



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY260159

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/05/2004
Inspector Name Glenys Swift

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Dickory Dock Nursery
Setting Address St. Thomas More Church
Margetson Crescent
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S5 9NB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Dickory Dock Nursery Reg No - 4678193 1083035

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Dickory Dock Nursery
Address St Thomas More Church
Margetson Crescent
Sheffield
S5 9NB

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

Dickory Dock Nursery opened in 1996. It operates from St Thomas More's Church Hall in the Parson Cross area of Sheffield and provides a service for local families. The nursery has sole use of a designated room within the building and an outdoor play area. There is also access to a large hall during each session. It is registered to provide full day care for up to 20 children between the ages of 2 years 6 months and 5 years and is open from 09.00 to 15.00 on weekdays during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Currently there are 12 four-year-old and 20 three-year-old children who are funded. Three of these children have special educational needs. The nursery offers a lunch club which gives the opportunity for children to extend their session or even stay all day.

The Nursery is managed by a Board of Directors, which includes parents of children attending the group. A team of seven staff, some full-time and some part-time work with the children. Most staff hold or are working towards early years care and education qualifications, which include CACHE level 3 and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 2 or 3. All staff benefit from ongoing additional training to support their practice. The setting also receives support from the community teacher, through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Dickory Dock has been eligible to receive grant funded children for approximately 4 years.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Dickory Dock Nursery provides a welcoming, stimulating environment where children are making generally good progress overall towards the early learning goals. The children are happy, confident and eager to learn. They make very good progress in areas of learning, apart from creative development, where their progress is generally good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff understand the early learning goals overall and work well as a team to help children learn. They plan a programme of interesting activities with clear learning objectives for both older and younger children. However in creative development some activities inhibit children's chances to express their own ideas. Staff adapt their teaching to meet individual needs and give good support to all children, including those with special educational needs. They explain clearly, praise achievements and use practical opportunities well to help children to understand a range of ideas and develop skills in using language. Relationships and behaviour are very good. Staff encourage children to treat each other with respect. They assess children's progress but records are not always used effectively to plan further opportunities to promote learning. Resources are used well to give a balanced programme of activities with time for individual, small and larger group work.

Leadership and management are generally good. The manager is responsible for the daily running of the nursery and the Board of Directors, which includes parents, oversees this and takes overall responsibility. They are very keen to improve the provision, however they are not yet fully effective in their monitoring and evaluating the educational provision or in assessing their strengths and weaknesses.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive clear information about the nursery. They have many opportunities to discuss their child's progress and share information with staff.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy, confident and eager to learn. They behave well and are developing very good relationships with staff and each other.
- Children have excellent opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills. Staff support their language development well throughout the whole range of activities.
- Staff use practical opportunities well to help children to learn to count and begin to understand a range of mathematical ideas.
- Staff provide interesting activities and wonderful sensory experiences, which stimulate the children's curiosity and encourage their imagination.

- Children enjoy energetic physical play and staff provide worthwhile experiences to develop their physical skills and also incorporate other learning, such as road safety, in meaningful ways.
- Staff are very caring and skilfully adapt activities to meet individual children's needs.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to represent their own thoughts and ideas in their pictures
- the use of displays to reflect the children's own creative work
- the use of records of children's attainments so that targets are completed and used to plan further opportunities to promote learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection of nursery education. There were two points for consideration. One was to use assessments to plan targets to identify ways to help individual children progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The other one was to encourage children to question why things happen and how things work.

The staff have revised the records of children's attainments to allow space for targets in each area of learning and also to include space for parents' comments. Records are shared with parents. However in practice the space for targets is rarely completed, so records still do not inform staff and parents of the next steps to help children make progress towards the early learning goals.

The staff have met the other point for consideration very well. Staff now encourage children to question why things happen and how things work in practical activities throughout the session, for example as they explore water and clay. Staff now organise the children into groups and activities and discussions are planned appropriate to their levels of ability. Older and younger children are now encouraged to join in discussions and staff use these opportunities to extend their thinking. These improvements are very effective in helping children to develop their reasoning skills.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and eager to learn. They work well independently, confidently selecting their activities and resources from the range provided. They concentrate extremely well. Their behaviour and relationships with staff and each other are very good. They are learning to co-operate, for example, as they play in the home corner and share books together. Staff are helping them to express their own needs and views and also become aware of and consider the needs of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to talk clearly and confidently, as they share ideas in their play and at group times. Staff use opportunities well to encourage them to talk and to help them to extend their vocabulary, for example spiral and habitat were introduced while discussing snails. Children listen well to stories and enjoy looking at books. They make marks freely in their drawings and in role play and other activities. Some children are able to write their own names and use recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to count with confidence and use numbers in their play. Staff encourage counting and use practical activities throughout the session to help children understand a range of mathematical ideas. Children explore shape and size as they make models with clay. They learn about position and quantity in games, while matching the steps they take to the number called. They enjoy comparing numbers and solve problems as they work out how many large and small snails are in the tank.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good opportunities to investigate. They explore ways to make bubbles and learn about living things by caring for a hamster and observing snails. They discover properties of clay as they make models. Children use computers and tape recorders to support their learning. Staff help children recall experiences and learn about their environment, as they use resources in play to reinforce road safety. Activities linked to celebrations and festivals help to raise their cultural awareness.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing good control and co-ordination of their bodies as they use a wide range of large and small equipment and practise balancing and climbing. Staff encourage them to move confidently and imaginatively with good awareness of space and each other while manoeuvring wheeled toys and joining in activities such as "Going on a Bear Hunt". Children mould clay and handle tools, such as hammers and paint brushes, safely with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use a good range of materials for painting, drawing and making models. They enjoy singing and music. Staff plan wonderful sensory experiences, such as observing snails, exploring bubbles and clay. Children respond well. A lovely variety of dressing up clothes and resources for role play stimulate their imagination. Children can represent their own ideas in their pictures and models but some activities inhibit their chances to do this. Some displays do not show children's creative work.

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

- use records of children's attainments more effectively so that targets are completed and used to plan further opportunities to promote learning.
- improve the opportunities for children to represent their own thoughts and ideas in their pictures.

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.