



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127555

DfES Number: 511552

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	21/09/2004
Inspector Name	Beryl Witheridge

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Smilers Pre-School
Setting Address	Walderslade Baptist Church Catkin Close Walderslade Chatham Kent ME5 9HP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Smilers Pre-school
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Smilers Pre-school
Address	Baptist Hall Catkin Close Chatham Kent ME5 9HP

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Smilers Pre-School opened in 1991. It is run as a part of the church with the committee made up of church members and parents. It operates from 2 rooms, with the occasional use of the main hall, in a church hall, in Walderslade, Chatham. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 31 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 12 funded 3-year-olds and 9 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports 2 children with special needs and no children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 12.00 Monday to Thursday and 12.30 to 15.00 Monday, Thursday and Friday.

There are eight staff working with the children. Over half the staff, six, have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. All staff are involved in taking short courses. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Smilers Pre-school provides good care for children.

The pre-school is run by qualified staff who are keen to update their knowledge and training. Staffing levels are always maintained and are often higher than the minimum required. They have use of two rooms upstairs in the church hall and the occasional use of the hall downstairs. There is limited storage space for all the equipment. Staff utilise the play area well to provide the children with a warm, bright, welcoming environment.

The premises are safe and secure both indoors and out. Staff practise good hygiene routines and encourage the children in these constantly. The keyworker system is in

place and staff are aware of the individual needs of each child. They aim to ensure that those needs are being met at all times. Fire drills are practised and health and safety routines, including daily risk assessments are in place. Staff are First Aid trained and aware of accident and medication procedures but they must remember to include existing injuries in their records.

The activities provided for the children are varied, interesting and exciting. Children do not have free access to all toys and equipment but are able to ask for the ones they are interested in. Staff work closely with the children taking an interest in all they do, talking and listening to them. Planning shows that staff use their knowledge of the children to ensure that all their individual developmental needs are met.

There is a good relationship between parents and the group. Parents are given a prospectus and newsletters to keep them up to date with everything that is happening. Parents are able to come into the group and speak to staff at any time about their child. The children's records are sent home regularly. There are formal arrangements in place for parents to meet their child's keyworker to discuss their progress before they move on to school. Parents feel that staff are friendly, professional and approachable.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group was asked to seek advice from the Fire Officer regarding an up to date fire safety check.

The Fire Officer visited the hall and was happy with the precautions taken. A letter was sent to Ofsted confirming this.

What is being done well?

- The staff have excellent interaction with the children. They talk to them at all times encouraging and praising them in all they do. The children learn to feel confident in all they do and learn.
- The staff use positive and consistent strategies to manage children's behaviour. These strategies are well thought out to ensure that children's individual needs are met.
- The children are offered a wide variety of toys, equipment and exciting activities. Staff use planning well to give the children different experiences. Children learn and develop at their own pace and are happy and secure.
- Good hygiene practices are encouraged. Children know how and when to wash their hands. Tables are always washed before food is served. This develops the children's own good hygiene practices.

What needs to be improved?

- the detail in the lost and uncollected children policy

- the inclusion of existing injuries, including parent's signatures, in the accident/incident book
- the children's free access to drinks of water throughout the session
- the selection of toys and equipment which provide positive images, including disability
- the provision for privacy, should it be required.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Review the lost and uncollected children policy.
7	Ensure that existing injuries are included in the accident book, with parent's signature.
9	Ensure play materials help children appreciate and value diversity, including disability.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Smilers Pre-school is acceptable and of good quality overall. The children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a good knowledge of the early learning goals (ELGs). They use this and their knowledge of the children when planning activities to interest and stimulate the children's learning. Planning includes opportunities to extend the learning of the children although it does not always clearly identify those individual needs in the plans. They extend children's knowledge by encouraging new skills. Good supporting photographic evidence is provided. The children have a good relationship with the staff. High staff to child ratios allow staff to work in small groups and provide more time for one to one work. Staff teach the children by example. They encourage the children to move freely between activities and support them in the use of the available resources. The children are confident and well behaved.

Leadership and management is very good. The supervisor's and staff know their roles within the pre-school and have good working relationships with each other. They have excellent interaction with the children. The staff are committed to the care and development of the children. Regular staff meetings are held. Staff take part in a yearly appraisal where they are able to identify their future training needs. They are encouraged to undertake training which they do whenever possible.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are given written information regarding the policies and procedures for the group as well as the ELGs and the proposed half termly activities their children will take part in. Termly newsletters are sent home and parent surveys used once a year. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress. Their records are sent home every half term which parents can discuss with staff if they wish. Parents can speak to staff at any time if there are concerns.

What is being done well?

- Staff reinforce children's learning by providing them with opportunities to learn new skills, have new experiences and also to build on knowledge they already have.
- The staff teach the children by example, they are good role models. Children know how to behave and understand what is acceptable and what is not.
- Leadership and management is good. Staff work well together and are committed to the learning and development of the children. Children receive good support.
- Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their child's progress. Children receive continuity in all areas of their care and learning.

- Children's mathematical development is well supported and children are able to recognise shape, size and number and do simple calculation.
- Children are confident communicators. They are able to use resources to act out every day activities and imaginary situations.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of the period before snack time, when staff clear away and children wash their hands
- the clear identification of children's next steps in the planning
- the opportunities provided during all sessions for children to write their names and practise letter formation.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group was asked to review the system for assessing and recording the children's progress towards the early learning goals, to ensure continuity across the foundation stage.

Staff now make regular observations of the children during activities and identify the next steps for the children. These are used in future planning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Staff provide stimulating surroundings and the children are motivated to learn. The children have very good self esteem and confidence. They are able to form relationships, take turns and play together in groups. Children's behaviour is excellent and they understand the difference between right and wrong. The layout of the premises and limited storage do not allow children to be totally independent or provide self care.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident speakers with the ability to express themselves clearly. They understand print carries meaning and show an enjoyment of books. Staff encourage the children to read, share and enjoy books. They are able to follow text and predict the stories. Staff are excellent at asking the children open ended questions, encouraging them to think about different ideas and concepts. Staff miss opportunities to help children to form letters correctly and write their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Number displays are at child height so the children are able to touch and see the display clearly. The children recognise the written numbers and most are able to confidently count to ten, some of the older children beyond this. Children can recognise shape and size. Staff encourage children in the use of comparative and descriptive language. Some four year olds are able to do simple calculation, adding and taking away.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have opportunities to explore, investigate and question. Children are able to describe the weather and how it makes them feel. They can identify everyday objects and explain their purpose. The children visit the surrounding area to look at the natural world around them. The group has a Christian ethos but there is photographic evidence that children have looked at different festivals and celebrations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are confident and move with control and co-ordination, they have a good sense of space. They move around the room with an awareness of the other children, the tables and equipment. They are able to use large and small equipment with increasing control. as there is little outside play space staff provide opportunities for dancing, music and movement and using large equipment such as hoops and a climbing frame. Children have a good understanding of how to keep healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children are able to explore media and materials and they show a great pride in their achievements. Children use their imagination well, especially four year olds in role play. Staff provide the children with good support when they are not sure how to use equipment. Musical instruments are available at all times but the children show little interest and staff do not appear to encourage children to experiment with them. They do use music tapes to inspire children when they are painting.	
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

- Manage the time the children have, to allow them to play. Utilise the period before snack time to provide the children with beneficial activities which extend their learning opportunities.
- Provide opportunities, during all sessions, for all children to write their names and practise pencil skills and letter formation.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.