



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 257941

DfES Number: 500633

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/11/2004
Inspector Name Tessa Margaret Betts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name The Owl Playschool
Setting Address Valley lane
Holt
Norfolk
NR25 6SF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Owl Playschool 1028916

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Owl Playschool
Address Valley Lane
Holt
Norfolk
NR25 6SF

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

The Owl Playschool registered in its current premises in January 2000. They operate from a purpose built building in the grounds of Holt Primary School. Accommodation comprises of a main playroom, kitchen, lobby and toilet facilities with an enclosed outdoor play area and balcony. A maximum of 24 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. The playschool is open from 9.15-12.00 Monday to Friday during school term time only.

There are currently 18 children on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community. The playschool currently supports one child with English as an additional language, and there are no children with special educational needs at present attending.

The playschool employs three staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

The Owl Playschool provides good quality care for children.

An attractive and welcoming environment for children and their parents is created in this purpose built building with excellent resources and a well planned layout of toys and equipment, which are all accessible to the children. Eye catching wall displays of posters and pictures enhance this child centred environment. Staff are qualified and experienced in early years, which contributes to children feeling secure and settled.

High staff to child ratios, clearly identified roles within the setting, ensures that a high regard is given to children's safety, both inside and when using the outdoor play area. Good hygiene practices are built into the daily routine and children are learning by example. Healthy snacks are enjoyed daily and drinking water is available throughout the session. Staff have extended their knowledge of child protection through training and are clear in their responsibilities.

Children are happy, stimulated and well occupied by the balance of child initiated and adult led activities available throughout the session. Staff interact warmly with the children, have high expectations of children's behaviour and generally children are well behaved. Inappropriate behaviour is effectively challenged and managed.

Information is shared with parents on a daily basis at the beginning and end of the session, through the notice boards displayed in the entrance hall and regular newsletters. The operational plan is displayed and available for parents, but information is not up-to-date and doesn't include what procedures are ultimately followed if a child is not collected, current information on sources of support for parents with children who have special needs or full contact details of the regulator if parents wish to make a complaint. Documentation is stored confidentially but lacks organisation.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the playschool was asked to improve several aspects of documentation, staff roles within the setting and written policies to meet the National Standards.

All checks on staff have been completed and the new chairperson is currently having checks processed. Staff recruitment and induction, a risk assessment of the premises and a written record of visitors on the premises are all in place.

The playschool has introduced a key worker system and identified a member of staff responsible for child protection and behaviour management, who has attended relevant training. Information on children's registration forms now ensures appropriate care is given to each individual child.

What is being done well?

- A wide range of stimulating activities is provided by the group, which enhance children's play and learning experiences. Good use is made of items brought in from home, to link topics and support the activity.
- Children are confident and at ease with the staff, who show a genuine interest in their news and ideas. Staff are attentive to the children's needs, support their play well and provide positive interaction.
- The setting is organised effectively to encourage the children's independence. The children are able to self select activities, access toilets and assist at snack time, through pouring their own drinks.
- Sound procedures are in place to ensure the safety of children at all times. Staff are suitably deployed to monitor all areas upon children's arrival and departure; the premises are secure and an accurate record of all visitors is maintained.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There have been no complaints.

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
14	Improve the accuracy of information within the operational plan to clarify the procedure followed if a child is not collected, sources of support and advice for parents with children who have special needs and full contact details of Ofsted as the regulator. Ensure all documentation is assessable and shared with parents.

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 The Owl Playschool is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development are particularly well fostered and as a result they make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have devised a system of planning that includes both continuous and focussed activities, however the continuous provision does not always show clear links between activities and the areas of learning they support. Assessment is used effectively from focussed activities to identify the next step of learning for individuals and this is then built into future planning. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum is developing well through the positive involvement of the link teacher and available training, however staff provide limited opportunities to promote children's appreciation of books, extend their physical development and explore creative materials.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff work well together as a team under the clear leadership of the supervisor. They ensure time is regularly given to discuss future planning and address issues as they arise. An appraisal system is in place to support staff, although it is not currently used effectively to build on staff's professional development. There is a clear commitment from the new committee to improve the current system.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents express confidence in the staff. They have access to a range of useful information giving details of the six areas of learning and short term planning. They are encouraged to share in their child's learning by providing items to support topic work and contribute to children's learning stories, which are accessible in individual trays.

What is being done well?

- Children feel valued and gain a sense of belonging as they develop confidence. They know and understand the daily routine and form good relationships with each other and the staff. The emphasis on personal, social and emotional development helps children understand ideas of acceptable behaviour.
- Children have access to a wide range of stimulating play activities with the emphasis on child initiated play and learning. Staff support the children in their choice of activity and extend and develop their play through discussion and encouragement.
- Children are given regular opportunities to develop their key skills in

mathematics through daily activities. These skills are extended through games and puzzles allowing children to practise and build on their existing knowledge.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning links between activities and the areas of learning
- the opportunities to promote children's appreciation of books in a variety of situations, extend their physical play using all available space and explore a range of creative materials.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the five key issues at the last inspection.

Assessments are now used to build on what children are learning from focussed activities, enabling staff to identify the next step of learning for each child.

Adult-led focussed activities have now been introduced to stimulate and provide a range of learning experiences.

Staff have developed procedures to ensure they are aware of the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs, with a designated staff member identified who has attended relevant training.

Mathematical development is given a high priority and is regularly introduced through daily activities.

Good progress has been made in extending the planning to identify what children are expected to learn through focussed activities, however progress is still needed to identify links with the early learning goals for the continuous activities offered each session.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children come into the playschool with confidence and readily take part. They are interested in the opportunities presented to them and some able to persist with activities for extended periods of time. They are encouraged to self select from the low storage units and to tidy away to develop their independence. The children are well behaved and involve each other in their play. They treat each other and the adults around them with care and respect as they learn to form meaningful relationships.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Some children are able to sit and listen for sustained periods during group and individual times, joining in when asked. Children are confident mark makers, some writing recognisable letters and using easily accessible writing materials such as shopping lists and cheque books in role play situations. Children enjoy listening to stories at group time, however there are missed opportunities to use books in a range of different ways.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident in using numbers in everyday activities and many are able to count beyond ten. Children excitedly explore simple addition and subtraction at snack time to identify the correct quantity of plates needed on each table. Children are showing a good awareness of size and shape as they choose and identify shaped mats to sit on at circle time. Children are recognising written numbers and sequencing with confidence as they play group games such as "What's The Time Mr Wolf".

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is being promoted in the activities provided. Outside speakers such as the local vet, nurse and care assistant introduce children to a world outside playschool. Children are becoming skilled at using the computer and have access to a good range of push buttons toys to explore how things work. Children's awareness of other countries and cultures is promoted through celebrating a range of festivals and examining the globe with staff.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children negotiate their own space well and respect that of others around them. They confidently follow movements when taking part in action songs and group games. They show skill in hand and eye co-ordination when threading, mark making and using scissors. They climb, balance and show control of their speed when using the climbing frame, however there are limited opportunities to extend their physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's imagination is fostered well within the role play area, where children build on their learnt experiences. One child confidently sets up her ironing activity, sorting the baskets she needs to complete the task. Children join in action songs with enthusiasm and enjoy making large objects, such as a washing machine and robot as a group. Materials to explore colour are regularly enjoyed but there are insufficient opportunities to experiment with a range of malleable materials.

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 there are clear links between all activities offered throughout the session and the areas of learning
- provide regular opportunities to promote children's appreciation of books in a variety of situations, extend their physical play using all available space and explore a wider range of creative materials.

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.