



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 123640

DfES Number: 580822

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/12/2003
Inspector Name Susan Parker

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Chiswell Pre School & Nursery
Setting Address 151 Watford Road
 Chiswell Green
 St. Albans
 Hertfordshire
 AL2 3HG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Barbara Sullivan

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

Chiswell Pre School opened in 1980, it is privately owned by the leader and manager Barbara Sullivan. The Pre-School is held in the United Reformed Church hall and is situated in Chiswell Green, close to all amenities.

It is open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 09:00 to 15:00, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 09:00 to 12:00 during term time only.

It is registered for 45 children aged 2-5years using two rooms. The main hall is used for children from 2 years 9 months to Under 5 years. The smaller room is used for the under 3's.

12 members of staff work with the children, 4 members of staff hold an NVQ level 3 qualification. 2 staff members hold an NVQ level 2 qualification, 4 staff members have other qualifications and 2 are unqualified.

There are currently 65 children on the register, and the group currently receive funding for 4 three year olds. The group also currently provides care for 2 children with special needs.

How good is the Day Care?

Chiswell Pre-School and Nursery provides good care for children.

There are a high ratio of qualified staff who are well organised in providing quality supervision of the children in the two rooms used. Children are grouped according to age and provided with a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities. The organisation of the accommodation and the provision of activities meet the needs of all the children. However, the layout of the premises, and the type of heating, can result in the temperature falling below an acceptable level.

Staff emphasise safety at all times. All members of staff hold a first aid certificate, and provide good quality care for children with special needs. Observations and assessments are carried out on all the children and recorded in individual books.

Staff ensure they work closely with all parents and any other agencies in order to meet the needs of all children, including children with special needs. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. They record any concerns or issues in a confidential manner, and will report any concerns in accordance with the local child protection committee procedures.

Children have access to a wide range of activities which promote their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. They are well behaved and staff are consistent in using developmentally appropriate strategies. Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources which positively promote equal opportunities in their every day play. However, children often take home very similar art and craft work which does not promote their individual creativity or imagination.

Parents are provided with detailed information on the setting, the themes and activities planned, and regular reports on the progress of their children. Parents have access to the policies and procedures the pre-school follow. However, the complaints procedure needs updating.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, Chiswell Pre-School and Nursery agreed to produce evidence to show what qualifications the staff hold. This information is now available.

What is being done well?

- There is a high ratio of qualified staff, including all staff holding a valid first aid certificate.
- Equal opportunities are promoted well through practice and provision of a wide range of toys and resources.
- The use of detailed observations and assessments of the children in order to plan the next stage in their learning and development.
- The recording of appropriate information which ensures the safety, care and welfare of all the children.

What needs to be improved?

- support of the children's individual imagination and creativity with their art and craft activities.
- the monitoring and maintaining of an appropriate temperature at all times.
- the lost child policy and the complaints procedure.

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
3	Support children in creating and designing their own individual art and craft ideas.
4	Ensure an appropriate temperature is monitored and maintained at all times in each room used.
6	Update the procedure on what steps to take if a child is not collected.
12	Include the procedure to follow, and the address and telephone number of the regulator in the complaints procedure.

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 Chiswell Pre-School & Nursery is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The team display a generally good understanding of the Foundation Stage, and use the accommodation and resources well to provide a broad range of experiences which cover all six areas of learning. However, staff are not encouraging children's personal independence in putting on their own coats, shoes and aprons.

The planning, evaluation and assessments of the children's activities, achievements and progress is recorded well. Children are well behaved and aware of their boundaries. They are encouraged to choose activities and resources for themselves, although some craft activities are adult led and the children are required to produce identical items. Children with special educational needs are well supported with trained staff, individual educational plans and a close working relationship with parents and other professionals.

The leadership and management is generally good. The owner and manager ensures the staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. The staff use the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage as reference for all activities. The team are aware of their own roles and responsibilities and work well together. However, some staff lack the confidence to extend the activity planned to meet the individual needs of the children, and to provide suitable challenges for more able children.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive regular written reports on their child's achievements and progress in all six areas of learning. Detailed plans and information on the weeks theme, colour or letter are prominently displayed. Staff work closely with parents in sharing information on the children in a confidential way.

What is being done well?

- The detailed planning of activities which effectively support the children's learning in all six areas.
- The recording and assessment of the children's progress and the effective sharing of information with parents.
- The provision of valuable nature experiences, such as bats and snakes that visitors have brought in for the children to see and touch.

What needs to be improved?

- encouragement of children's personal independence in putting on their own coat, shoes and aprons.
- provision for children to use art and craft activities for their own ideas, choose their own materials, and use their own imagination.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Chiswell Pre-School & Nursery have made generally good progress since the last inspection. They have effectively ensured that children's records and reports include comments about all six areas of learning. Staff have ensured that they provide practical activities to support worksheets. This enables the children to understand the activity before recording it on paper. However, the pre-school has not improved its practice in encouraging children to select their own materials and use their own ideas in creative activities.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are beginning to form firm relationships and are developing confidence and self esteem. Children are well behaved and are beginning to share and take turns. They are able to go to the toilet by themselves, but, staff are not encouraging the children's independence in putting on their own coats, shoes and aprons. Children are also learning about different cultures and views from people around the world.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are displaying positive pre writing skills. They use appropriate mark making tools and materials in many aspects of their daily play, such as notepads for food orders in their play café. Children are developing a good understanding of books, they are being taught about the title and author of the books, and are able to use books for their own enjoyment. Children respond enthusiastically to familiar rhymes songs and stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are progressing well with their understanding of mathematics. They are able to recognise numerals. They can sort according to size and shape and can sequence size well with resources such as a Russian doll. Children enthusiastically join in with number rhymes and are learning elements of addition and subtraction with songs like ten fat sausages and five little speckled frogs. Wall number displays and car number plates are used well to re- enforce matching numbers to written numerals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are gaining a sound understanding of aspects of the world around them. Visitors have brought in bats and snakes for the children to see, touch and learn about. They grow plants such as sunflowers and then use the seeds to grow more next season, so are learning about nature and the cycle of life. They play with a variety of different media and materials such as soil in the sand tray, through this they learn the different textures and consistency of different natural substances

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing a good understanding of their own bodies and recognise the importance of hand washing and staying healthy. They show balance and co-ordination in activities such as music and movement, dance and using apparatus. They are developing fine motor skills using small tools such as scissors in a safe way, plucking the strings of a violin, and using the bow correctly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's role play and imaginative play are well supported with a good selection of props and resources such as dressing up, hats and themed areas such as a home corner or café which has the appropriate furniture and equipment to support and extend the play. However, many craft activities are adult led, and the children are all required to produce identical items.

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 children with activities, material and resources which promote their own individual ideas and creativity.
- encourage children's personal independence skills such as putting on their own coats, shoes and aprons.

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.