Office for Standards in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203708

DfES Number: 522373

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	11/02/2004
Inspector Name	Gillian Jefferson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Beeches Preschool
Setting Address	136 St. Andrews Avenue Colchester Essex CO4 3AQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Elaine Joy Beecham

This inspection was carried out under the provisions of Part XA of the Children Act 1989, as inserted by the Care Standards Act 2000; and Section 122 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

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

The Beeches Pre-school opened in 1990. It operates from four rooms, in an annexe behind a house on the outskirts of northeast Colchester. The pre-school serves the local and wider surrounding areas.

There are currently 31 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 19 funded 3 year olds and 5 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports no children with special needs or who speak English as an additional language

The group opens five days a week during term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 15:30 Monday to Friday. The group also open occasionally during school holidays between 09:15 and 15:30, depending on demand.

Three part time and three full time staff work with the children, and there is a full time manager. Another two staff work with the children during the school holidays, as required. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 or above. Three staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The group also incorporate some Montessori teaching and use Montessori equipment within their pre-school practice.

How good is the Day Care?

The Beeches Pre-School provides good care for children aged two to under five years.

The group is efficiently organised and well run. The large amount of detailed documentation supports staff in their provision of care. The staff skilfully promote the children's development and the higher than required staff to child ratio helps them. The group have made good progress implementing their action plan to achieve the supervisor qualification requirements. All staff are also regularly involved in

additional training to broaden their knowledge and expertise.

Children's welfare and safety is a paramount consideration, with staff active in their implementation of the policies and procedures and in keeping well informed about health and safety legislation. The widespread use of quality small group and one-to-one interaction from staff enables all children's individual needs to be met and good relationships forged. Children also learn about health and hygiene.

Children are involved in diverse and exciting learning opportunities that support their development in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to develop independence and gain high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Staff adeptly question children to promote their learning. Good behaviour is also successfully supported.

The group work effectively in partnership with parents/carers. The group have an open door policy and give informal feedback to parents and carers, some would like more formal information on their children's progress. A wealth of praise and support for the group was received during the inspection.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the registered provider agreed to ensure that the written statement about special needs is consistent with current legislation and guidance. The statement and policy have been reviewed and updated accordingly.

What is being done well?

- The promotion of children's learning, through the high quality interaction with staff. The use of small group work, and one to one work with the key workers, further assists staff in meeting all the developmental needs of the children through focussed activities and questioning.
- The children's involvement in a dynamic programme of activities, and their access to a wide range of resources and equipment, including some Montessori teaching aids. This helps their development in all areas by capitalising on the children's curiosity and specific interests.
- Staff's consistent implementation of the safety procedures and risk assessments, along with their awareness of health and safety legislation demonstrate their continuing vigilance of the children's safety and wellbeing. Procedures for arrival and collection of children are especially good as commented on by parents and carers.
- The comprehensive and detailed documentation, records and policies that support staff in providing high quality care and keep them well informed of the children's individual needs.

What needs to be improved?

- the sharing of information with parents/carers, to be reviewed.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

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

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
12	Review how information about the children's progress is shared with parents and carers.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Beeches Pre-School is a high quality provision that helps children make very good progress towards all the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. The provision is well presented, creating a stimulating and inviting learning environment. Excellent use is made of the resources and materials; to plan activities, to promote the children's development in all areas. The planning is thorough, demonstrating clear links and learning intentions within activities, and it enables the group to monitor their delivery of a balanced and stimulating programme across the six areas of learning. Staff are skilful in supporting the children and promoting their education through quality interaction and questioning. The children's behaviour is very good in response to the modelling of staff, their high expectations and the positive reinforcement given. Their independence is also fostered, though the adaptation of some equipment may enhance this further The children's confidence and self-esteem is encouraged by the importance staff give to their individual achievements. The staff's experience, training and knowledge, in conjunction with the ongoing assessments and one to one work, help assist planning to meet the children's differing needs.

Leadership and management are very good and a strength. The group has clear objectives and focus, which the staff team embrace. The successful induction of staff and their regular involvement in training keep the group's skills and experience developing.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents and carers are given open access and encouraged to informally discuss their children's developmental progress and view the assessment records. More formal opportunities to discuss the children's progress and the possibility of termly written reports are being looked into. The group do however keep a home reading diary and 'workbooks' for mathematics and writing which are readily available for parents and carers to view.

What is being done well?

- The staff's use of one to one and small group work to develop the children's learning and understanding, particularly for literacy and mathematical development. Staff adapt activities to meet the children's specific needs.
- Staff interaction with and questioning of the children demonstrates skill and confidence in their knowledge of the stepping stones and early learning goals. The children's learning during activities is therefore maximised and their interests capitalised on to enable intended learning outcomes to be achieved.
- The provision of a comprehensive programme of stimulating and dynamic activities across a broad 'curriculum' that effectively maximises children's

development, through opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge across all six areas of learning.

- The teamwork of staff and the management and leadership of the setting. All staff know their specific roles and responsibilities, and work successfully as a team to support and progress the children's learning. Staff are effectively supported in their professional development and are encouraged to have regular training to expand their skills.

What needs to be improved?

- the maximum promotion of the children's independence within their everyday experience. This relates to the small amount of equipment that hinders the children's move towards full independence within their self care.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The Beeches Pre-School has made very good progress since the last inspection of its nursery education provision. The point for consideration to build on existing resources and activities to develop further children's understanding of cultures and beliefs, other then their own, has been effectively achieved. The group now have a comprehensive collection of books and other resources to support the children's learning in this area and have included cultural learning through music and dance within the children's physical development.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
The children are confident and happy and enjoy participating in activities, being keen to learn and involved. They develop a high level of independence, although this may still be extended further for the more able children, by adapting some of the resources used. Children build strong friendships with each other and with the staff, and show care and compassion for others. They are very well behaved and gain a strong sense of community through the activity programme they are involved in.	

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children are confident in speaking and listening and many have a very expansive vocabulary. They acquire a very clear understanding of the links between sounds and letters and recognise rhyme and rhythm in their speech. Each child has a book that they are given one to one support to develop their writing and handwriting skills. Children enjoy stories and books, and gain good reading skills.	

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children are able at using numbers as labels and for counting and confidently use number language within their everyday experiences and play. They also have a high level of understanding of calculation and the links between numbers and how they can be split into different group but still add up to the same total. Children have a good knowledge of 2D and 3D shapes and independently refer to space and measure within activities.	

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children learn about time, the natural world, their local environment, cultures and beliefs through a topic based programme. They are involved in dynamic opportunities to explore and investigate and enjoy planting seeds and making gardens. Children show great curiosity and skilfully adapt their designs and creations to get the desired effect, such as changing the angle of slopes to make cars and trains roll faster.	

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have daily opportunities for physical activity, both indoors and out. They show an increasingly high level of skill in using a wide range of equipment and tools. They are able to move confidently and spontaneously to explore their bodies and the effects of exercise and are supported in learning about keeping healthy. The children's development of fine motor skills is particularly good, as demonstrated in their early writing.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children show real imagination and creativity in their artwork and role-play. They clearly express and communicate their ideas and feelings, using a wide variety of media and are given plenty of chances to use all their senses. All the children enthusiastically participate in dance and music and learn songs with ease. Regular opportunities to hear and play music and musical instruments help them learn about speed, rhythm and how they can make sounds change.	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

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: • There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to reviewing the promotion of the more able children's independence to ensure every opportunity is taken to maximise it within everyday activities. *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.