



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 140859

DfES Number: 584126

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/11/2004  
Inspector Name Patricia Joan Latham

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Little Ashes Pre-School  
Setting Address The Village Hall, Horsepond  
Rotten Row, Great Brickhill  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK17 9BA

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Little Ashes Pre-School 1020026

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Little Ashes Pre-School  
Address 1 Holts Green  
Great Brickhill  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK17 9AJ

## 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

Little Ashes Pre-School has been registered since 1995 and operates from the village hall in Great Brickhill, Milton Keynes. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The group is open Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 12.00 with a lunch club each day from 12.00 to 12.30.

There are currently 21 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding area.

The group employs six members of staff, some working part time, of whom four have relevant qualifications.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Little Ashes Pre-School provides good quality nursery education overall, which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and Foundation Stage stepping stones and update their knowledge as needed. The curriculum offered covers all areas of learning, but some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are not fully covered. Interesting themes are used to link activities and time is used wisely to maximise learning, although resources and activities are not always presented well to promote all aspects of creative development. Staff question and challenge children effectively. They offer good support to those learning new skills and adapt activities to extend the more able. Regular observational recordings of achievement are used to identify children's progress and to focus learning objectives for activities. Staff manage children's behaviour well, providing clear consistent guidelines.

Leadership and management of the group are generally good. Staff work well as a team, attend regular staff meetings and are all involved with planning. Clear roles and responsibilities are assigned and a clear daily routine followed. Activities are evaluated and repeated to ensure learning is re-enforced. Although there is an informal evaluation of the overall provision, this is not effective enough to highlight weaknesses in the programme offered.

Partnership with parents is very good and they are given good information about activities undertaken and the progress of their children. They can access records and speak with key workers as needed. Parents are involved in children's learning and are invited to take part in activities. They have regular opportunities to comment on how to improve the provision.

### What is being done well?

- Staff use activities well to maximise children's learning. During circle time they re-enforce the sound and shapes of letters and during construction activities encourage children to count and sort by colour.
- Observations of children's achievements are recorded clearly so that progress can be easily identified. This enables key workers to adapt activities and provide the appropriate level of support to ensure skills are developed and extended.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in children's learning. Children borrow books to read with parents at home and parents are asked to help children find objects which link with the colour or letter of the week for 'show and tell'.

- Individual activities have clear learning objectives identified and are evaluated fully to ensure those objectives have been met. If necessary the activity is adapted and repeated to ensure children's learning is consolidated.
- Children's behaviour is managed well and they are encouraged to work well together. Staff act as good role models, calmly re-enforcing rules, respecting children's views and giving lots of praise and encouragement.

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

- opportunity for children to gain an awareness of differing cultures and customs
- opportunity for children to freely express their own ideas through art and to use a wider range of resources to extend and support role play
- evaluation of the overall provision to ensure a balanced programme is offered covering all aspects of learning.

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

There has been very good progress made since last inspection. The staff take the opportunity during free play activities to challenge children and extend learning. Children can access books themselves and take part in regular daily story time. Writing resources are made available at each session and focused activities are used to re-enforce and extend skills in letter formation.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are eager to learn and confident about taking part in activities. They concentrate and persevere when undertaking tasks, showing a real sense of achievement in their work. Children understand group rules and behave well, sharing resources and working well together to clear away when asked. They are gaining in independence, choosing their own activities and resources. Children demonstrate care and concern and have an understanding of the needs of others.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children listen attentively to each other and use language well to express ideas and describe events. They are confident about linking the sound and shape of letters and all children practise emergent reading and writing skills. The more able can read and write their own name and correctly form other letters. All enjoy looking at, and handling, books and listening to favourite stories.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently count and recognise numbers and are developing skills in number operation. For example, they know how many objects are left when some are taken away. They can recognise and name shapes, and use a range of mathematical language in their play. They are gaining an understanding of length and weight and are able to reproduce pattern when using coloured beads and copying flags.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore their surroundings, examining and observing how things, such as the weather and seasons, change. They use basic technological equipment to support their learning and design and build objects such as stick puppets and trucks from recycled material. They have a growing understanding of time describing past and present events. Children have an awareness of their own world and familiar cultural events, but limited opportunity to gain an awareness of differing cultures and customs.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are gaining control over body movements and co-ordination and practise climbing, jumping and balancing. They use small and large equipment with control and have an understanding of space. They are able to spread butter over their cracker at snack time. They can use tools such as scissors with safety and have a growing awareness of how their bodies grow and stay healthy.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore a range of malleable materials and textures including paint and water with pasta. They express themselves through music and enjoy action rhymes and singing songs, but there is limited opportunity for them to freely express their imagination through art. Children enjoy role play, although there are limited resources provided to enable them to extend this fully. They develop the use of their senses to distinguish things such as finding objects buried in flour.

**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**

- develop the evaluation of the educational provision ensuring a balanced programme is offered, and appropriate activities and resources provided, especially in relation to an awareness of cultures and customs and creative development.

*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.*