



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 508880

DfES Number: 542228

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	01/03/2004
Inspector Name	Ann Hilary Guy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Kingfishers Pre-school
Setting Address	Kings Hall, Kings Chase Brentwood Essex CM14 4LE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Kingfishers Pre-school
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Kingfishers Pre-school
Address	Brentwood Baptist Church Kings Hall Brentwood Essex CM14 4LE

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Kingfishers Pre-School opened in 1986. It operates from a large and smaller room within a church hall in Brentwood. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 42 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 33 funded three-year-olds and 7 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports two children who speak English as an additional language and no children with special educational needs, however provision is in place to do so.

The group opens five days a week term time only, from 09:15 until 11:45 and 12:30 until 15:00 on Monday, and 09:30 until 12:15 Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Two full time and six part-time staff work with the children. Two of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level three, or equivalent. Two members of staff are currently working towards an NVQ level two qualification. The nursery receives support from a teacher and development worker from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Kingfishers Pre-School provide a satisfactory standard of care for children.

The provision is suitably organised to meet the needs of the children and effective use is made of the staff, space and resources. A sound set of policies and procedures underpin the practice of the group, although some amendments and additions are required.

High priority is given to ensuring the children's safety at all times, with children unable to leave the main play area unless escorted by a staff member. Health and safety procedures are strictly followed, with clear guidelines available for staff to use. Systems are in place to ensure children with special needs or English as a second language are well supported and fully integrated.

The staff work well as a team and they know all the children, parents and carers. Each child has a key worker who gets to know the individual children very well. The staff plan a wide range of stimulating practical activities, particularly in the role play area, which encourage the children to make choices and to learn and develop their skills. However, the snack time period is not fully integrated into the session. The staff follow a practice of positive behaviour management, as detailed in the policy, and give the children much praise and encouragement, although their behaviour during whole group times is not as appropriate as at other times during the session.

The pre-school have a good partnership with parents and carers. They are kept informed through regular newsletters, the notice board and informal daily contact with staff. Parents are encouraged to join the management committee, which actively supports the work of the pre-school.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were asked to maintain an accident record book; have a complaints policy available for parents; and ensure all staff have been vetted. An accident record book is in place; the complaints policy is available to parents; and most staff have either been fully vetted, or have submitted clearances and are awaiting final paperwork.

What is being done well?

- The opportunities and variety of role play offered is both stimulating and enjoyable for the children. The house, fire engine and office encourage them to use their knowledge and imagination whilst enacting a wide variety of interlinked scenarios.
- The health and safety practice and procedures are extremely thorough and very clear for both the staff and any visiting students or parents to follow. Equipment is clearly labelled and the person responsible for this area ensures all staff are fully aware of the requirements. A detailed file has been produced giving clear procedures for all duties relating to health and safety.
- The children are treated with respect and as individuals. Staff respond to each child's racial, cultural and linguistic needs with sensitivity.

What needs to be improved?

- confidentiality within the accident book and implementation of an incident book
- the organisation of snack time to encourage independence and become an integrated part of the session
- implementation of an outings policy
- obtain full clearances for all committee members

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
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<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
1	ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that the committee are suitably vetted
7	ensure confidentiality within the accident book and a record of incidents is maintained
8	develop snack time to encourage children to be independent and to enable it to be a fully integrated learning experience
14	ensure a policy and procedure for outings is in place

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 Kingfishers Pre-School is acceptable and of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals, although their progress in communication, language and literacy, physical development and creative development is limited by some significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planned session times offer a worthwhile range of activities where children can learn through play. Thoughtfully prepared role play, such as a firefighting scenario, ensures that children use their imaginations to explore real life situations. Children are mostly well behaved. Staff are deployed effectively and interact well with the children. However, they lack confidence in teaching using the stepping stones and miss opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy within the daily routines. Planning is generally good but has become too complex to be effective. Long term plans are based upon clusters of skills. Weekly plans support the same clusters over the course of half a term. The plans do not support differentiation for children who learn more quickly or more slowly and result in low staff expectation of children's achievements.

Leadership and management is generally good. The joint supervisors work well together, dividing the responsibilities according to their relative strengths. They take a proactive approach to issues and work hard to resolve difficulties which arise.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents provide positive feedback about the group and value the Open Door policy. However, there is little information about the educational content of the provision.

What is being done well?

- The very caring, committed staff team work hard, and make good efforts to cover the six areas of learning. They know the children well and enjoy their company.
- Thoughtfully prepared role play encourages children to use their imagination and to re-enact familiar scenarios. Plans show how the role play area changes regularly and is developed over time. The provision of home-made fire hoses, plenty of uniforms, a fire engine tent and walkie talkies, ensures role play of sustained quality.
- Good emphasis is given to some aspects of personal, social and emotional development. Children develop positive relationships with adults and other children.

What needs to be improved?

- capitalisation of learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy.
- whole group times; e.g. snack, story. music and rhyme
- expectations of older/more able children
- the planning systems require clarification and simplification
- the assessment records
- staff confidence in using the stepping stones.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Kingfishers Pre-School has made limited progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection.

The group has tried many different ways to plan the programme of learning in an attempt to strengthen the educational provision. Three key issues centred around strengthening the programme for communication, language and literacy to include increased opportunities for children to write their names, speaking and listening in whole group activities with specific reference to those with English as an additional language. The fourth issue required the group to include reference to the desirable learning outcomes in all six areas of learning within the assessment records.

Significant weaknesses remain in the programme for communication, language and literacy. All six areas of learning are now covered in the assessment records.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident, select their own activities and develop personal independence in self care tasks. They are mainly interested and excited to learn. However, whole group activities do not always sustain the interest of all children and the organisation does not presently support the development of concentration skills. Children's behaviour occasionally deteriorates when their needs are not being met. However, there are friendly relationships between staff and children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Quality role play supports the development of children's language for thinking. Whole group activities do not always support the development of children's speaking and listening skills. Some computer activities support children's learning in linking sounds and letters. However, there is insufficient emphasis given to encouraging children to enjoy stories and to develop early reading skills. Children occasionally write their names but do not attempt writing for a sufficient variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Good attention is given to the development of children's mathematical skills through home made games such as "To the Rescue". Children recognise the number of dots on the die and are encouraged to count forwards and back. Early calculation is included where appropriate. Children also count through rhymes and songs. Less emphasis is given to numbers as labels and to problem solving through practical activities. Daily routines include little mathematics.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore and investigate sand and water and staff are well deployed to support child initiated learning. Children are able to select resources to build and design. The children gain a sense of time and place through discussion with staff and learn about other cultures in planned activities. Older children have weekly access to the computer to support learning in literacy and numeracy and younger children use technological toys such as toy mobile phones and walkie talkies in role play.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children move confidently around the nursery with control and co-ordination and children ride bikes and wheeled toys in the annexe room. However, there is no outdoor area and this limits children's progress in the use of a range of small and large equipment. They use an adequate range of small tools with increasing control. Health awareness is given little regular emphasis.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children benefit from good quality role play, thoughtfully resourced and prepared by staff. Children experience an adequate range of media but these tend to offer a low quality of learning and do not always encourage children to express their own ideas. Some staff lack confidence to deliver music based activities. Children have too few opportunities to respond using their senses and to use their imagination in art and design, dance and stories.	

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

- Strengthen staff confidence in the use of the stepping stones to guide the further useful development of short term planning. Ensure that plans are simple and manageable. Identify clear intentions for children's learning and brief details of how activities may be extended to challenge more able/ older children.
- Continue to develop assessment records to track children's progress against the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Show how this information will be used to complete the planning cycle.
- Capitalise on learning opportunities for literacy and numeracy within play activities and improve the quality of whole group times.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.