



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220151

DfES Number: 512405

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	21/04/2004
Inspector Name	Christina Downey

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Abbey Centre Pre-School
Setting Address	Overslade Close East Hunsbury Northampton Northamptonshire NN4 0RZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Abbey Centre Pre School 1035356
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Abbey Centre Pre School
Address	Overslade Close East Hunsbury Northampton Northamptonshire NN4 0RZ

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

Abbey Centre Pre-school was established in 1987. It operates from a community centre in the Hunsbury district on the outskirts of Northampton. The accommodation consists of a large, well-lit central room and a secure outdoor space with a safety-surfaced area. There is separate access to the kitchen and toilets. The pre-school is a registered charity, a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, and is run by a parents' committee. There are six members of staff, who form a long established and experienced team. They all hold appropriate childcare qualifications and work closely with Northamptonshire Early Years Childcare and Development Partnership Advisory Team.

The Pre-school is open on Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 12:00 and Monday to Wednesday from 12:30 to 15:00 during term-time. Children can attend from the age of two years and nine months, for up to five sessions a week. They mainly come from the Hunsbury district but some travel in from surrounding areas of Northampton and nearby villages. They are representative of a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds. There are currently 63 children on roll. Of these, 37 three-year-olds and 10 four-year-olds are in receipt of funding. The pre-school caters for children who have special needs.

How good is the Day Care?

The Abbey Centre Pre-School provides good quality care for children.

The well-established staff team have developed effective working relationships. They are well organised and work closely as a team. The high ratios and relaxed atmosphere enables the children to feel safe and secure. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, a good level of commitment to further training, and they are a confident and experienced staff team. Space and activities are organised effectively to promote children's development. The environment is warm and welcoming, with children's work and posters displayed attractively on the walls. A very good variety of toys and resources is used effectively

to support learning and development. Documentation is well organised and underpins the good practice.

Procedures are in place throughout to ensure children's safety and well-being. Staff are involved daily in risk assessments to make the premises safe, and these procedures are regularly reviewed. Supervision is good, although knowledge of child protection requires improvement. All medication records and permissions are in place and children are developing a good understanding of the need for hygiene routines. Staff encourage children's independence during snack time and there is constant access to fresh drinking water.

Children are able to extend their play and develop their confidence by moving freely from the varied activity tables set out for them. Staff give excellent attention to meeting children's individual needs, and differences are acknowledged and valued. Staff act as good role models and encourage children in their good behaviour.

The strong staff team form good relationships with children and parents. Good verbal communication, comprehensive information on the notice boards, and effective record keeping ensures that parents are kept informed of the progress and development their child is making. Parent questionnaires are also very positive.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff organise and supervise the available space well, allowing children to play freely and choose their own activities and resources. Independence is valued and encouraged.
- All children are successfully included; the welfare and development of the child is a high priority. Staff work sensitively and effectively when liaising with home and other parties with regard to special needs, this enables them to meet children's individual needs very well.
- Staff work together to ensure consistency in the approach to managing children's behaviour. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged and children are treated with respect; this helps develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Documentation is very good. Staff maintain good quality records, and policies and procedures are clear and up-to-date. The operational plan in particular works well in practice, and good use is made of staff, space and other resources.

What needs to be improved?

- existing good practice by continuing to improve training particularly in the area of child protection.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

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
13	Build on existing good practice by continuing to improve training, particularly in the area of child protection.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Abbey Centre Pre-school provides a very welcoming and stimulating learning environment. The children enjoy their time in the group and their natural enthusiasm for learning is fostered very well. They are making very good progress towards all the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the stepping stones and high expectations for learning and behaviour. Planning is most successful in maintaining the provision of a very good range of practical activities each day, and the weekly meetings ensure all staff know what the children are expected to learn. The careful system of observation and assessment enables staff to successfully pitch the levels of challenge according to individual children's capabilities. Children with special needs are included very well. Staff interact with the children in a positive and supportive manner; they explain things well and use questions judiciously to encourage children to think.

Leadership and management is very good. The staff work closely as a team and have a high level of commitment to improvement. They regularly participate in training events, sharing ideas and evaluating and modifying practice accordingly. Delegation is very successful in developing skills and confidence of the whole team. The committee is very supportive of the group's work.

The Partnership with parents and carers is very good. They are welcomed into the group and provided with much good quality information about the activities their children have taken part in. Effective working relationships are established between key workers and parents and a good amount of written and verbal information is exchanged about children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Very effective organisation of sessions ensures children's interest is maintained throughout. Children have very good opportunities to choose their own resources and activities. They are able to develop their own ideas, take control of their learning and build positively on previous experiences. They learn to make decisions, take responsibility and to negotiate and co-operate with one another; consequently behaviour is excellent.
- Children have free access to well-planned outdoor play. Together with the very good range of activities and resources made available inside this produces a rich and stimulating learning environment in which individual needs are met very well.
- Competent, enthusiastic leadership and a collaborative management style have produced an effective and dedicated team with a well-defined set of

common principles based around learning through play. Time and resources are used consistently well and there is a collective sense of responsibility for continuing to raise standards. Team members are successfully encouraged to develop their skills and abilities, and are all involved equally in planning and assessment.

What needs to be improved?

- Opportunities for children to develop their own methods of representing numbers before they are introduced to more conventional, abstract systems.
- Scope for older or more physically able children to challenge themselves and develop new skills on large apparatus.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The children now have a wide range of opportunities to use writing for different purposes. They develop skills appropriate to their stage of development, gain a sound awareness of the distinction between writing and drawing and acquire a positive attitude of themselves as writers. The outdoor area has been redeveloped and is now used most effectively to provide a wide range of activities on a daily basis. Many more resources and activities have been provided for the exploration of sound. Children regularly use an interesting range of musical instruments and play a variety of listening games.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are confident and independent learners. They approach new activities with interest and persist for extended periods, showing some high levels of involvement. A strong sense of pride in their achievement develops as they display completed work for parents at the end of each session. Relationships are very positive and children work together in a friendly and cooperative way. Their behaviour is excellent and they learn to take responsibility and to negotiate with one another.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use language successfully to extend imaginative play, recall past experiences and explain ideas. They learn new words as they look at interesting displays and listen very well to stories in small and large groups. They use the range of good quality books with interest and make their own to record special events. Children use varied writing materials purposefully during role play and other activities, developing skills at their own pace and learning letter sounds linked to their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children take part in a wide range of practical activities and successfully develop their understanding of mathematical concepts and simple calculation. They describe and compare length, weight, position, shape and size. They happily count and learn number names but have too little scope to consolidate their understanding of how numbers are recorded by devising their own systems of representation. Children make predictions about capacity, learn number rhymes and enjoy construction activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore the properties of many interesting materials and objects. They successfully experiment with melting, floating and colour mixing, and operate equipment such as remote control cars. They make models to their own design with a varied selection of materials and tools. Children develop a strong sense of being part of a local community and regularly visit the nearby shops and library. They talk with interest about past events and take part in a good range of cultural celebrations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have free access to the outdoor play area and are able to be active for the whole session if they choose. They develop and consolidate skills using varied equipment such as tyres, balls, ribbons and large boxes, although older children have more limited scope to challenge themselves on large apparatus. They move with confidence and imagination, dancing to music and changing speed and direction. Regular use of different tools and small resources develops their manipulative skills well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use their imaginations very well during their play, and successfully use small world resources to develop their story telling skills. They take part in high quality role-play in the very well resourced scenarios such as the 'nursery'. They explore an interesting range of media and materials, and combine them in different ways in their work. Good organisation of resources enables them to express their own ideas creatively. They listen and respond to music and explore a variety of sounds.

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 points:
- Provide more opportunities for children to develop their own methods of representing numbers.
- Increase the scope for older or more physically able children to develop new skills on large apparatus.

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.