



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 156376

DfES Number: 515478

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	02/03/2004
Inspector Name	Alison Weaver

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Nursery School
Setting Address	All Saints Church Hall Chapel Green Crowborough East Sussex TN6 2LB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Jacqueline Bannister
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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

The Nursery School has been run by the current owner since February 2001. It operates from a church hall in Crowborough, close to local amenities and shops. They have the use of a large hall that can be partitioned, occasional use of another larger hall, and an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 60 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 32 funded 3 year olds and 6 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children who have special needs and for whom English is an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00 on Mondays to Thursdays. On Fridays the nursery is open from 09.00 until 12.00.

Eleven staff work with the children. Five staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Three staff are about to start a course working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Nursery School offers provision which is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision with the exception of physical development where progress is generally good.

Staff develop positive relationships with the children but the overall quality of the teaching has significant weaknesses. They provide a balanced curriculum with a range of interesting activities. Some of the written plans lack sufficient detail. Overall the staff are aware of the learning intentions for the activities, however, some staff regularly miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Observations and assessments are carried out but they are not always used effectively to plan the next stage of children's learning. Children generally behave well but at times the poor organisation and lack of challenge results in them becoming inattentive.

Leadership and management of the setting is generally good. The owner is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and is taking steps to make improvements. She is attending management training to extend her own experience and knowledge. There is a lack of trained staff but this is being addressed. Further training is encouraged for all staff to keep up to date with current practices. There is no formal system in place to monitor staff development.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents and carers receive a variety of helpful written information about the setting and its procedures. There is limited basic information given about the Foundation Stage. Parents are welcome in the group and encouraged to share information on an informal basis. They receive some formal feedback about the children's progress towards the early learning goals. The opportunity for parents and carers to contribute to their child's learning is not fully extended.

What is being done well?

- Children are very confident and sociable. They settle quickly into the group, relating well to each other and to adults.
- The snack time is used really well to promote children's independence with children being encouraged to pour their own drinks.
- The open evenings for parents are used well to keep them informed about their child's progress and activities within the group.

What needs to be improved?

- planning in all areas of the curriculum to ensure that activities are well

organised, that all children are challenged appropriately, and to show how activities will cater for children working at different rates and levels

- planning for creative development, to provide regular and frequent opportunities for children to express themselves freely
- the observation and assessment process, to ensure that this is used to inform future planning
- parental involvement, so that they have more opportunities to contribute towards their child's learning and assessment
- opportunities for children to explore calculation
- the level of staff interaction at activities so that children receive appropriate help and support.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There has been a change of ownership of the group since the last inspection.

The group has made generally good progress since the last inspection. At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world. They were asked to increase opportunities for children to record observations of natural objects, select materials for themselves to build models, and to use technology to support their learning. The group is addressing two of the three areas by planning and providing more opportunities for children to explore objects and to build models. There are less planned opportunities for children to explore technology.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children build positive relationships with their peers and with adults. Children generally show good concentration skills and are able to work independently. Children are confident but there are missed opportunities to increase their independence. Overall their behaviour is appropriate but at times some of them become restless due to a lack of challenge and poor organisation.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are confident speakers and respond with enjoyment to songs and rhymes. They avidly listen to stories. Children's writing skills are developing but progress is limited. This is due to missed opportunities for them to practise mark making in everyday activities. Children's progress in reading skills is inhibited by poor labelling and ineffective activities. Their understanding of letter sounds is hampered by some poor teaching methods.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of number and are able to count successfully. They demonstrate an increasing knowledge of shape. Children's progress is limited at times by staff failing to develop and consolidate mathematical learning during everyday play activities. Children's understanding of simple calculation is restricted by the lack of opportunities provided for them by staff.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children talk confidently about past and present events in their own lives and others. Children have adequate opportunity to explore and investigate objects and materials. They skilfully construct a variety of models. Children's access to everyday technology is limited. They are gaining an increasing understanding of the wider world through a variety of planned activities. At times the lack of staff interaction at activities restricts children's progress.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and safely. They show good co-ordination and spatial awareness. Children use a limited range of tools successfully and show developing fine motor skills. At times staff do not allow children the freedom to practice using the tools for themselves. Children have regular access to a range of large and small play equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children use their imagination well in role play and free painting. They experience a range of materials but some of the activities are very adult directed. Consequently there is a lack of opportunity for children to express their own ideas and feelings in art and design. They enjoy participating in singing activities. There are planned opportunities for children to enjoy music and movement.	
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

- Extend plans in all areas of the curriculum to show how activities will cater for children working at different rates and levels.
- Improve the organisation of the sessions and grouping of children to ensure that all children are actively involved.
- Improve the level of staff interaction at activities in order to promote children's learning and development.
- Extend the opportunities for parents to contribute towards their children's learning and assessment.

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.