outside play area. The nursery is registered to receive nursery education funding and there are currently 21 children between the ages of three and four years on roll. Ten of the three year olds and nine of the four year olds receive this funding. There are no children at present with a special educational need or who speak English as an additional language.

There is a nursery manager in overall charge of the nursery and six staff designated to work with the three and four year olds. One of these has the role of special educational needs co-ordinator.

The nursery is a member of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Pre-School Learning alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The quality of nursery education offered by Playzone Day Nursery is acceptable and of good quality. Children make general good progress towards the early learning goals. Very good progress is made in areas of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Progress is generally good in other areas.

Quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a good knowledge of individual children and an understanding of the early learning goals. Long term curriculum plans cover all areas of learning and staff use interesting activities to further children's learning. The daily plan is not always completed, which limits the opportunity to reinforce intended learning, and learning intentions for some activities are unclear. This sometimes results in children either not being supported or challenged appropriately. Staff manage children's behaviour well and offer clear explanations to enable children to set their own boundaries. Resource are used well to support children's play and staff organise sessions to allow children time for free choice. Staff make regular observations on children's progress but recordings are not linked to the Foundation Stage stepping stones. This does not enable staff to easily identify individual learning needs.

Leadership and management is generally good. All staff are involved with planning and work as a team delegating tasks on a daily basis, but staff deployment is not always effective to ensure children's learning is supported. Although activities are assessed and discussed at staff meetings, there is no formal procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of the programme and identifying gaps. Staff undertake training and review practise.

There is very good partnership with parents, who are kept regularly informed about children's progress. There are regular newsletters, parent's evenings and opportunities to become involved with children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Staff make very good use of imaginary play activities to reinforce children's learning. They resource the role play area well to enable children to practise reading and writing skills and further their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Children are well behaved and are forming good relationships with each other. Staff offer consistent, clear guidelines and children are able to work well together.
- Staff plan practical activities linked to interesting themes and children are eager to learn. They examine and learn about vegetables by preparing, and

tasting, vegetable soup, draw carrots and read The Enormous Turnip story.

- Parents are kept well informed about their children. Staff are always available to speak with parents and records readily available. They receive regular newsletters and daily activities are listed on a notice board.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunity for children to practise letter formation and reinforce mathematical skills
- the learning objectives of activities to be more clearly defined and known to staff
- the recording of staff's observations of children to enable staff to identify learning needs
- the regular assessment and evaluation of activities to ensure all areas of learning are covered effectively.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There has been generally good progress since the last inspection, but some weaknesses remain. Staff maintain children's focus for the majority of the time but during free play are not always deployed effectively to support learning. Children are being questioned effectively and encouraged to think more. Very good use is made of the imaginary play area and children are encouraged to further their learning through role play. There are regular opportunities for them to use and enjoy books. Staff plan focused activities for mathematics but the learning objectives for these are not always met. The regular daily routines are not maximised to reinforce children's mathematical learning and there are few activities planned to develop skills in pattern making or shape recognition.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and motivated to work both independently and in groups. They negotiate roles in imaginary play and share resources well, taking turns when playing a board game. Children's behaviour is very good, listening attentively to instructions from staff and to each other at circle time. They are gaining personal independence and developing a respect for others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening and talking to each other. They are developing a wide vocabulary which they use extensively in imaginary play. They are able to understand that words carry meaning and are learning to read and write their own name and enjoy a range of books and stories. Children practise making marks but there are few activities planned to enable more able children to learn and practise the correct formation of letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are learning to count and recognise numbers. They are beginning to understand how numbers work and practise these skills in a range of free play activities. Planned activities enable them to develop skills in weighing and measuring skills and they use a range of mathematical language. There are few planned activities for children to develop an understanding of shape or pattern.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are gaining an understanding of the world through interesting, well planned activities. They investigate their environment, learning about the seasons and how things grow. They also learn about their own world, turning the home corner into a hospital. They are encouraged to design and build using a range of technological equipment to support their learning. Through a variety of activities they are extending their knowledge of other cultures as well as their own.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are gaining confidence and control of their bodies. They are able to use a range of equipment with ease, climbing, kicking balls and riding bikes. They are aware of how their bodies function and of good ways to keep healthy, knowing what to wear to keep warm. Children are also using a range of smaller equipment, such as scissors and computer mouse, with increasing skill.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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There are many opportunities for children to develop their imagination and thoughts through a range of creative activities. As well as role play they take part in song, music and dance on a regular basis. They know a range of songs and rhymes and take delight in changing the words sometimes. They explore a range of differing mediums playing with paint, oats and gloop and investigate things using sound, touch and smell.

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

- include planned activities, on a regular basis, to encourage more able children to practise the correct formation of letters and for all children to gain an understanding of shape and pattern
- expand the present observations of children, linking them into the Foundation Stage stepping stones, to enable staff to clearly identify children's progress across all areas of learning and identify individual learning needs
- ensure short term planning gives staff clear learning objectives for focused activities and establish a means of assessing and evaluating activities presented to ensure learning objectives are being met and a balanced programme is offered.

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.