



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402144

DfES Number: 519819

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	04/02/2004
Inspector Name	Janette Elaina Langford

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Oakwood Pre-school
Setting Address	St Marys Church Hall The Triangle High Road, Langdon Hills Basildon Essex SS16 6HG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Christine Deer
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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

Oakwood Pre-school opened in 1996. It operates from one main room in a church hall in Langdon Hills in Basildon. The Oakwood Pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 57 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 18 funded 3 year olds and 19 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:00 and 12:30 until 15:00.

Twelve 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 the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Oakwood Pre-school provides good care for children.

The supervisors and staff are well qualified and committed to regular training and updating their skills. The sessions are organised to meet the needs of the children attending and staff continually assess their practice and make any necessary improvements. The premises are warm and welcoming, clean and well maintained. There is a good range of suitable equipment available. Records, policies and procedures are available to parents and most are consistent with the National Standards.

Staff are vigilant and safety checks are carried out to ensure areas are safe for children. There are policies in place to encourage children to be healthy and staff act in their best interest if they are ill. Children bring their own snacks to the session and there is a policy that the food supplied must be healthy. There is a positive approach

to equal opportunities and children are made aware of our similarities and differences through interesting and varied activities. The child protection policy is understood by the staff and they are aware of their responsibilities.

Activities provided are stimulating and fun for children with regular singing and movement activities interwoven into the session. Children are cared for as individuals and the staff have a 'can do' approach to caring for children with special needs. Staff are calm and consistent when dealing with challenging behaviour.

A notice board provides parents with information about the setting and a prospectus containing all the necessary policies and procedures is available. Parents are encouraged to leave their children once they have settled into the session and parents talk to staff regularly about their child.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the registered person was asked to ensure that children do not have access to the kitchen, to obtain written consent from parents for emergency medical advice or treatment, to develop an operational plan and to contact Environmental Health. A gate now prevents children gaining access to the kitchen. Parents have provided written authorisation for staff to seek emergency treatment for their child. The group have developed their operational plan and sought advice from Environmental Health regarding their food preparation areas.

What is being done well?

- The mid term plans take into account many forthcoming festivals and celebrations including some lesser known ones such as 'Japanese Children's Day'. Staff also increase the children's understanding of people in our own communities such as Travellers.
- Children with special needs are actively welcomed into the group and the S.E.N.CO. and staff liaise regularly with other professionals involved and the parents. Individual education plans are written to ensure that children are working towards realistic goals. The staff know the children very well and encourage them to take part in the activities.
- Records are well kept and clearly written. They are kept up to date and are easily accessible. Staff are aware of confidentiality and working towards ensuring all their procedures are consistent with the National Standards.

What needs to be improved?

- the information contained in the child protection policy, so that it details what action is to be taken if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

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>
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<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	Ensure that the child protection policy details the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

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

Teaching is generally good. Staff know the children's abilities very well and direct their methods of teaching at the individual although this is not detailed in the planning. Staff question children carefully and listen to them, giving them praise and encouragement. Plans show what the learning intention is and covers all the six areas of learning. Although there are some evaluations made, these are very brief. Staff write observations of children and complete basic assessment records which can be used for further planning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The registered person visits once a week and manages staffing issues and some paperwork. She communicates regularly by phone and delegates the day-to-day running of the group to the supervisors who attend various sessions. There is a commitment to training to ensure that the latest thinking in childcare is being followed and information and support is sought from the EYDCP and the PSLA. Between them the management team and staff assess the group's strengths and weaknesses and make changes to improve the care and education for all children.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with appropriate information about the curriculum and activities. They can ask to see the child's assessment records or to discuss the child's progress. Parents are given the assessment records when their child leaves the provision. Parents complete an information form about their child's particular likes and dislikes to help in planning and understanding of the child. Sometimes parents are asked to contribute towards the activities by bringing in topical articles.

What is being done well?

- There are some close friendships developing between children. They seek out each other to work at the same activities such as looking at books, chatting about things that interest them and developing imaginative games.
- Children are able to develop good all round physical skills through daily planned and spontaneous activities. Throughout the session there are several times when they are encouraged to join in with action songs and rhymes and music and movement to release some energy and focus their minds on managing their bodies to create intended movements.
- Activities to reinforce counting and simple calculation are frequent throughout each session with staff using books, rhymes and opportunities arising to

encourage children to understand how useful numbers can be.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of groups - particularly during circle time and stories so that more able children are not distracted from their learning
- the written plans, to include harder and easier options for children and for more detail in the evaluations of activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection. Staff now monitor daily and weekly plans to ensure that they cover all aspects of each area of learning and relate to the early learning goals. They have made some improvements to the teaching of writing to give children more practical activities that increase their skills in this area.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing their confidence and enjoy the activities and experience of being in the setting. They know the routine and take some initiatives for themselves. Some children have linked up with friends, to share their time with and demonstrate a sense of trust towards them. Most children are aware of the boundaries for behaviour and stay within them, looking for reinforcement from staff.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk confidently to staff and others. Sometimes they initiate conversations or narrate stories during their play. Children enjoy repeating refrains of rhymes after staff and show interest in stories and books. However, sometimes more able children are distracted by others in a larger group. Children have opportunities to practise pre-writing skills, sometimes linked into play activities. Some children attempt to write their names on their work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show interest in numbers as labels and for counting and particularly enjoy number songs, rhymes and stories. Some number language is used during play and children talk about large numbers. Children are beginning to understand simple calculation reinforced by practical activities. There is equipment provided to encourage children to learn about space, shape and measure through 'hands on' activities although there is slightly less emphasis on this part of mathematical development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy learning about the world they live in. They show interest in both natural and manmade objects and talk about what is seen and what is happening. There are frequent opportunities for children to explore construction materials to learn about building and balancing. Children show interest in ICT and are learning to operate simple programmes on the computer. There are planned opportunities for children to gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have regular opportunities throughout the session to move around through action songs and rhymes. They have access to large apparatus on which to climb and can mount steps with alternate feet. Children are learning healthy practices such as eating healthy snacks and letting their food 'go down' before running around. There are frequent opportunities through play for children to practise their finer movement skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have daily opportunities to explore media and materials through different planned activities such as collage, painting and play dough. They use their skills to produce work, which is displayed on walls or taken home. Children enjoy musical activities - singing, listening to music and dancing in music and movement. They have props to support their imagination and encourage their role-play.	
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

- improve the organisation of groups - particularly during circle time and stories so that more able children are not distracted from their learning
- include details of harder and easier options for children in the planning and increase the information in the activity evaluations.

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.