



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 511344

DfES Number: 523505

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/03/2004  
Inspector Name Olive Sumner

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Mulberry Preschool  
Setting Address Mulberry Road  
Marchwood  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO40 4WB

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of MULBERRY PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name MULBERRY PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Address u/a  
(AS PREVIOUS)  
u/a

## 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

Mulberry Preschool opened in 1991. It operates in a recently refurbished self-contained building on the edge of the army camp in Marchwood near to Southampton. Children come from the village of Marchwood as well as from army quarters. The preschool is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary committee.

There are currently sixty-three children on roll aged between two years six months and five years. This includes twenty-seven funded three year-olds and twelve funded four year-olds. At present the pre-school support children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week in term-time. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and from 12:30 to 15:00 except for Friday afternoons. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are twelve part-time staff working with the children. Five staff members have relevant early years qualifications including Diploma in Preschool Practice and NVQ111 and two are working towards qualification.

The preschool is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance is a member of the Hampshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and values this support.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Mulberry Preschool is generally good overall. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The setting provides an exciting and motivating learning environment. Staff interact very well with the children using questions skilfully. Children make very good progress. They work quietly on their own or in groups and access resources independently, on occasions books are used inappropriately. Children lack sufficient opportunities to hear and link sounds of letters to words. At times children lack direction to learn effectively and sometimes it is hard for them to concentrate when sitting too long. Overall behaviour is very good. Children who have special educational needs or English as an additional language make very good progress and are very well supported by staff. Planning and observations are linked to the early learning goals. However planning does not have sufficient impact on some aspects of the curriculum, especially mathematical development, so some children do not have consistent opportunities to build on what they already know. The assessment system is used as a manageable tool to inform parents of children's progress and achievement.

Leadership and management of the setting is generally good. The supervisor and chair of the committee work very well together. Roles are clearly defined. The supervisor has good knowledge of the curriculum and has the support of a very committed team. The chair is facilitating improvements to the provision. This is having a positive impact on children's learning particularly outdoor play.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents appreciate the friendly, caring atmosphere. They have access to a good range of information and good opportunities to be informed of progress.

### What is being done well?

- Children show motivation and enthusiasm in a very stimulating learning environment. They interact with one another and with adults and eagerly find out about the features of living things as when observing guinea pigs and hamsters.
- Children use their senses to explore and investigate objects and materials and use their imagination very well in role play and creative activities.
- Children listen with enjoyment to stories and rhymes. They extend their vocabulary learning about pets when listening and responding in a familiar group and can use speech to organise ideas and explore feelings.

- Children say and use numbers in familiar contexts and can recognise numbers and count objects reliably. They use their fingers to demonstrate a number and can apply their knowledge in independent activities as when counting building blocks.
- Relationships are very good and children identified with special needs are very well supported. Staff are very good role models and children learn to behave with consideration and courtesy to one another.
- Leadership is very good. The chair and the supervisor work well together to move setting forward. The staff are a committed team, use good teaching methods and have many strengths.

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

- children do not have sufficient consistent opportunities to hear and say the sounds of letters and link the sounds to the letters in everyday activities and games or to attempt to draw and write for a variety of purposes.
- planned opportunities to develop children's learning across the curriculum especially in mathematical development so that more able children can acquire new learning and build on what they already know.
- the organisation of the second half of the session including tidy up time and snack time and the length of time children are sitting.
- opportunities to learn how to value and look after books when using books for enjoyment and information supported by staff.

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

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

Planning has been reviewed and reflects the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. In the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development the variety of exciting and well planned experiences and activities ensure that children make very good progress along the stepping stones of the early learning goals.

Progress is also very good in personal, social and emotional education and in some aspects of mathematics for example counting reliably and recognising numbers. However in some areas of the curriculum children do not have sufficient opportunities to acquire new knowledge or build on what they know. Overall progress has been generally good in this key issue.

Observations are now incorporated into the assessment records and inform of progress towards the early learning goals. Assessment is not always effective in informing future planning because some children are not consistently having opportunities to access new learning or to build on what they already know. Parents have regular formal and informal opportunities to access children's records and to discuss their children's progress with keyworkers. They are invited to share their

observations from home. Overall generally good progress has been made in this key issue.

The quality of teaching is generally good and is only limited by some aspects of planning and organisation. The teaching methods employed by the staff are very good. Staff interact very well with the children across a range of directed and independent activities. They use questions effectively and demonstrate and explain clearly what they want the children to do and children make very good progress. Staff are well qualified and take advantage of further training opportunities. Progress has been very good in this key issue.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn. They confidently choose from a range of resources and activities and can work independently or as part of a group. They confidently speak in a familiar group and suggest ideas. Relationships with adults and other children are very good and children learn to take turns and share. Behaviour is very well managed and children behave very well. They learn to be considerate to others and show sensitivity and care for living creatures.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children respond and listen to stories and rhymes with enjoyment. They use speech to organise ideas, explore feelings and extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning of words. Children are good at recognising their name and some familiar words. They have some opportunities to attempt their own writing but this could be developed further. Children have insufficient opportunities to listen to the sounds letters make and to link the sounds to letters names. Books are not always used with care.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show enjoyment and confidence recognising numbers and counting objects reliably as when fishing for ducks or counting blocks in tall towers. They begin to develop understanding of addition and subtraction singing number rhymes and they use their fingers to demonstrate. They are learning the language of shape, size, quantity, position and measure. However there is a need for more planned practical activities to extend and challenge more able children and to build on what they know.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident investigating and using their senses to learn about features of living things observing guinea pigs and pets. They ask questions why things happen and design and make their own models. They learn about everyday technology in role play and use the computer. They learn about past and present in their own lives, about where they live and respond to the many visitors including the guide dog and the hedgehog man. They begin to learn about their own culture and about others.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children move confidently in the indoor and outdoor space. They are learning control and awareness of space using wheeled toys on the new road track. Children learn the importance of being healthy, washing hands after handling animals and talking about healthy food. They handle small tools with increasing control as when using playdough and confidently build with construction. The setting is presently increasing the range of small and large equipment for use on the newly developed outdoor area.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children have very good opportunities to use their senses, explore and to communicate their ideas with a very good range of media and materials in the art room. They imagine they are vets and pet owners in role play and are very well supported by staff who extend their imaginative play. Children make up their own imaginative games using a very good range of resources including farm animals and dinosaurs. They enjoy singing songs from memory and joining in with the actions.

**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**

- ensure that children are challenged and extended and build on what they know particularly in mathematical development and communication language and literacy by:
- building on the good practice in mathematical development by providing more planned opportunities and practical activities to extend children's knowledge of mathematical language and ideas;
- plan opportunities for children to regularly hear the sounds of letters and to link them to letters and words through games and everyday activities;
- providing more opportunities to encourage children to attempt writing with enjoyment and confidence for a variety of purposes and scenarios;
- review the organisation of the sessions so that children are not sitting too long and support children at tidy up time, at snack time and when book sharing;

*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.*