



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 304973

DfES Number: 516899

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/02/2005
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Beeches Pre-School
Setting Address Edge Village Hall
Edge Green, Malpas
Cheshire
SY14 8LG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name . Beeches Pre-School Committee

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

Beeches Pre-school opened in 1983. It serves the village of Malpas and the surrounding rural areas. The pre-school is run by a management committee consisting of parents and staff.

Accommodation is in a village hall, where children have access to a large playroom and the entrance area, which can be used for activities. Kitchen and toilet facilities are available. Outdoors, there is an enclosed space that has both hard and grassed surfaces. The setting adjoins a conservation area where children can observe rare flowers.

The pre-school is open each week day morning from 9.15 to 12.00 during term time. Beeches Pre-school is the only provision in the surrounding area and children attending travel from a variety of nearby localities. Staff have established links with local primary schools to enable children to have a smooth transition to school life.

The setting caters for children from two years six months to five years. There are 30 children on roll, including 24 funded children. The setting supports children with special educational needs.

Six staff work with the children in the setting. They all have relevant qualifications and, or experience. The leader of the setting has a Diploma in Pre-school Practice. One of the staff team is a qualified primary teacher and another has a National Vocational Qualification, level III in Childcare and Education. A further staff member has an Advanced Diploma in Special Educational Needs.

There are a variety of ways in which parents can become involved in the pre-school, if they wish. These include helping out in the group on a rota, and serving on the management committee.

The setting receives support from the local early years partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The education provided at Beeches Pre-school is of good quality where children make generally good progress overall towards the early learning goals. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and creative development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff know children well and are sensitive to their needs. Information from assessment is used in planning to build on what children know and can do. However, although assessments contain observations of children and samples of their work, records do not reflect all areas of learning. Staff are developing a new system of assessment to make it more manageable and are monitoring its effectiveness. Challenges provided are generally satisfactory but some aspects of physical development lack challenge for more able children and routines and activities do not effectively support children's understanding of addition and subtraction. Although the range of resources is good overall, children lack opportunities to use technological resources independently to support their learning.

The quality of leadership and management is generally good. Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team. A range of systems are used to help them monitor and evaluate what they do and the pre-school leader has devised a plan to identify areas for development. Staff act on advice from the local early years partnership and are committed to developing pre-school provision. Although clear aims for the whole group are not yet in place.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Staff provide a good range of information for parents and good relationships support children's learning well. Written records of children's progress are not shared regularly with parents, although this is planned. Parents' comments, although invited, are not used to contribute to these records to give a fuller picture of children's attainment.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and secure in the welcoming environment provided.
- There are good relationships between staff, children and parents and this supports learning well.
- Children can concentrate and persevere at tasks and they are well behaved.
- There are good opportunities for children to find out about where they live, with visits and visitors used effectively to promote learning.
- There is good support for children with special educational needs and staff work well in partnership with parents and other professionals.
- Staff give clear explanations and use questioning effectively to move children on in their thinking. They develop children's vocabulary well.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of practical activities and routines to develop children's awareness of addition and subtraction
- the opportunities provided for children to use technology to support their learning
- the emphasis given to children recognising the importance of staying healthy and being made aware of changes in their bodies following activities and changes in weather
- the labelling of resources to enable children to access them easily and independently
- the records of children's progress so that they cover all six areas of learning. The frequency with which these records are shared with parents and the inclusion of parents comments.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection. Staff were required to ensure that the daily plans describe what children are to learn and how they will be grouped. Plans were to indicate staff deployment and extension activities for more or less able children. The planning documentation had to reflect the stepping stones and the early learning goals in order to ensure that children are working towards the full range of early learning goals.

Staff have reviewed the planning of the educational programme and plans now reflect the stepping stones and the early learning goals. Plans detail extension activities that will accommodate the differing needs of the children in the group. How children will be grouped and staff deployment are known but they are not indicated in the planning of the programme. Staff are implementing a new system of planning and are monitoring its effectiveness. They are beginning to use information from assessments to inform planning, to build on what children know and can do.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children come into the setting confidently and settle quickly to activities. They listen quietly at story time and they persevere until they complete tasks. Children's personal independence is well promoted and they pour their own drinks and share snack items. They are beginning to understand that others have different needs and views. Children are well behaved and respond well to staff's requests. They are able to share and take turns.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident communicators. Their spoken language is developing well and they display a wide vocabulary as they ask questions and provide explanations as to why things happen. They enjoy listening to stories and they make up their own stories during role play. There are good opportunities through routines for children to recognise their names and they enjoy writing for a variety of reasons as they label their work and write messages.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently to ten and beyond and recognise numbers well. They have good opportunities to learn about weight and quantity as they measure the ingredients for making sweets. Children explore size and shape using games and jigsaws and there are good opportunities for them to sort and match objects. Routines and activities are not employed effectively to promote children's understanding of addition and subtraction, although number rhymes are sometimes used.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

There are good opportunities for children to find out about materials as they make ice cream and they appreciate change and growth through planting activities. There are many valuable opportunities for them to find out about where they live, with visits and visitors used effectively to promote learning. Children are encouraged to share their news and to make links between present and past experiences. They lack opportunities to use technological resources independently to support their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy imaginative movement and they have good opportunities to balance, gaining control and coordination. They display good spatial awareness as they use wheeled toys outdoors. Children control paintbrushes and glue spreaders well during creative work. A topic on 'Healthy Me' is planned but there is too little emphasis given to health and bodily awareness as an ongoing part of the educational programme. Opportunities to climb and travel over, under and through equipment lack challenge.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

There are valuable opportunities for children to explore paint, colour and texture. They have good opportunities to listen and respond to music and a specialist dance teacher visits the setting each week. Children enjoy singing and playing musical instruments. There is a wide range of sensory experiences to encourage children to express themselves creatively and to make connections between experiences. They enjoy tasting and smelling activities and they make 'cold' pictures and weather sounds.

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

- use practical activities and routines to develop children's awareness of simple addition and subtraction
- provide more opportunities for children to use technology independently to support their learning
- give more emphasis to children recognising the importance of staying healthy and make them aware of changes in their bodies when they have been active or as a result of the temperature
- ensure that records of children's progress cover all six areas of learning. Share records more frequently with parents and include their comments in these records to give a fuller picture of children's attainment.

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.