



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127366

DfES Number: 524932

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/03/2004
Inspector Name Malini Parmar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Manston School House Nursery
Setting Address Preston Road
 Manston
 Ramsgate
 Kent
 CT12 5BA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Lisa Jayne Stewart

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

Manston School House Nursery opened in 1993. The nursery is housed within self-contained premises and occupies three rooms and an enclosed garden. The nursery caters for children who live within the local rural community of Manston and surrounding villages.

The nursery is open weekdays from 08.15 to 15.00, 50 weeks a year and offers sessional, daily and weekly care. There are currently 26 children on roll. Altogether there are 11 children aged between 3 and 4 years who receive funding. The nursery is registered to cater for children from 1 to 5 years of age.

Four staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications. All staff attend short training courses. The setting receives support from a teacher and / or mentor from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). It is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Manston School House Nursery provides a caring, welcoming environment for children. The educational provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement.

The overall quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff provide some worthwhile opportunities and work positively with children, encouraging them to be confident and promoting their self-esteem through praise. Staff employ useful questioning techniques to support and extend children's thinking and development and children have daily opportunities for vigorous exercise. However, the staff's lack of knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage does not ensure children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Much of the children's time is spent in whole group situations. Often, this leads to children being presented with unsuitable challenges, and activities are not planned to cater for children's individual needs. The free play session is planned by staff who select resources that children have not recently used. Children often receive inconsistent opportunities. The system of planning has very recently changed, including in the duration of the inspection. It is evolving in order to identify children's next steps and use these to inform future plans. Children generally behave well. However behaviour changes as they progress through whole group activities. Systems to support children with special educational needs are evolving.

Leadership and Management has significant weaknesses. The provider has a positive attitude. Staff work together as a strong team and have regular training opportunities. Procedures to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the practice are not yet fully developed.

Partnership with parents is generally good; parents are invited to contribute to the programme. Staff are available at every session to discuss progress and a formal consultation is programmed. Parents receive basic information about the programme.

What is being done well?

- Staff consistently use open-ended questioning techniques to support and extend children's thinking and development. Staff use mathematical language well to encourage children's understanding of size, shape and quantity.
- Children have daily opportunities for vigorous exercise and the outdoor area is used well to support children's physical development.
- Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment and are caring towards the children. Children are happy, settled and confident.
- Children have access to a wide range of age and stage appropriate books; they benefit from the interactive story times.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in all six curriculum areas
- the effective use of observations in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning and use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities
- the routine to reduce the length of time children spend waiting in whole group activities and increase children's independence at the nursery
- staff's knowledge of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and effective procedures to support the needs of children with special educational needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to include opportunities for children to recognise and write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower-case letters. They agreed to give children greater opportunity to access technology and to question how things work. They agreed to provide more technological equipment and planned activities, such as torches, walkie-talkies and programmable and battery operated toys, and include opportunities for children to question and investigate why things happen, for example through basic science activities.

The group have made some progress in addressing these issues; children have greater opportunities to label their work and have access to a wider range of technological resources. However, taken overall, weaknesses in the programme exist and progress is limited.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident and secure in a warm and caring environment. Positive relationships are formed as they learn to work collaboratively, taking turns and sharing resources. Children have a strong sense of right and wrong. They persevere in chosen activities for example, "digging for ants". Children spend too long in group situations during which times they become restless and bored and their behaviour changes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate effectively and clearly, making conversation with friends and adults alike. They have daily opportunities for song. Children enjoy listening to stories and contribute their thoughts and ideas during the interactive story times. They ably select their names daily. There are insufficient opportunities for children to link sounds and letters through planned practical activities. Children receive inconsistent opportunities to attempt writing for a variety of purpose.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children learn to count during the session for example at registration. Children benefit from the use of mathematical language, for example, to describe shape, position and size. They become familiar with simple concepts of early addition and subtraction through songs. However the lack of effective planning and assessment does not ensure children's progress within the programme of mathematics.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children clearly enjoy the activities that take place such as mixing sand and water. Children use magnifying glasses to closely examine ants. They receive opportunities to find out about their environment, for example, visits to the farm. Opportunities to use information technology are provided. Children enjoy using the tills and telephones. Insufficient activities are planned to support and extend children's learning in this area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children move around freely and safely from area to area. They have opportunities to refine and strengthen their small and gross movements through the daily routine, for example using scissors. Children demonstrate dexterity and agility. They manoeuvre safely around objects and show an awareness of themselves. Children enjoy hopping, skipping, jumping and climbing. Opportunities to raise health and bodily awareness are missed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
------------	------------------------

Children clearly enjoy the daily opportunities for songs and painting. Children's experiences to freely experiment with a variety of materials and communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings, are hindered by staff's over-direction during some activities. Children enjoy "shopping" and "cleaning" in their role-play although the quality of their play varies with the amount of support they are given.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- reorganise the routine to reduce the length of time children spend in whole group activities
- continue to develop effective use of observations in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning and use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities
- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals in all six curriculum areas
- increase staff's knowledge of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and ensure effective procedures are in place to support the needs of children.

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.