



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY239397

DfES Number: 530666

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/10/2004
Inspector Name Margaret Coyne

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Magic Moments Pre-School
Setting Address 1st Baldock Scout HQ
Park Drive
Baldock
Hertfordshire

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name . Committee of Magic Moments Pre-School

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

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Magic Moments Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their physical and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of practical activities and most have an understanding of what children can learn. However some staff have limited understanding of the stepping stones and how to implement these to move children forward. Planning is used effectively to introduce children to the six areas of learning through stimulating and challenging activities. Children's assessments are in place, however they do not provide relevant information linked to the stepping stones to clearly show the children's progress. Resources are well organised to increase children's independence in most areas. Staff develop children's language and listening skills, although their open-ended questioning is limited to encourage children to think for themselves. Further opportunities could be provided for children to use their knowledge of different mathematical concepts. A wide range of purposeful activities and opportunities encourage children to explore and express themselves through play. Children behave well and respond to direction from staff.

Leadership and management is generally good. The group benefits from a dedicated manager and a committed staff team. The committee play an active role in the management of the group and work closely with the manager. The manager and staff work well together in providing an effective educational program in most areas.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are given the opportunity to talk informally with staff and attend open evenings to obtain details of their child's progress. Parents are provided with good information so they can play an active role in their child's learning and extend that learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children's curiosity and imaginations are skilfully developed as they explore an interesting range of activities which stimulate and challenge them, such as the role play areas, creative and messy play activities and physical activities. They work and play independently and are well supported by staff. Staff create interesting areas of play which they link into the topics, for example a builders yard which gives children opportunity to use resources to extend their understanding of real life situations.
- Children are secure and happy within their environment. Their concentration skills are growing as they persist at chosen activities. They know the routine well and interact positively with adults and peers. Children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them, staff foster this consistently with

praise and encouragement and children respond well to direction from staff.

- Children's physical development is promoted effectively as they confidently take part in activities and use resources which develop their large and small motor skills. Children enjoy using a range of one handed tools and equipment which develops their dexterity and hand and eye coordination.
- Partnership with parents and carers is a strong feature within the group. Parents are actively involved with the group through the management committee and as fund raisers. They enjoy friendly relationships with staff, who take time to make themselves approachable and available to discuss any aspects of their child's care, activities and progress.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to increase their skills in communication, language and literacy, independence, some mathematical concepts and with information technology
- staff's use of children's assessments to evaluate their progress and to inform future planning
- Staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and what children can gain from them and the development of their open-ended questioning skills.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have developed good relationships with each other and adults in the group. They show pride in the work they produce which is well displayed. Children are confident, happy and relaxed, they have developed good independence skills in most areas which could be further extended at snack time. Their concentration skills are developing as they persist at activities and explore new experiences. They have developed positive attitudes towards behaviour, reinforced by good role models.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's vocabulary is developing as they use language to talk about personal events and during role-play. They interact well with each other in small and large groups and listen to others when appropriate. However limited opportunities exist for the reinforcement of sounds and letters and to use resources to develop their writing and mark making skills for example using name cards to copy when marking their own work and labels around the room. Children enjoy time in the book area.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing a good awareness of number, they count confidently to ten and beyond and recognise numbers in planned and spontaneous activities. However there are missed opportunities to introduce children to practical problem solving and to reinforce their understanding of shapes. Children can sort items by size, length and colour. Staff provide activities which introduce them to the concept of weight and capacity as they cook and use sand, water and dry goods.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children take part in activities that develop an interest in the world around them. They take part in role play to experience the different jobs that people do and enjoy visits from people who help us. Children explore how things work using magnets and examine living things such as mini beasts and how seeds grow and change. They enjoy activities about different cultures and beliefs as they make Indian sweets and pots. Children have limited opportunity to extend their understanding of ICT.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The children negotiate obstacles when pretending to be monsters and move easily around the room. They have ample opportunity to climb, balance and jump using equipment both inside and out. Their dexterity is developed with the use of jigsaws, fastenings on clothes and with tools such as scissors, glue spreaders, rollers, cutters for playdough and cooking activities. Children have gained an awareness of keeping safe and healthy with topics about healthy eating, road safety and brushing our teeth.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children experience imaginative use of techniques to apply paint using hands, brushes, spaghetti painting and using paint under cling film. They have opportunity to take part in music sessions, enjoying ring games and music and movement. They are animated singers and enthusiastically practice Christmas songs. Children enjoy familiar role-play situations and use resources imaginatively, involving adults and friends in their play. Staff support and engage in the children's play.

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

- Provide further opportunities for older and more able children to develop an understanding of the links between sounds and letters. To use resources to develop all children's writing and mark making skills. To extend their mathematical knowledge for practical problem solving and understanding of different shapes and to extend their understanding of information technology. To develop all children's independence skills particularly at snack time.
- Develop the use of assessment, to evaluate children's progress and development in line with the stepping stones and enable the children to extend their learning towards the early learning goals.
- Raise staff's awareness of the stepping stones and what children can gain from them and develop staff's awareness of using open-ended questions to encourage children to think for themselves.

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.