



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 508988

DfES Number: 538220

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/06/2004

Inspector Name Sue Taylor

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care

Setting Name Health Tots Nursery

Setting Address The Burton Unit
The Conquest Hospital, The Ridge
St. Leonards-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN37 7RD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust

Address Kings Drive
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

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

Health Tots opened in 1990. It operates from a building on the hospital site. There are four rooms used for childcare. The nursery has use of an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves the local area for National Health Service and Primary Care Trust staff.

There are currently 78 children from 4 months to 8 years on roll. This includes 11 funded 3-year-olds and 13 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery opens 5 days a week during all year round. Sessions are available within the full day from 6:45 until 18:30.

Sixteen part time/full time staff work with the children. Fifteen have early years qualifications.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Health Tots provides nursery education that is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. There are however significant weaknesses in two areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are aware of the areas of learning and related aspects, however they lack confidence in their understanding of the stepping stones. Daily routines run smoothly and the use of resources is planned. Staff know the children and activities are sometimes adapted to meet individual needs. However the more able child and children for whom English is an additional language are not always sufficiently challenged or supported. Behaviour is managed well with clear explanations given. Key workers plan for three or four year olds but do not make good use of the assessment profiles. Learning intentions connect to the various aspects, though with limited effectiveness as no clear link to the early learning goals.

The leadership and management is generally good. The committed staff team is well supported by management. All staff members have clear roles and responsibilities. Time is given for planning. It is not clear how the education provision is effectively monitored or evaluated. Annual staff appraisals help identify staff development needs. The managers are very aware of areas needing improvement and are positive about the need to develop.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. Limited information relating to the Foundation Stage is provided. There is an informal verbal exchange of information daily. They are able to access their child's file and speak to the key worker. They are not actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning such as receiving information about activities they could do at home. Parents appear happy with the care their children receive They are welcomed into nursery and have access to their child's work tray.

What is being done well?

- Children's communication skills are well developed. They are confident in initiating conversations and are interested in what others have to say. New words are introduced and staff support language development.
- The children have a well developed sense of belonging. Many have been at the nursery for a while and are comfortable with all staff and routines. They welcome visitors to the group particularly if familiar to them. They get great pleasure from being able to access their own tray where they put work to take home or store personal belongings.
- All children enjoy looking at books. They use them well, often sharing with

others. They have favourite books and like to participate in the story telling.

- The staff show enthusiasm and this acts positively on the children's enjoyment of activities. The staff are involved with children's play, spending time talking and playing with them. Good trusting relationships are developed.

What needs to be improved?

- knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones
- planning, making effective use of the assessment process
- parental involvement
- challenges and support offered to children, particularly those for whom English is an additional language.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection is generally good. A basic action plan was produced though not evaluated or monitored.

Opportunities for children to develop independence at snack and lunch-times have been increased though more could be provided for the more able child. Children still lack consistent opportunities to practise writing during play, and to write their own names on work.

Children's achievements are now assessed and recorded in profiles that show their progress towards the early learning goals. These could be better used to inform planning. The staff have worked at developing the needs of both three and four-year-olds during group sessions, especially story-times. Children are supported in large groups and participate well. They also benefit from story times in their smaller key worker groups enabling staff to meet their needs and offer some one to one attention.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The majority of the children are very confident. They settle well and enjoy their time in the group. Most persist for long periods of time at an activity whether adult led or of their own choosing. They are able to concentrate and sit quietly, participating as appropriate. They have some opportunities to develop independence skills. They form good relationships with adults and other children. They behave well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

All communicate well and most are clear, confident speakers. They listen to others and use talk well to explain what is happening during an activity. Some independently link sounds and letters in play. Staff create varied times for children to look at books and listen to stories. Children are beginning to form recognisable letters with good pencil control. However they are not fully encouraged to practice pre-writing skills, attempt writing for different purposes or to write their own name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Some are confident in counting, using numbers in their play. Staff miss opportunities to develop children's progress throughout the session. Some children can recognise numerals though this is not developed sufficiently by staff. The more able have an awareness of less or more using numbers or size. However children are not introduced to the idea of simple addition and subtraction using everyday situations. They enjoy puzzles, completing them well with an understanding of shape and matching.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show curiosity. They use simple technology such as tape recorders and develop skills on the computer. They like to investigate such as looking at play bugs under microscopes. This is not extended to provide or value exploration of different textures and objects using all of their senses. They respond well to open questions from adults and ask good questions themselves. Experiences and knowledge of other cultures and religions are not effectively shared.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children move confidently, with enjoyment. They have a good sense of space both indoors and outside, for example whilst using bikes and ride on toys. They benefit from using the outdoor areas in most weathers. Staff miss chances for children to recognise changes to their bodies when they are active. They develop good hand-eye coordination through the use of resources such as scissors, pencils, puzzles and construction. They use equipment that helps them learn how to balance or control a ball.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

They enjoy singing and action games. Most children are happy to sing in a large group on their own. They have some access to musical instruments and listen to music. Some children show good rhythm. The role play area is often linked to varied topics with children able to recreate experiences or develop imaginative play. They respond well to different activities, willing to express their own ideas. They do not have ready access to paints and craft work where they can freely express themselves.

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 the staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals to enhance children's development across all areas of learning, with particular regard to knowledge and understanding of the world, and mathematics
- use the assessment process to develop the planning to show (i) clear intentions linked to early learning goals, (ii) how children are suitably challenged or supported in activities and (iii) how children's individual learning needs help inform future planning
- encourage parents to be more involved in their child's learning

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.