



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101756

DfES Number: 596885

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/02/2004
Inspector Name Carole Elizabeth Price

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Circus Day Nursery
Setting Address Haddo, Pittville Circus Road
 Cheltenham
 Gloucestershire
 GL52 2PZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Miss Susan Wilson

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

Circus Day Nursery was registered in 1997. It is situated in a house in Pittville Circus on the outskirts of Cheltenham Town. Children who attend from all areas of the town and wider area. The nursery has a driveway so that children may be delivered and collected away from the main road. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 18.00.

Care is organised in 12 rooms over 3 floors. Each floor is organised to provide care for a particular age group of children. There is a separate computer room on the top floor and an enclosed, walled garden to the rear of the house.

There are 34 staff members working directly with the children, 30 work full-time and 4 work part-time. Of these, 26 are qualified or working towards relevant qualifications. The nursery has developed its own training centre and offers a range of courses for staff with its own in-house, qualified assessors.

The nursery has 95 places for children aged 0 to 8 years of age. They currently have 180 children on roll. They receive nursery education funding for 31, 3-year-olds and 14, 4-year-olds. The nursery has no children with special educational needs at present. There are no children attending who speak English as an additional language. The nursery receives support from the Gloucestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is a member of the Gloucestershire Quality Assurance scheme.

How good is the Day Care?

Circus Day Nursery provides good quality care for children. There is a well-qualified and experienced staff team with a good induction programme for new staff. The nursery is well organised with good procedures in place to ensure there are always sufficient staff working directly with the children. Space is used well to provide areas for different aged children.

Good procedures are in place for ensuring the premises are safe, well maintained

and regularly checked, and for monitoring and recording when a child becomes ill. Staff are very active in promoting good health and hygiene within the nursery and follow hygiene procedures thoroughly. Fresh healthy and nutritious meals are cooked daily on the premises. Staff have a good awareness of how to deal with child protection issues and many have received appropriate training. The child collection policy is unclear and parents' written acknowledgement for medication administered is not always recorded.

There is a good range and balance of activities that are well planned and resourced for all children. Activities and displays sensitively introduce different festivals and cultures. Adults show great interest in what the children do as they play alongside and interact appropriately with the children. Time is given for children to explore and experiment as they play. A clear, positive, behaviour management policy is in place which is understood and consistently applied by staff.

Staff work hard as a team to ensure there are good links with parents and that communication is good. Parents are given good information about the nursery and their child's day. A warm and welcoming environment is provided. Staff are friendly and there are good displays of children's work.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions identified at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- The organisation of staff and space for children of different ages is effective.
- Arrangements and procedures for ensuring health and safety within the nursery are good. Staff are particularly active in promoting health, hygiene and healthy eating.
- There are interesting activities organised for all children, with good interaction from the staff.
- Communication with parents is effective and ensures they are given regular information about their child's day.
- There are clear and effectively implemented policies on child protection and behaviour management.

What needs to be improved?

- further clarification of the child collection policy.
- parental acknowledgement of all medication administered to children.

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
2	Clarify child collection policy making sure action to be taken is clearly documented.
7	Ensure parental acknowledgement of administration of medication is recorded for each entry.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children attending Circus Day Nursery are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good and staff support the children very well as they play and learn. They use observation effectively to inform their planning and to help children build on what they already know. Staff use questioning very well to extend children's thinking, problem solving and language skills. Topics are well planned and resourced and encompass all six areas of learning. Most systems to ensure all staff are aware of children's progress are good.

Children are motivated, enthusiastic and confident. They show independence as they choose activities, take care of personal needs and assist with daily routines. They are encouraged through easy access to resources to be freely creative. Staff allow time and space for children to develop their own ideas in role play, craft and art activities. Children have good opportunities and appropriate resources to practise emerging writing and mathematical skills as they play. They use computers confidently to support their learning. Children have many opportunities to learn about the world around them as they observe nature in the garden.

Leadership and management of the setting is very good. The strong management and staff team have well-defined roles and responsibilities and co-operate closely to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. There is a high level of commitment to ongoing staff training and maintenance of good practice.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with clear information about the Foundation Stage of learning and well informed regarding their child's progress. Parents share information with the nursery before their child begins. Formal systems for parents to contribute to on going assessments are not yet in place. However they continue to contribute at parents' meeting and regular information sessions with staff.

What is being done well?

- Staff teach the children effectively through a wide range of well-planned activities and very good use of questioning to extend and reinforce learning. Children are motivated and interested. They demonstrate high levels of concentration during 'together time' when they share news with the group. Children co-operate very well during play as they share resources and offer praise to other group members. They are very independent as they choose their activities, take care of their personal needs and assist in daily routines.
- Children use language very well in group and free-play activities to explain, organise and discuss. Writing skills are developing very nicely through opportunities to practise emerging skills during their play. They enjoy stories

by both staff and other children. Imagination is used well during role play in the 'imaginary room' as the children become 'builders', 'princesses' and 'doctors'.

- Children count confidently during group and individual activities. Staff effectively utilise opportunities within the daily routines and free play to encourage children to practise counting and simple calculation. Children demonstrate sound understanding of shape, size and position.
- Children use information technology skilfully and independently to support their learning. They have many opportunities to explore and investigate through well-planned topics such as 'Colours'. Free creativity is widely encouraged through provision of easily accessible art-and-craft resources and changing role-play scenarios.

What needs to be improved?

- assessments of children to ensure all staff are fully aware of children's next steps of learning
- interim formal opportunities for parental contribution to ongoing assessments.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection has been very good. No key weaknesses were noted in the educational programme during the last inspection. As an area for consideration they were asked to continue to support the high standard of the nursery's provision by developing the partnership with parents and carers so that all are given information about the educational provision in the six areas of learning.

The nursery now gives parents very good, clear information about the Foundation Stage including the six areas of learning and the stepping stones that support children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents attend information meetings, receive written details and have opportunities to read informative displays regarding their child's education.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested and motivated. They settle quickly to familiar daily routines. They are able to sit quietly and patiently during 'together time' and listen to the other children's contribution. Children are encouraged to make decisions and choices regarding their activities. They are independent as they manage their own needs, assist with daily routines and help others. They share resources willingly as they play and show persistence for their chosen tasks. Children behave well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Staff provide many opportunities for children to communicate and express themselves. Children in the nursery use language confidently as they discuss, describe and talk about what they are doing. Writing skills are developing with many opportunities to consolidate emerging skills as they play. Children in the nursery link initial letter sounds to their own and others names. Children enjoy books for both story and reference. Older children show interest in detail of dedications, title and author.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff utilise spontaneous opportunities in the daily routine effectively. The children count and calculate through play activities, snack time and 'together time'. Children join in enthusiastically with number rhymes and songs. They recognise shapes, position, size and quantity with confidence. Children have many opportunities to explore mathematics as they play. Staff question effectively during group and individual activities to extend learning and understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their senses to explore and investigate. The nursery garden is used daily to support observation skills linked to changing weather, seasons and passage of time. Easy access to bug-box magnifiers allows for close observation. Children are very confident users of the computer as they open, run and close appropriate programmes to support their learning. Children are confident, independent designers as they select and join easily accessible resources to make models and collages.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move carefully and competently around the setting. They negotiate the stairs with care. Daily access to a range of large and small equipment in the garden supports physical development and encourages children's understanding of their bodies. They identify changes to their skin and heartbeat after exercise. Children's control of tools and small equipment is developing well with easy access to resources that encourage small movements such as cutting, threading and pencil control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their imagination very well. Staff support learning with excellent questioning and resources to extend ideas during child-initiated role play and with finger puppets. Children alter their voice as they become different characters. They use their creativity well as they make collage pictures with their favourite colour and model with recycled materials. Children sing simple songs and rhymes from memory and are able to match appropriate actions to the words.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to the following:
- further extend assessments to ensure all staff are fully aware of children's next steps of learning.
- further develop systems for including parents in ongoing assessments.

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.