



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113450

DfES Number: 581766

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	30/11/2004
Inspector Name	Clare Moore

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Country Mice Pre-School
Setting Address	Station Road Cowfold Horsham West Sussex RH13 8DA

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Country Mice Pre-School 1000764
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Country Mice Pre-School
Address	Country Mice Station Road, Cowfold Horsham West Sussex RH13 8DA

## 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

Country Mice Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates from a large room in a self contained unit on the school premises in the village of Cowfold close to Horsham. It serves the local area. It is managed by a voluntary committee.

There are currently 30 children from two to five years of age on roll. This includes 19 funded 3-year-olds and two funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children who have special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The Pre-School opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:40, lunch from 11:50 until 12:30 and afternoon sessions from 12:40 until 15:10. The setting is closed on Monday afternoons and sometimes on Friday mornings.

There are six staff who work with the children. Four of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One of the staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the local school.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Country Mice Pre-school provides nursery education which is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. The two supervisors take responsibility for planning a balanced curriculum of activities that stimulates learning across the six areas. Activity plans are clearly linked to the stepping stones, and staff make good use of the opportunities presented. An effective key worker system ensures that staff have good knowledge of individual children. They regularly record children's achievements, and show areas to be targeted for development. Staff liaise with other professionals to develop practice and include children with special educational needs. They use carefully considered teaching methods, ask questions and make suggestions that promote learning. They engage children in conversation, develop language skills and include counting throughout activities. They help all children to enjoy books and stories. They use praise and encouragement to build children's confidence and help children to develop independence. They provide a balanced range of adult led activities and frequent opportunities for children to initiate their own activities.

The leadership and management is very good. The management committee and the two supervisors lead a strong team and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. A system of staff appraisal identifies training needs and staff are supported in updating their skills and knowledge.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are made welcome in the group and many serve on the management committee. They receive comprehensive information about the pre-school, the Foundation Stage and their children's learning. They are given ideas about how they can help their children to learn at home. Currently the setting does not often share the written records about their children's progress.

### What is being done well?

- Children have regular access to outdoor play in the well designed outside play area. This is used for physical exercise and to help children learn and practise many new skills. During the summer months children have free flow use of the garden.
- Staff's clear understanding of the early learning goals leads to well planned and executed activities which engage and sustain children's interests and efforts.
- Staff constantly encourage conversation with children, and provide plenty of opportunities for developing language skills. They keep photographs which

are used as discussion points and a home bear so children can talk about past experiences. They frequently introduce and explain new vocabulary.

- Children develop their mathematical skills throughout their daily activities and develop good understanding of the use of number. Staff use games and songs to help children have fun when learning about number, shape, words letters and sounds. They use role play and cooking to help children learn about weight, measure and recording the results.
- Children learn about their local and wider environment through trips for example to the beach, a farm, post office, and the surgery. They learn about how different people help us and occupations from parents and visitors who are invited in to share their knowledge and experiences with the children.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the process of sharing the written records about children's progress with the parents.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have introduced effective measures to improve assessments and use this information as a guide to planning and teaching.

Both supervisors have since attended training in managing development records, and this has been shared with all the staff. A key worker system has been introduced to facilitate regular observations and assessments. All children now have individual files about their progress, and this information is used to guide the planning and teaching.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children sit quietly to listen when appropriate and many are able to concentrate for sustained periods. They are confident in moving between activities and relate well to other children and adults. They learn to take turns and to be sensitive to the needs of others. They are becoming very independent in their personal care dressing themselves for outside play, selecting resources and managing their personal hygiene.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are becoming confident speakers and are learning to take turns in group discussions. They enjoy books and in a well-equipped and comfortable reading area. They are developing an understanding of rhyme and learn to hear and say the initial sounds in words. Most can recognise their printed names and some are able to write them. They practise early writing in a variety of situations, for example making tickets and boarding cards at the airport, and making cards.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count and use number throughout daily activities. Children enjoy number rhymes and they are supported in using number to solve problems, for example at snack time. They learn to recognise numerals using games and puzzles, and use a variety of resources to learn about space and shape. They practise mathematical language and measuring through sorting activities, small world, play dough and construction toys.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show interest when they investigate, observe and talk about what they see. When learning about other countries, for example, they made Rangoli patterns, decorated their hands and tasted Indian sweets. They explore plant life through growing vegetables and sunflowers from seed, and animals through carefully handling chicks and finding out about how caterpillars become butterflies. They use a tape recorder, digital camera and a computer as an introduction to technology.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop physical fitness and skills with ride-on toys, climbing and balancing apparatus and frequent opportunities to run and jump, mainly using the well equipped garden. They use small equipment such as balls, bean bags and quoits to throw catch and control, and develop manipulative skills with a range of tools and materials such as pencils, chopsticks, scissors and play dough. Children learn about importance of good hygiene practice and food in keeping healthy.

<b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore colour, texture and pattern with imaginative art and craftwork. They use paint, play-dough, and a variety of re-cycled and natural materials. They join in songs and rhymes with pleasure and use percussion instruments and a keyboard to explore sound and rhythm. They develop imagination and act out experiences in planned role-play situations. They also make up their own scenarios and improvise with available resources.	
<b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>	

### **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:*

- introduce a system so that the written records of children's progress is shared with parents on a regular basis .

*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.*