



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 301816

DfES Number: 523473

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 25/01/2005
Inspector Name Ann Marie Lefevre

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Red Balloon Pre-School Group
Setting Address Osborne Road
Tweedmouth
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Northumberland
TD15 2HS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Committee of Red Balloon Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Committee of Red Balloon Pre-School
Address Osborne Road
Tweedmouth
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Northumberland
TD15 2HS

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

The Red Balloon Pre-School group has been operating for over 12 years and was registered to the current premises in November 1999. The setting provides places for a maximum of 24 children at a time. There are currently 30 children on the roll. The children are aged from two to five years. The group offers care for all children within the appropriate age range, however, most of the placements are from the local community.

The children are accommodated in a mobile classroom in the grounds of Tweedmouth West First School, which is located close to the centre of Berwick town. There are facilities for the provision of refreshments. The toilets are in the main school building. The school hall and playground are also available for more active play.

Child care sessions are held during term time only and are available from Monday to Friday 08:55 until 11:30 and also Monday and Friday 13:00 to 15:00 for the younger children. The group is participating in the Foundation Stage of Learning initiative. Of the 19 funded children 16 are three years old and three are four years old. The setting supports children who have special needs. Currently, there are no children attending who have English as an additional language.

Overall responsibility for the pre-school group lies with the management committee of parents of the children attending. There are five regular staff members, and one back up staff member. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. Students are welcomed into the group; they are appropriately cleared and supervised as necessary. The group also has the support of the school reception teacher and from a Local Authority early years advisor.

How good is the Day Care?

Red Balloon Pre-school provides good quality care for children. The staff are dedicated to offering a very comfortable, clean, stimulating, and welcoming environment where children feel safe, secure and happy. Well structured routines

are in place and children respond well to these. Staff take effective measures to promote health and safety awareness in the children.

Staff continue to participate in a wide range of relevant training to further develop their skills and knowledge. Detailed staff employment and training information is in place, and comprehensive policies and procedures are kept up to date. All necessary recording systems are in place and very well maintained, however, there is a need for some clarification in how the incident book is used. The staff and committee members are willing to take any addition fire safety measures as recommended by Ofsted.

Staff develop excellent relationships with the children and offer a range of interesting and fun activities so that children can learn effectively through play. There is a wide selection of good quality, age appropriate playthings and equipment. Activities are carefully planned, but there is flexibility which allows for children's preferences and their stages of development. Children are confident, polite and very well behaved. They are able to participate fully in a wealth of fun and educational activities in the playroom, in the school and outdoors. There are many exciting projects which help children develop their skills. Children are kept fully occupied and clearly gain a great deal of pleasure from being with the other children and staff members.

Partnership with parents is very good. This is apparent when parents and carers collect their children and in very positive comments made by parents during the inspection. They feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress and development, events and the overall management of their child's care.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable.

What is being done well?

- The staff team are committed to developing their own child care practice and they have participated in a wide range of training initiatives. They continue looking towards additional training to build upon their existing knowledge and skills. They are able to assess and determine areas for improvement to further develop their childcare practice.
- Staff are very involved in children's play and are interested in what they do and say. There is an excellent range of resources which provide interesting, stimulating and fun activities. The children enjoy attending and are very comfortable with the staff and with each other. New and established children are supported well taking into consideration their ages and stage of development.
- There is a positive partnership with parents and carers. There is a strong sense of community within the school and with parents. Children have many opportunities to experience the school setting which helps them to prepare for eventual transition into school life.

- There are comprehensive policies and procedures and other useful information for parents, staff and to inform practice.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The staff are very skilled and creative in providing a secure, comfortable and exciting setting for children. They are imaginative and create a wealth of opportunities so that children are enabled to take part in the activities. They offer a warm and caring environment where children are supported well. Activities such as craft projects, role play and circle times, as well as setting routines, are used very well to link topics, promote and reinforce learning, and teach children about the wider world. The children are encouraged to participate at their own pace and are able to enhance their existing skills and learn new ones. Staff are sensitive to differing needs; this being evident in the way they plan and deliver activities so that children are able to experience a wide range of exciting and fun projects.

What needs to be improved?

- the provision of fire drills in the setting to supplement those undertaken with the school
- the recording of incidents and building maintenance issues.

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
6	Look towards doing fire drills in the setting, in addition to those organised

	by the school.
7	Ensure that the use of the incident book is clear if it is to be used for childcare issues. Look towards having a separate building damage/defect book.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Red Balloon Pre-school provides high quality nursery education overall. Excellent planning, teaching and overall management in the setting helps children make very good progress in all areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the foundation stage for learning, which ensures that their childcare practice is appropriate for the differing ages and abilities of all children attending. Effective monitoring and assessment systems are in place to inform staff practice and future planning. Very good teamwork is evident in daily routines and activities as staff provide the children with a variety of learning experiences.

Staff develop excellent relationships with children, supporting and encouraging them as they play and learn. There is a good balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. All children are gaining increasing levels of confidence in the setting and are able to develop their sense of independence in a secure and caring environment. Good support is provided for all children in the setting. Children are very well behaved and respond well to the good role models that staff provide.

Leadership and management are very good. The leader, staff and committee have a clear vision and have a shared understanding of good early years practice. The staff work very hard to provide a consistently high standard of childcare within the setting. There is a strong commitment to ongoing staff development and evaluation of practice.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Staff develop a good rapport with them and use effective strategies to involve parents in their children's learning. This is evident in the very positive comments made by parents during discussions, as they spoke highly of the care their children receive. A wealth of clear information is available to inform them about the foundation stage, the educational provision and their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Leadership and management are very good. Staff work well together as a team. They are dedicated and committed to ongoing professional development.
- Staff create a stimulating environment where all children are able to learn and develop their social and practical skills.
- There is a varied range of good quality equipment and playthings which provides for the differing ages and abilities of children attending.
- Children's progress very well in all the six areas of learning as the staff use their skills to help all children gain confidence in their own abilities. Staff use

effective teaching methods to promote equal opportunity and encourage an awareness of others. Children are finding out about people in other countries and how they live, as well as gaining a greater awareness of their own community.

- There is a strong sense of community. Staff get to know the children and their parents and carers well. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate in their children's learning and development.

What needs to be improved?

- Ensure there is consistency of lettering in activities so that they include a capital for the first letter of a child's name in keeping with pre-school and school practice

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have introduced a number of effective measures to address the two points for consideration for the benefit of the children attending.

Staff organise clear name cards of children's names, familiar words, simple words related to the topics to support children who are beginning to write more independently. These cards will be accessible at every session.

All samples of children's work and records are clearly dated, topics to be used to record progress, records are divided into the six areas of learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have formed very good relationships with the staff and with each other. They are gaining confidence in expressing their needs, making choices and taking initiatives. Children are becoming aware of how to build friendships, work well together and learn to share. They behave very well and respond well to adult guidance. There is a very good sense of community within the group and children are helped to have a growing awareness of their local environment, and of the world outside.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are good listeners and are gaining confidence with peers and adults. They are encouraged to think, question and answer through a variety of interesting and stimulating activities. Children enjoy linking sounds and letters in fun ways. Children handle books very well and these are used effectively to support learning. There are many ways for children to develop emergent writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently use numbers in planned and incidental activities. They recognise and name shapes and use their calculating skills to solve simple problems. All children have regular opportunities to develop and consolidate mathematical learning during activities and in daily routines. They are beginning to show an awareness of pattern, space and dimension. They are able to learn new concepts and reinforce those from previous sessions and activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children work well together in planned and child led activities using equipment imaginatively. They receive many opportunities to explore and find out about modern technology as well as the natural world. Children are supported in using computer programmes and other modern equipment as well as using natural and man made materials to design and create during craft projects. Children are learning about their own their own culture and the culture of others from different countries.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

All children receive regular opportunities to use a range of large and small equipment during indoor and outdoor activities. They are developing their skills in the use of tools to shape materials such as playdough and have increasing control of writing and drawing implements. Children are gaining an awareness of being healthy and learning how their bodies work. They participate very well in structured games and are able to cooperate and work together in large and small groups.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

All children are developing their skills through a wide range of fun and stimulating activities which encourage them to use all their senses and imagination. They enjoy participating in circle games to music; enthusiastically doing actions to songs and rhymes. They explore a variety of media and materials; learn about colour, shape, texture and use a wide range of resources in interesting ways. Children enjoy using their imagination in games of pretend in planned and incidental activities.

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 improving the following:
- the consistency of lettering in activities so that they include a capital for the first letter of a child's name in keeping with pre-school and school practice

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.