



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 103842

DfES Number: 522671

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 22/11/2004
Inspector Name Margaret, Ann Sandfield

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name St Francis Pre-School
Setting Address The Church Hall
Galahad Avenue
Rochester,
Kent
ME2 2YS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Francis Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Francis Pre-School
Address The Church Hall
22 Stour Close
Strood, Rochester
Kent
ME2 3JX

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

St Francis Pre-school is a committee run group. It opened in approximately 1968 and currently operates from one main room. It is situated in a residential area in the town of Strood.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:00 apart from Wednesday, when it opens from 09:00 to 11:30, school term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 61 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 33 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a mainly local catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special education needs.

The nursery employs 10 staff. Six of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

St Francis Pre-school provides a satisfactory standard of care. Children are independent, happy and relate to staff and each other.

Staff plan and provide the necessary facilities and a range of activities and play opportunities, which develop children's emotional, social, physical and intellectual capabilities. The premises are safe, secure and are welcoming to children. They have access to a range of toys, resources and equipment that are of a suitable design and condition and conform to safety standards.

Staff take positive steps to ensure children's safety within the setting and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. However not all appropriate procedures are followed to prevent the spread of infection.

Parents demonstrate they are happy with the standard of care their children are

receiving. They are given clear information about the provision including policies and procedures and information about how staff plan and provide care and educational experiences for their children. Parents and staff share relevant information to enable children to have their needs met in accordance with parents wishes.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group have no evidence of ever receiving a copy of their last report, therefore this section is not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Suitable arrangements are in place to protect children from persons not vetted. Staff are deployed effectively and are vigilant about children's safety at all times. There are effective systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Fire safety notices are clearly displayed.
- The premises are safe, secure and warm.
- Children choose confidently from the range of toys and resources, moving freely from one activity to another. Staff provide furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and safe environment for children, which promotes their learning in all areas.
- There are procedures in place in the event a child is sick or when there is an accident.

What needs to be improved?

- the cleanliness in all areas of the premises to be maintained to a hygienic standard
- the planning and provision of resources and activities, enabling staff to be suitably deployed in supervising the large numbers of children being cared for over the wide play space provided in the hall
- the effective monitoring and evaluation of children's play experiences that influences the planning of future activities for the next stage of children's development that suitably challenges them
- the information recorded in the accident report to include all relevant details
- the provision of practical experiences for children to encourage them to understand how to stay healthy and provide them with opportunities to re-enforce their learning through the provision of basic resources during everyday hygiene routines.

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 have been no complaints recorded by Ofsted since 01/04/2004.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
2	Ensure that the maximum number of children in one group on a regular basis does not exceed 26.	01/04/2005
7	Ensure children have access to appropriate hand cleaning materials at all times.	01/04/2005

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
4	Ensure the landlord is made aware of all parts of the premises that are not maintained to a hygienic standard.
4	Ensure organisation of space, staff, resources and activities provide the children with sufficient supervision to meet their individual and group needs.
7	Ensure accident records include all relevant information.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff do not have an adequate understanding of how children learn or the early learning goals. As a result children were not set appropriate challenges in accordance with their stage of development. The teaching methods in the main do not enable children to learn and to progress effectively. However staff know children well and there are fairly good relationships within the group. Staff work well together as a team. There is a suitable range of resources.

Leadership and management is generally good. They are happy to delegate many of the tasks and as a result work fairly well together, which impacts positively on most children's play experiences. However monitoring and evaluation of the activities and children's learning experiences to use as a tool to build on practice is ineffective.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Staff place a great deal of emphasis on working in partnership with parents, seeking parents views and encouraging them to share knowledge of their children's needs. They provide information about the provision including some evidence of how activities relate to several of the early learning goals and provide photographic evidence of the most recent experiences their children have been involved in.

What is being done well?

- Most of the children respond to experiences and are communicating their thoughts and ideas, during planned large group activities e.g. routines to stay healthy (all about me) and story time.
- Children move freely from one activity to another.
- Children are encouraged to re-tell narrative as part of a story time activity.
- Children have some opportunities to count.
- Children have a good range of resources to aid the exploration of their senses e.g. water bubble, playdough and gloop activity.
- Children have good opportunities to use a wide range of tools and equipment, including computer skills.
- Most children sing simple songs and action rhymes from memory.
- Children have good opportunities to explore role play activities in the home corner.

What needs to be improved?

- the effective monitoring and evaluation of children's play experiences that influences the planning of future activities for the next stage of children's development that suitably challenges them
- the information in plans that highlights language intended to be used during small group activities that builds on children's existing language skills, including the use of mathematical language
- the staff's encouragement of children by good use of appropriate questioning skills during individual and small group activities, which encourages children to interact and talk, ask questions as to why things happened, how things work and to organise and explore ideas and feelings
- the opportunities for children to develop social skills during practical everyday routines
- the encouragement of children to relate well to each other, to understand the consequences of their actions and behaviour
- the opportunities to develop mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems, develop mathematical language and to count and compare numbers to two groups of objects on a regular basis during practical activities and routines
- the experiences of children that encourages them to understand how to stay healthy by providing them with meaningful practical opportunities to re-enforce their learning through the provision of basic resources during everyday hygiene routines.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection has been generally good. The pre-school have addressed the key issues set at the last inspection to some degree as follows:-

The provision has developed long, medium and sessional plans to define what areas of learning each activity is intended to cover and the intended outcome, to inform future planning that suitably challenges children. However, the activity outcome is not being formally assessed to ascertain whether intended outcome has been met or why it has not been met or how the outcome informs future planning.

Increase in resources encouraging children to respond in different ways e.g. in music and movement activity. This is evidenced in the pre-school's planning that this has been introduced and is used on a regular basis.

Encouragement of writing skills in daily activities has been addressed to some degree according to the groups planning. However this was not observed during the session and further development of this area on a regular basis needs to be explored.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff are sensitive to the needs of the children and know them fairly well. As a result most children are involved and enjoying their play and learning and demonstrate a fairly good understanding of agreed codes for groups working together harmoniously. Children choose between activities. However, children have few opportunities to develop their social skills during everyday routines.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children communicate fairly well. They are given some opportunities to extend their language through use of questioning techniques during formal circle time around the topic/theme, whereby children are actively encouraged to communicate their thoughts and feelings and explore new ideas. However, this was not evident during free play or small group activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have some opportunities to learn to recognise and say number names. However significant opportunities were missed to re-enforce mathematical language or concepts during small group activities or practical routine. Children have few practical opportunities to use mathematical ideas to solve problems, to compare numbers to two groups of objects through play opportunities or routines to naturally build on what they know.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children extend their understanding in this area through the provision of a range of practical activities and resources to explore and investigate objects using all senses. Staff provide children with opportunities to compare similarities, differences, patterns and change. More able children confidently use programmable toys and practice computer skills. However children ask few questions in order for them to build on what they already know.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children handle a variety of objects, malleable material, tools and equipment for construction, safely and with increasing control. Currently there are few opportunities to explore a variety of large play apparatus, balancing equipment or ride on toys. However children move around confidently, safely, in control and co-ordination. Children explore how to stay healthy as a topic activity. However this was not supported or re-enforced through the provision of basic resources during routines.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore a range of materials, texture, shape and form during practical activities. They sing simple action rhymes, matching music to movement with interest. They are provided with good opportunities to use their imagination in role-play activities in the home corner.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure monitoring and evaluation of children's play experiences that influences the planning of future activities for the next stage of children's development
- include information in plans that highlights language intended to be used during small group activities, that builds on children's existing language skills
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of appropriate questioning skills, which encourages children to ask questions and builds on their thinking and communication skills
- provide opportunities for children to develop social skills during practical everyday routines that encourages them to relate well to each other and to understand the consequences of their actions and to behaviour
- provide opportunities for children to develop mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems, develop mathematical language and to count and compare numbers to two groups of objects on a regular basis during practical activities or routines.

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.