



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 305351

DfES Number: 583688

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/11/2004
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Sunshine Under Fives Centre
Setting Address Percival Road
 The Dale
 Chester
 Cheshire
 CH2 4AH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Management Committee Sunshine Under 5's Centre

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

Sunshine Under Fives Centre is a facility under the supervision of the manager and supported by a committee, parents and the Army Welfare Service. It opened in 1986 and operates from a building located on the Dale Camp in Chester. The centre provides a creche and a pre-school. The pre-school has the use of a large room, which is subdivided into designated learning areas, a kitchen and a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term-time from 09:15 to 12:15.

There are currently 18 children from two and a half years to four years on roll at the pre-school. Of these fourteen children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from military families based at the Dale Camp. However, some children come from the local community. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs.

Five staff work in the pre-school for a varying number of sessions over the week and they are assisted at times by volunteers. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One other member of staff is working towards a qualification.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Sunshine Under Fives Centre provides an acceptable quality of nursery education overall but has some significant areas for improvement. Children make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There is a significant weakness in the children's progress within personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of the teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff ineffectively manage children's behaviour. This results in children being unsettled and not benefiting from the teaching and activities available. Staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the early learning goals and plan a rich program of activities. The long and medium term plans identify the early learning goals which activities target, however staff do not monitor children's participation in activities. This results in some children not having a balanced range of learning experiences. Information in the children's progress records is not used when writing short-term plans. These plans do not show how activities will be adapted to meet children's different learning needs, including those with a special educational need. Staff do not promptly observe and record possible early signs of children's special educational needs.

The leadership and management of the pre-school has significant weaknesses. The pre-school provision has not been thoroughly monitored. Although policies and procedures are in place, these are not being effectively implemented and the disruptive behaviour of some children results in some, if not all, children failing to benefit fully from the activities.

The partnership with the parents and carers is very good. Parents are provided with information about the centre. Detailed records of children's progress are provided. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning in a variety of ways including through helping at pre-school.

What is being done well?

- Most staff have a good working knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and use this knowledge to plan stimulating activities to promote children's learning.
- Children are engaged in much talking and discussion with staff helping to develop their language.
- A strong partnership with parents and carers has been formed which supports children's learning. Parents are provided with valuable information and are encouraged to extend learning to home.

- Children enjoy counting. Staff plan a range of activities that stimulate children's interest and relate their mathematical skills to other areas of learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the management of children's behaviour and the implementation of the behaviour management policies, thus enabling children to benefit fully from the wide range of activities planned by the staff
- the observation and recording of children to identify any possible early signs of special educational needs so that plans can be adapted accordingly
- the monitoring of children's participation in activities to ensure that all children are experiencing a balanced range of learning activities
- the provision for children to use everyday technology and information and communication technology to support their learning
- opportunities for more able children to extend their recognition of familiar words.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Limited progress has been made to address the three key issues identified at the last inspection.

The pre-school was required to plan strategies which would encourage and support children who have difficulty managing their own behaviour. The staff have attended behaviour management courses and have adopted reward systems for children who show positive behaviour. However, there is still some very disruptive behaviour within the group. This prevents children from accessing fully the learning opportunities within the sessions. Strategies, such as the staff's mixed responses of a slow and gentle approach and alternating with a loud vocal shouting, need reviewing.

Staff were asked after the last inspection to use the early stages of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs when supporting children for whom staff have concern. Staff are still not showing prompt awareness of early possible signs of special educational needs. Hence, some children, who may benefit from external professional assessment, are not being identified nor are records kept of their unusual approach to the pre-school programme.

Children now have good opportunities to explore music within the sessions. However, older and more able children are still not being given enough opportunities to further develop their interest and skills in recognising familiar words.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children enjoy their learning and, on some occasions, participate enthusiastically and positively in activities. They are developing their personal independence. They select their own resources. Some children have difficulty managing their behaviour and working successfully in a group. This disruptive behaviour causes them to lose concentration and concern for others. They fail to consider the consequences of their actions. Children's awareness of some different cultures is developing.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are gaining in confidence and are starting to use language to explain what they are doing. Stories are enjoyed and books are handled confidently. Children can recall the key points of a story, especially when it is used as part of an activity. Their listening skills are limited when they behave inappropriately. Children are developing their interest in mark making. They read their own names but more able children do not have opportunities to extend their recognition of familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding through taking part in well-planned practical activities. Counting skills and recognising numbers are developing. Children explore patterns and take part in activities that promote their understanding of position, size and measure. Children have little experience of the early stages of calculating, such as comparing groups of objects or solving number problems..

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have taken part in observational activities, such as an insect hunt. Interesting topic work provides children with designing and making experiences. For instance, children have designed and made crowns and other treasure items as part of a 'Pirate' theme. They have explored time in relation to their own lives. They have learnt about their community. Children have few opportunities to use everyday technology and information and communication technology to support their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Some children take part in regular activities to promote controlled and co-ordinated movement, developing climbing and balancing skills. The behaviour of some children prevents the participation of others in the activities offered. The program lacks a well-planned range of activities in which all children participate. Small equipment and tools are used to further promote their controlled actions. Children are learning to recognise the importance of hygiene practices and eating healthy food.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children using colour imaginatively in their work. They can freely express their ideas and feelings through painting. They experiment mixing colours. Children handle different textured materials but are sometimes restricted as to the type of textured materials they are allowed to use. Children explore musical sounds and enjoy singing tunefully. They use their imagination in their role-play and when playing with small world characters. Stories further their imaginative experience.

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's 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

- implement policies and training strategies for managing children's behaviour so children can appropriately and fully participate in activities to extend their learning
- develop the observation of children to ensure that planning meets the learning needs of all children, including those with a special educational need
- monitor children's participation in activities to ensure that individual children are getting a balanced range of learning experiences.

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.