



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 257938

DfES Number: 500047

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/01/2005
Inspector Name Margaret Elizabeth Roberts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Little Normans
Setting Address Northwold Pre-School
Fendick Field, School Road
Thetford
Norfolk
IP26 5NB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Little Normans 1037605

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Little Normans
Address Fendricks Field
School Lane, Northwold
Thetford
Norfolk
IP26 5NB

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

Little Normans Pre-School opened in 1976 in the village hall in Northwold. In 1997 it was re-registered in its own premises. It operates from two rooms in a mobile building and serves the local area and outlying district.

There are currently 42 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. This includes 21 funded 3-year-olds and 8 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 09:00 until 12:00 on Monday and Friday.

Five part-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

The Little Normans Pre-school provides good quality care for children.

There are processes in place to ensure that persons working with children are suitable to do so. Staff who are experienced and qualified, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The premises are warm and welcoming to children and have a range of activities to promote children's development. Space is not always used to advantage and some areas are overcrowded, leaving no open space for floor activities. Appropriate equipment provides children with a stimulating environment, however some of the equipment is well used and beginning to look dirty. Documentation in place supports the successful management of the group.

The premises are safe and secure. Risk assessments are undertaken to ensure that risks to children are minimal. Nutritious snacks are served and staff have a good understanding of children's dietary needs to promote their growth and development. Good hygiene practices are in place. Children are treated with equal concern and individual needs are met through working closely with parents. Children's welfare and safety is supported by the group's policies and procedures that are followed if abuse or neglect is suspected.

Staff support children in their play and learning. Individual needs are met through practical activities and play situations that help to promote children's development in all areas. There are opportunities for the children to learn about our diverse culture through play and the resources available. The group have policies and procedures in place that ensure all children can participate at a level appropriate to their needs. Staff have a consistent approach when dealing with behaviour management and therefore children know what is expected of them.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff welcome them into the group and the use of diaries and the 'travelling hedgehog' gives parents the chance to contribute towards their children's care.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to establish a key worker system and designate a member of staff who would be responsible for behaviour management.

Key worker groups have now been established and enable staff to co-ordinate information about the children's individual needs and their progress. This is then shared with parents and other practitioners to maintain consistency and provide continuity of care.

One of the supervisors has been designated as the person responsible for behaviour management and ensures that all staff consistently apply positive techniques when managing children's behaviour.

What is being done well?

- Staff support children well in their play and learning, which is promoted through practical activities.
- Links between the pre-school and home are good. The use of home diaries and a 'travelling hedgehog', where parents can comment, are valued by staff and helps to support them in the care and education of individual children.
- Good emphasis is put on equality of opportunity and children learn about our diverse culture, through planned topics and resources.
- Well organised documentation and the dedication of the administrative staff ensures the successful management of the group.

What needs to be improved?

- the presentation, accessibility and cleanliness of equipment.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
4	Consider the presentation of equipment and the overall layout of the room to allow for floor activities.
5	Ensure that toys and equipment are clean, well maintained and easily accessible.

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 Little Normans Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Planning is shared by all staff and covers the six areas of learning. Staff have recently begun to use the Foundation Stage 'learning story' to record children's progress, but do not use it to plan the next steps in children's learning. There are positive relationships between staff and children, who relate well to adults and respond positively. Staff make good use of spontaneous moments to extend children's learning, for example looking at changes in weather, such as the wind and snow. Small world play is not always used to advantage due to its presentation. Staff make good use of number in everyday situations but do not always maximise the opportunity to do simple calculation, due to their questioning techniques. Staff make learning fun by using props, such as puppets and items that belonged to them when they were young.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is very good. Child care and administration staff work well together as a team. Regular staff meetings are held and appraisals given. The group monitor and evaluate the setting by attending committee meetings, local cluster meetings and acting on advice given by external advisers. The group is committed to improving the care and education of all children, by supporting staff and accessing further training.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with good information about the setting. Home links have been developed through the sharing of information, home visits if required, and diaries where parents are encouraged to add comments.

What is being done well?

- Staff use spontaneous moments to enhance learning, using the natural environment, such as changes in the weather to create new experiences for children.
- Staff enjoy helping children to make progress, by making learning fun and using props effectively to make activities more interesting.
- Relationships between all staff, children and their parents are robust, helping children to develop their confidence and supporting all aspects of learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of small world play and calculation in maths
- the recording of children's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group have made very good progress since the last inspection when they were asked to provide planned opportunities for children to recognise and re-create mathematical patterns.

New resources have been purchased and opportunities are given to children on a regular basis to create patterns. These opportunities are written into the planned activities.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and learning to be independent. They sustain interest in self-chosen activities, enjoy what they are doing and persevere to complete a task. They separate from parents happily and relate well to staff. They play well together, take turns and share. There are some obvious friendships. Children are well behaved, learning right from wrong, listen to staff and are able to apologise to others. They make connections about life experiences when looking at photographs.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children communicate well with staff and visitors, respond to simple instructions and ask questions. They have the opportunity to sing rhymes and are beginning to link sounds to letters. Due to the presentation of small role-play, children's language for thinking is not promoted. They are able to listen with interest to stories, often joining in. Children are able to recognise written letters and use mark-making materials with confidence often putting meaning to marks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use number in everyday situations and are able to count up to eight and beyond. They play games with dice and are able to recognise written numbers. Although children use simple calculation in number rhymes, such as how many buns in the baker's shop, opportunities for problem-solving are limited. Children show interest in shape when constructing, which they persist at for some time, and board games, such as building a house by choosing the correct shape to fit windows and doors.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore their surroundings with pleasure, they ask questions about how things work and use tools for a purpose. They have free access to the computer and use the mouse adeptly, completing simple programmes without support. They enjoy talking about past events and have a sense of time and place through reflection. Planned activities and resources give frequent sessions to finding out about the world in which they live and about our diverse culture.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently within the space available, are able to negotiate pathways and move in all directions. They have many opportunities for outside play in all types of weather, where they adapt their routine with regard to this, particularly enjoying flying streamers in the wind. With adult support children are able to meet their health and bodily needs with regard to eating and hygiene routines. They have increasing control in their fine motor skills when using one-handed tools.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are very artistic; displays presented throughout the room and their sustainability at this activity, show their enjoyment of art and craft. Children join in with music sessions and sing simple songs from memory. However, their imaginative skills are not fully promoted due to the presentation of equipment. Areas are cluttered and children have no clear floor space to use the small world play equipment. They do use their imaginative skills in art and craft.

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

- Consider the use of small world play and simple calculation in maths, to increase children's language and thinking skills.
- Improve the use of assessments to include the next steps for children's learning.
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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.