



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109848

DfES Number: 517756

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/07/2003
Inspector Name Geraldine Poole

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name ST LAWRENCE PLAYGROUP
Setting Address ST LAWRENCE CHURCH HALL
VICARAGE HILL
ALTON
HAMPSHIRE
GU34 2BY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of ST LAWRENCE PRE SCHOOL
COMMITTEE

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name ST LAWRENCE PRE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Address AS BEFORE
U/A

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

St Lawrence Pre-school is a voluntary group run by a parent committee and has been registered since 1974. It can provide sessional care for up to 26 children aged two to five years. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time, offering morning and afternoon sessions. Currently there are 32 children on roll, of these 16 are funded including six, three year olds and ten, four year olds. There are currently no children with special educational needs but there is one child with English as an additional language.

The group operate from a church hall and have access to the main hall, kitchen and toilets. The church grounds are used for outdoor activities.

The group employs four staff, all of whom hold Early Years qualifications. The setting liaises and receives teacher support from local schools, and has particularly close links with St Lawrence School. Support and advice is also received from the Early Education and Childcare Unit and Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

How good is the Day Care?

St Lawrence's Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children. It offers a caring, welcoming environment where children feel secure and settled.

Children are well occupied and self motivated. A wide range of interesting and stimulating activities are provided and children learn in a supportive, caring environment. However these can lack focus and the purpose of the activity is then lost. Staff show a willingness to train and keep up to date with the latest developments, but evidence of these staff details is lacking.

Appropriate routines and good organisation ensures children feel secure, settled and their needs are being met. Good behaviour management strategies are in place, there is a calm atmosphere. Children play well together and are cooperative.

Safety procedures are satisfactory, although all relevant documentation is not currently in place. Good hygiene practices are encouraged and new procedures are currently being discussed to improve the present systems.

Good relationships with parents are established. They are kept up to date with relevant information through regular news letters. The preschool have an open door policy and parents are welcome to discuss any concerns and their child's progress at anytime. There are also more formal meetings during the year.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This section is not applicable as the last inspection was a transitional inspection.

What is being done well?

- Staff are well qualified and committed to ongoing training. They provide a variety of stimulating activities and a good range of toys and play equipment to support children's learning.
- Appropriate behaviour management strategies are in place, staff act as good role models and there is mutual respect between staff and children. Children are happy and settled.
- Snack time is a sociable event and children sit down together and enjoy a variety of healthy snacks and drinks. Some independence is encouraged e.g. when pouring drinks, and all children help clear away.
- All children are included and their individuality is recognised and acknowledged. Parents are welcomed into the group and not only come to assist in the day to day running but also to share their expertise. Children and their parents are valued and respected.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation including, a written recruitment procedure, long term medication consent, up to date information in complaints procedure, the addition of a statement addressing bullying and a procedure in the event of a member of staff being accused of abuse;
- staff details, including, availability of certificates to verify staff training and qualifications.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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
11	ensure behaviour management policy contains a statement on bullying.
13	ensure child protection policy contains a procedure if a staff member is accused of abuse.
12	ensure complaints procedure and policy has correct up to date information.
7	develop a system for obtaining parental consent and recording long term medication.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St. Lawrence Playgroup provides generally good education for the children. They are making generally good progress in all areas of development and in particular in personal, social and emotional development. Some development is needed in the programs for mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world through staffs increased knowledge of the Foundation Stage.

Teaching is generally good. Staff are good role models. They are kind, caring, with a sense of fun and show children respect using please and thank you often when talking to them. Staff plan and provide an interesting range of activities including trips to the local market and flood meadow, with the children having great fun practicing for sports day. However some activities lack focus and so children do not always achieve the intended learning goals.

Leadership and management is generally good with the parent led committee giving the staff and children good support. The supervisor makes effective use of the space and resources.

Staff deployment could be improved to ensure children are supported at focus activities.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with useful information about the preschool via newsletters and notice board. They are important to the playgroup forming a committee to support the staff and sharing skills with the children as part of the children's learning for example parents who are a vet, musician, nurse and doctor. Parents have positive relationships with the staff enabling them to share information about the children's progress both informally on a daily basis and at planned yearly meetings.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and secure. They arrive and settle quickly into the group. They know the routine well. They are co-operative and behave well responding to the staffs friendly approach.
- Staff are kind and caring with a good sense of fun. They form good relationships with the children, this encourages good interaction where children are well motivated, confident to talk in small and large groups and with all adults. They sit and listen well to stories at circle time.
- Children can count confidently to ten, counting the boys and girls at circle time and then comparing which there are more of. Counting is reinforced during other activities such as when threading beads and number puzzles.
- Staff plan interesting practical activities for children to learn about shapes for example, using shaving foam for the children to draw the shapes as part of a

topic.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation and use of the book corner where the book box is too full which makes the books difficult for the children to access;
- short term planning, to ensure activity objectives are recorded so the activity has focus, is sufficiently challenging and the children achieve the intended learning outcome and staff are effectively deployed;
- staffs knowledge and understanding and confident use of the stepping stones and early learning goals.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection is limited. Children are given more opportunities to use mathematics and make progress to the early learning goals in practical situations such as counting the boys and girls at circle time and comparing which there are more of and in the role play area in the café talking about the cost of food and drinks. Staff have extended the program for knowledge and understanding of the world. They plan first hand experiences for the children to explore the local environment through trips to the market, farm and the flood meadow and activities using corn flour and shaving foam. However not all issues have been addressed sufficiently in the area of short term planning and staff deployment which means children are not always sufficiently supported and challenged and do not always achieve the planned learning goal.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and secure. They arrive and settle straight into the group. They know the routine well. The children are co-operative and behave well, responding to the staffs friendly, caring approach. They really enjoyed the fun, lively sports day practice, waiting, taking turns and following instructions. Children form good relationships with the staff and each other and are confident to talk in small and large groups with all adults and each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident to speak at group times and they are happy to share their experiences of home and about their new schools and teachers. They are given good opportunities to develop and use language for imagination such as in the role play area when serving at the cafe. Children are able to recognise their names during everyday activities and some can write their names on their work. The organisation and use of the book corner needs developing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can count confidently to ten, counting the boys and girls at circle time and then comparing, this is reinforced during other activities such as when threading beads and number puzzles. Staff plan interesting activities for children to learn about shapes using painting and shaving foam as part of shape topic. Mathematical activities sometimes lack a purpose as when children use balance scales for weighing.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff plan a good range of activities to explore senses and textures such as shaving foam, corn flour and a smelling tree. Children explore the local environment going to the flood meadow to look at nature and visits to the market to look at and buy fruit. They use a range of technological equipment including a computer. Many of the children are skilful in using the mouse and interactive alphabet toys. Children need more opportunity to investigate and explore materials and ask questions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently showing good spatial awareness in the hall as waiters at the cafe and when completing a fun and lively practice for sports day where they run, hop, skip and jump. They handle tools well using both fine and thick paint brushes, scissors and tools for play dough such as rolling pins and cutters. They are given many opportunities manipulate pieces of jigsaw and thread laces to develop fine motor skills. Many of the children show good mouse skills when using the computer.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use their imaginations well in a variety of role play situations such as being a chef, waiter and customers at the café, where they play co-operatively. Staff join in and support their play. Children use a variety of tools and materials to express ideas and feelings such as when painting, playing with dough and at the sound table. The children express feelings when playing with the shaving foam and exploring the smelling tree. They know and enjoy a range of songs from memory.

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

- ensure all staff have a sound understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones and especially the program for mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world;
- ensure planning has sufficient detail to enable staff to be aware of the activity objectives, how it will be adapted to provide challenge for more able children and how staff will be deployed.

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.