



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 219968

DfES Number: 521412

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/10/2004
Inspector Name Rachael Mankiewicz

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Potterspurty Pre School Playgroup
Setting Address The Horsa Building, John Hellins Primary School
Browns Wood Drive
Potterspurty, Towcester
Northamptonshire
NN12 7PL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Potterspurty Pre School 287096

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Potterspurty Pre School
Address The Horsa Building, John Hellins Primary School
Browns Wood Drive
Potterspurty, Towcester
Northamptonshire
NN12 7PL

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

Potterspury Pre-School was opened in 1967 and is currently held in the Horsa building within the local primary school in the village of Potterspury. The pre-school has access to a classroom with an adjoining small area which is used for messy play and storage. Two toilets are available for the children. The pre-school uses a covered play area, the play ground and the grass field as facilities for outdoor play.

The pre-school is registered for a maximum of 20 children with no more than eight children under three years. The pre-school provide sessions on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:00 until 12:00. On a Tuesday the children are able to bring a packed lunch and stay until 12:30.

There are currently 22 children on roll. There are no children with assessed special needs or English as a second language but there is support available for the children who have particular needs. There are five members of staff in total. The supervisor and deputy hold a required Level 3 qualification. Two other members of staff are working towards gaining an appropriate childcare qualification. The group receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the development worker from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Potterspurry Playgroup provides a nursery education of good quality overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in the areas of personal, social and emotional, and creative development, and in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff, trained or currently training, are building on their knowledge of the foundation stage. They offer a full range of activities and resources to help children learn through play. Planning has been reviewed and an effective system of observation and assessment is in place. Plans currently lack evidence of how the assessment influences planning and how challenges are set for the more able children. Some opportunities for consolidating learning in the area of language development and measuring in mathematics are not developed in the planning. Large muscle play is not currently an option in the free-play session.

The staff interact well with the children and act as good role models. They have high expectations of the children, and are rewarded with children respectful of friends and adults. A key worker system operates, with a member of staff responsible for a small group of children providing regular updates about the children's progress. Good support systems are in place to cover individual needs, including special educational needs and English as the child's second language.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. Systems are in place for appraisal, and staff are encouraged to undertake training. The management and staff show a commitment to the improvement and care of children. They review practices, and have sought advice from the advisory teacher.

The partnership with parents is very good, with information shared about the curriculum and how both parties can progress the child's learning. Parents make comments on reports, and develop learning at home.

What is being done well?

- The children's natural enthusiasm for learning is fostered well as they move confidently between the variety of activities on offer during the free-play session. Aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are covered well with the children exploring and investigating a wide range of resources.
- The children operate independently and successfully make links and friendships. They show care for each other but are also able to negotiate and show assertiveness when they need to.
- The staff work together very well as a team and create a happy and purposeful atmosphere. All staff members have input into planning.

Leadership and management systems show commitment to maintaining the good quality of the provision. The staff are encouraged to undertake training and to take responsibilities.

- Staff are aware of the importance of working in partnership with parents to the benefit of the child and to contribute to the progress of the child. Staff and parents have regular meetings to discuss the children which result in a written report, and to which the parent can add comments.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning to ensure that assessment records, and information contributed by parents and carers, are used to influence the planning for children's progress, and that reasonable challenges are set for more able children
- the opportunities for children to choose play to develop large muscle skills during the free-play sessions
- the opportunities for exploring size, position and shape in everyday situations.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. Planning issues and the assessment of the children have been addressed. Qualified staff have done updates on the Foundation Stage, and new staff have done training in this area. Staff have put this knowledge into practice in a review of planning.

There is a key worker system in place with a member of staff responsible for a small group of children, and these staff provide regular updates about the children's progress. Formal annual meetings are held with parents, when they are able to make verbal and written comments on what their children are doing at home and how they would wish them to progress in the group.

The group has increased mathematics related activities to develop skills in calculation, counting and number through practical everyday events, however the areas of measurement and the understanding of space and positional language are still limited, and is made an issue as an outcome of this inspection.

The group encourages children to choose books freely, and also to have free-expression on the mark-making table which is available at all times.

Assessments and records of achievement are made by the key workers although it is not made clear how these observations influence planning and how challenge is set for the more able children. This has been made an issue as an outcome of this inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show confidence and independence as they separate from their carers, and move between self-chosen activities. They show perseverance, both in small groups and as individuals. The interaction between children and adults is very good, and children meet the high expectations for behaviour. They show care and concern for others. Children develop an awareness of other cultures through an interest in festivals, with most children taking part in the Harvest Festival service.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children communicate confidently and take turns in conversations. They listen to each other and staff and convey what they are doing and how they feel. Children are beginning to understand that written words convey messages, and show respect for books. Their early mark-making skills are good, including recording marks on lists during role play. Most children recognise the initial letters and sounds in their names and repeat them spontaneously, but opportunities for extending this are limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count reliably and often and recognise numbers up to ten. They compare numbers of objects, and learn about simple subtraction whilst acting out number rhymes. They consolidate this knowledge when playing mathematical games. Children are developing their knowledge of different shapes and figures when sorting wooden shapes. They are beginning to understand about patterns and sequences. They weigh through activities including cooking, but do less measuring and ordering by size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a good awareness of the natural world and the changing seasons. They enjoy looking at the environment and the community, with outside experiences brought inside. Children explore actions and reactions as they design, and make. They talk successfully about past events, such as holidays and moving house. Their awareness of their own families, their cultures and the beliefs of others is also developing. Most children are adept at using the computer and other technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children handle an interesting range of materials, tools and small equipment, and their manipulative skills are good. They move confidently around the room, aware of other children and the restraints of furniture. Children do not have an option of activities for large muscle play during the main session, but do a group activity most days. They show an awareness of their own physical needs- through good hygiene practice, a topic on their bodies, and noting the changes when they do exercise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enthusiastically take part in role-play, and work imaginatively with small-world resources. Children experience a good range of sensory experiences throughout the free-play activities, including food tasting, and smells in dough. They explore sound with a range of instruments, and sing and mark rhythms. Children enjoy creative activities using many different craft mediums, in both two and three dimensions.

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

- increase the opportunities for play to develop large muscle skills as a choice of activity during the free-play session
- review planning to ensure that assessment records, and information contributed by parents and carers, are used to influence the planning for children's progress, and that reasonable challenges are set for more able children
- improve the use of resources to promote children's understanding of size, shape and space.

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.