



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 103846

DfES Number: 516445

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 12/02/2004
Inspector Name Ann Revell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Lukes Pre-School Learning Alliance
Setting Address City Way
Rochester
Kent
ME1 2BQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Lukes Pre-school Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Lukes Pre-school Committee
Address 10 Nickleby Close
Rochester
Kent
ME1 2LE

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

St Luke's Pre-school Learning Alliance Pre-school has been established for over 40 years. It operates from the Community Hall attached to St Luke's Church, Rochester. The pre-school serves the local area. It is managed by a committee of parents and has charitable status.

There are currently 51 children from two and a half to five years on the roll. This includes 23 funded three year olds and 9 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. No children have special needs but seven funded children have English as an additional

language.

The group opens on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and Monday and Tuesday afternoons during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15 until 11.45 and from 12.30 to 15.00.

Three full time and four part time staff work with the children. The staff are very established and all have an early years qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It also receives support from a teacher from 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 provision for nursery education at St. Lukes Pre-School Learning Alliance is generally good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world and generally good progress in the other areas except creative development where there are significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff's sound knowledge of the curriculum and how children learn enables them to plan interesting, practical activities that encourage children to be effectively engaged although there are aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematics where the older children's learning is not being fully extended. Very good support is given to children with English as an additional language and to those with special educational needs. Relationships are warm, the calm management enables children to behave very well. Staff actively encourage children to make choices and generally to initiate their own learning, although in art activities, resources are limited and children are too directed. Assessment is thorough and is generally used well to inform the planning, and for reporting to parents.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is generally good. The supervisor effectively facilitates the team spirit and ensures the staff are clear about their roles. All staff contribute to planning, and their ideas are valued. There is an induction programme for new staff. A system of appraisal is in place and appropriate courses are found when required.

Partnership with parents is very good. They are warmly welcomed into the setting to give and receive information about their child's progress. They regularly help in sessions and support pre-school activities. They receive good information about the curriculum and the pre-school work through the notice board, the parent's information book and newsletters

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. They are confident, interested and cooperate very well in groups. Their behaviour is very good.
- Staff work closely as a team. They act as positive role models for the children and create a secure, friendly environment where children can flourish.
- Children are supported effectively in learning about each other's cultures and beliefs.
- Parents are welcomed into the sessions and are encouraged to share and receive information about their children's learning.

- Children are enthusiastic writers. They are developing good handwriting skills.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of groups for stories and discussion to enable the older children to contribute their thoughts and ideas.
- the planning for communication, language and literacy to include the systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make.
- the provision of resources for art activities so that children can initiate their own learning and use them to express their own ideas.
- the planning of daily routines in order to provide children with opportunities to compare numbers and to solve simple problems.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection, improvement has been generally good. Staff have developed a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and now use this to plan a generally effective and interesting programme of activities that further children's learning. The effective use of resources and well planned programmes now ensure that children's progress in physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Assessment is now recorded in each area of learning. This information is now used to inform the planning and for reporting progress to parents. Children are now enabled to initiate their own learning in most areas of the curriculum. They enjoy selecting their own writing resources and are developing good skills.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and purposeful in their approach to activities. Their learning is effectively facilitated by the warm, friendly atmosphere that ensures they feel very secure. Children share and take turns and successfully organise their own games. They are aware of the needs and feelings of others and are developing a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs. Children's self esteem is high and their behaviour is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

All the children have very good listening skills in large groups. In role play, they listen to each other and take turns in conversations. Children are confident speakers but older children have only limited opportunities to express their own ideas. Children love stories and often read favourite books independently. They benefit from rhyming games but are not systematically taught the sounds that letters make. Children enjoy writing letters and cards and posting them in the post box.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Many children are becoming confident when counting objects to ten and can arrange numeral cards in order. They are learning the early concepts of addition and subtraction through counting songs and games but the older children are not encouraged, in the course of daily routines, to compare numbers or to solve simple problems. Children confidently find their table when a shape name is called and use appropriate language to describe height and size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's interest in nature and in their locality is stimulated by visits to the shops, the library and the park. They look at the street names and talk about their route. They note how quickly the grass seed grows and observe the changes to spaghetti when it is cooked. Children are developing an understanding of technology as they carefully control the computer mouse and photocopy their drawings. They benefit from learning from parents about other cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy a variety of daily indoor activities that effectively ensure that they are developing good coordination and control. They confidently crawl through the tunnel and balance on the boards. Good encouragement enables them to experiment with a variety of movements. They stop and start with the music and have a good awareness of space. Children cut with the scissors, pick up strands of spaghetti and squeeze icing on to their biscuits, all with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children join in enthusiastically when singing a range of songs and regularly explore instruments. Children draw freely but do not have a sufficient range of art materials to choose from for them to explore and experiment, and they have only limited opportunities to express their own ideas. Children benefit from a varied and interesting range of role play activities that are sensitively supported by staff. They bath the dolls and decide how many covers they will need on the bed.

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

- provide children with a wide variety of art materials in order to encourage them to initiate their own learning and express their own ideas.
- ensure that the older children have opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas at story and discussion times.
- use daily routines to provide opportunities for children to compare numbers and to solve simple problems.
- give more priority in the programme to the systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make.

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.