



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 134995

DfES Number: 514514

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/11/2004
Inspector Name Claire Elizabeth Johnson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name The Orchard
Setting Address Thame Road
Little Milton
Oxford
Oxfordshire
OX44 7PZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Management Committee of the Orchard

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Management Committee of the Orchard
Address The Orchard
Thame Road
Little Milton, Oxford
Oxfordshire
OX44 7PZ

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

The Orchard was originally formed as a Play-school in 1987. It operates from a purpose built Log Cabin with a safe enclosed garden. The pre-school serves the village of Little Milton and the surrounding area.

There are currently 50 children from two to five years on roll; of these 30 children are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is open five days per week during term times from 09.00 to 15.00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 09.00 to 12.00 on Thursdays, and from 09.00 to 13.00 on Friday. On Wednesday afternoon from 13.15 to 14.45 hours there is a starter session for the youngest children.

Four staff are employed to work with the children. Three staff hold early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 or above. The fourth member of staff has NVQ level 2 and is currently studying for level 3.

In December 2003 the setting was awarded a quality assurance certificate 'Partners in Quality' through the Oxfordshire Early Years Childcare Development Partnership (EYDCP).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Orchard provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress toward the early learning goals. In mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world children are making generally good progress and in all other areas of learning they are making very good progress.

The quality of the teaching is generally good. All staff attend half-termly planning meetings to pool ideas and to ensure information is effectively shared. Planning is good; it links the different areas of learning and provides the opportunity for children to revisit topics to consolidate their learning. Staff are particularly skilled at planning for linking letters and sounds but miss opportunities to introduce technology and to develop children's number skills. Evaluations fed into children's profiles provide an effective record of their achievement and to inform future planning. There are currently no children attending with special needs but documentation is in place to offer suitable support.

Leadership and management are generally good. The committee are supportive of staff on a daily basis. Staff and management are both clear about their roles. Staff are well qualified and training needs are identified through an effective appraisal system. Staff and management meet to evaluate the provision for nursery education, however, identified weaknesses are not fully acted upon.

The partnership with parents and carers are very good. Information provided for parents is informative about activities children are involved in and what they are learning. Many opportunities are provided for parents to involve themselves in their children's learning both in the home environment and when participating on a parent rota. Children's progress records are available for parents to take home and key workers are at hand for further discussion. Parents are welcomed into the group and any feedback from them is valued.

What is being done well?

- Staff are skilled in developing children's knowledge of letters and sounds. Each week children, with a little help from their parents bring in objects beginning with the letter of the week to share with others. They create their own alphabet frieze and enjoy their play in the igloo when the letter of the week is I.
- Staff take every opportunity to involve parents in their children's learning. Good quality information about forthcoming topics and which areas of learning the children are covering is available on display boards. Further information is included in the newsletters. Parents further involve themselves on the parent rota to find out how their children are learning.

- Children express themselves creatively when creating collages of gardens, plants and trees. Work displayed shows children select freely from a range of materials and staff value their contributions. Children make their own interpretations of the activity and extend their ideas to create aerial views of their own garden.
- Children are well behaved. Staff clap their hands once to achieve an instant response from the children. Children stop what they are doing to listen and then start cheerfully tidying-up. Children work as a team to get the jobs done before settling down for a social chat with their friends during snack-time.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to use number on a daily basis
- the accessibility and planned opportunities for children to use computer technology
- the procedure for addressing identified weaknesses.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. In addressing the issue of providing increased opportunities for children to participate in music and movement, dance and activities with musical instruments, children now select from an increased range of musical instruments. Children explore musical instruments selecting from recently purchased multi-cultural instruments and others all stored at a low level and easily accessible. Older children have increased opportunities to involve themselves in music and movement sessions.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy in the group they readily leave their parents to prepare themselves for the daily routine. Children are developing good relationships with their peers. They show kindness to others and respond sensitively to their needs. Children are well behaved and cheerfully tidy up in response to a hand-clap signal from staff. Children are developing high self-esteem; they are pleased to take on group monitor responsibilities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning to link letters and sounds through a range of well planned and inter linked activities. Children speak confidently when sharing their plastic insects and enjoy play in an igloo when learning about the letter I. Staff provide many opportunities for children to make marks and children are learning to write for a variety of purposes, particularly when copying inspectors taking notes. Children select freely from a good range of attractively displayed books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident when naming shapes. Staff promote this development through activities well linked to previous topics. Children are learning about number but there are insufficient opportunities to use number on a daily basis. The environment provides insufficient exposure of written numerals. Children are developing knowledge of positional language when being guided by staff to a suitable seat at circle time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The environment is well organised to encourage children to make close observations and develop their scientific thinking. Children are learning about the natural world, they recognise changes in the seasons and confidently use tools for investigation. Communication and information technology is available for children but its accessibility is restricted. Children are starting to develop an understanding of the differences between the cultures and beliefs of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore and investigate the properties of materials using a range of different tools and equipment. They have access to an adventure playground where they confidently climb and travel. Children set themselves personal challenges when exploring different ways of travelling across bridges and sliding down poles. Staff plan opportunities for children to develop their co-ordination and ball skills when playing on the tennis court.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colour and texture using a range of materials including bubbles, straws and sponges. They find effective ways to use wax crayons when making leaf rubbings and use their senses to explore resulting textures and markings. Children make their own interpretations when asked to produce a garden collage; they produce original creations and aerial view maps. Children share ideas and themes when creating birthday parties in the home corner.

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

- provide an environment that is rich in number and provide increased opportunities for children to use number on a daily basis
- improve the availability and planned opportunities for children to access information and communication technology.

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.