



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 253471

DfES Number: 517951

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/02/2005
Inspector Name Gill Ogden

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Sturton Cygnets
Setting Address The School House, School Lane
Sturton by Stow
Lincoln
Lincolnshire
LN1 2BY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Sturton by Stow Pre-School Group
Committee 1038936

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Sturton by Stow Pre-School Group Committee
Address Sturton by Stow CP School
School Lane, Sturton by Stow
Lincoln
Lincolnshire
LN1 2BY

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

Sturton Cygnets has been registered for many years, originally known as Sturton-by-Stow Playgroup, and is run by a volunteer management committee. It operates from a classroom in Sturton-by-Stow Primary School and has access to secure outdoor play areas. Sessions run each weekday during school term time from 09:00 until 11:30. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time.

Currently there are 32 children aged from two and a half to five years on roll. They attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local, rural area. Of these, 18 receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children with special educational needs and also ones who speak English as an additional language.

There are four regular members of staff working with the children. Two staff have appropriate early years qualifications and one of those is currently upgrading hers. A further staff member is about to start working towards an appropriate qualification.

The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and is working towards achieving its quality assurance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Sturton Cygnets provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all the areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are committed to providing the best they can for the children and work hard to create a warm and fun environment for them. They develop some useful homemade resources to support both individual children's learning needs and those of the whole group and they make good use of foodstuffs to support children's learning. They have not yet organised the classroom sufficiently well to maximise children's learning and minimise potential undesirable behaviour. Staff observe and record children's achievements consistently but they do not use this well enough to inform the planning of what individual children should be doing next. Children with special educational needs are supported well and systems are in place to improve the provision for children whose first language is not English.

The leadership and management of the nursery is generally good. There is a whole team approach and the committee carry out appraisals on all the staff so that strengths and training needs can be identified. Staff carry out regular evaluations of activities and use outside support well for areas such as special educational needs but the overall monitoring of the educational provision has not been fully developed.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Some parents form the management committee and good relationships are evident between parents and staff generally. Parents receive some useful written information about the foundation stage curriculum and are kept up-to-date through newsletters about what the children are doing. They chat daily with staff about their children and have the opportunity to attend open evenings twice a year. However, there are limited opportunities for them to take part more fully in their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Staff work effectively with parents and other agencies to support children with special educational needs. Individual education plans are in place and are reviewed regularly.
- Children's progress records clearly show what children can do. They link closely to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and are regularly updated.
- The staff have developed a warm, caring and fun atmosphere for the children which helps them feel secure and keen to take part in activities.
- Food is used well to teach children about healthy eating, stimulate their senses and learn about changes through cooking.

- Staff create some useful homemade resources to support children's learning such as the 'picture clock' which children can check to see what stage they are at in the session.

What needs to be improved?

- the identification of individual children's next steps in planning
- the organisation of the classroom to maximise children's learning and reduce opportunities for inappropriate behaviour
- parents' involvement in children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff were asked to improve the teaching methods used when delivering large physical activities particularly regarding ensuring children warmed up sufficiently.

All the staff attended training on large physical play and as a result have improved its all round provision. They are more confident and children enjoy taking part.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are keen to get involved in activities and confident to speak at circle times and also when they want different equipment and toys. They play together in small groups and pairs with activities such as construction, small world and role play. They show care and concern for one another and the staff, helping each other to make toys work and assisting the staff to tidy up. They know their manners and how they should behave but do not always manage to do it.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children chat to each other and staff during activities and listen to stories and join in with songs and rhymes, often predicting events. They talk about what they are doing and learn new words regularly. They enjoy using the Jolly Phonics system to sound out and recognise words and letters. They are developing the skills they need to hold and use pens and pencils and try to write their names but do not have enough free access to writing materials.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently and are beginning to recognise numerals. They enjoy number rhymes and songs which help them begin to understand about calculation and staff help them to recognise colours and amounts during activities such as making bracelets and building with Duplo. They enjoy playing maths games such as Lucky Ducks. However, daily routines and regular water play are not used effectively enough to reinforce children's mathematical understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy investigating growth and change through such activities as cooking and growing bulbs. They use construction sets regularly and recycled materials occasionally to develop their design skills through model making. They access battery operated toys and understand how they work but do not have enough regular access to the computer and other forms of technology. They celebrate festivals and take part in national and local events such as the village show and Children in Need.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and safely around the room and planned activities help them to develop their balancing and climbing skills. They understand about changes in their body when exercising and what foods are healthy. They play with small and large toys and equipment skilfully and are developing good control of tools such as scissors and hammers. The outdoor playground is not used effectively enough to promote children's whole body skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are exposed to a variety of materials, such as paint, glue, leaves and cloth, which help them use their imaginations to freely create paintings and collages. They enjoy singing, listening and moving to music. They take part in role play such as hairdressing and enjoy small world play such as train sets and dolls houses. They are developing their senses by, for example, tasting and smelling different food. They have limited access to water 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

- review planning so that it identifies the next steps for individual children
- review the organisation of the classroom to maximise children's learning and reduce the opportunities for inappropriate behaviour to occur
- develop parents' involvement in children'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.