



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 105261

DfES Number: 514000

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	10/01/2005
Inspector Name	Julie Youngman (TCCI)

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Arndale Nursery & Creche
Setting Address	Unit 35 Arndale Centre Luton Bedfordshire LU1 2TG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Arndale Nursery & Creche 1031348
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Arndale Nursery & Creche
Address	Unit 35 Arndale Centre Luton Bedfordshire LU1 2TG

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

The Arndale Nursery and Crèche is situated in the Arndale shopping centre in Luton. It serves local families for day care and short periods of care for shoppers children.

The premises comprise a large room on the first floor of the Arndale centre. There is an entry system, office, staff room, toilets and kitchen. There is also a store room, utility room, baby change area, cleaning store and outdoor play area. Snacks are provided for the children but packed lunches can be provided by parents. A drop in is held in the same premises, however it is separated from the day care facility by suitably high walls. The same entrance is used by both groups. The registration is for 60 children aged 2 to under 8 years. The Arndale Nursery offers both full and sessional care for children and a shopper's crèche, it is open Monday to Friday, 08:00 - 18:00 and Saturdays 09:00 - 16:30. This is all year round except for Bank Holidays.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Arndale Nursery and Creche provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals and development along the stepping stones of the foundation stage. The range of opportunities for creative development is of particularly high quality which enables the children to make very good progress in this area of learning.

The quality of the teaching is generally good. Staff manage children well, consistently expect high standards of behaviour and have good relationships with them. Staff use open ended questions to develop children's thinking and are accessible and supportive during play and activities. Staff do not use every opportunity to enable children to do simple tasks independently, for instance, tidying up books and objects during the session. Links between medium term and detailed short term plans are being strengthened as staff begin to use newly devised evaluation sheets. This innovation is helping staff to reflect on their practice and enables them to keep satisfactory records of children's progress towards the early learning goals.

The leadership of the setting is generally good. The staff are a strong, united team with clear leadership structure. Roles are clearly defined. Management use the range of staff's individual strengths and knowledge to facilitate the development of the setting.

The partnership with parents is generally good. The provision works closely with parents before their child starts at the playgroup by exchanging information and informing parents about the foundation stage curriculum and learning through play. Staff have developed strategies to keep parents informed on the curriculum as well as more detailed information on weekly activities. Parents much appreciate the approachability of staff and ready access to their children's records.

What is being done well?

- Arndale Nursery and Creche provides a warm friendly caring environment where staff and children form good relationships. Staff make sure they know the children well. Children of a wide age range work and play together well.
- The children's creative development is a particular strength of this setting. The children have access to and enjoy an interesting range of experiences and equipment, not least, regular visits by a 'live' musician, to add further stimulation to the curriculum. Children have excellent opportunities to use their imaginations in role-play situations, as well as art, music and dance and express their ideas in a variety of ways as they play.
- Staff work well as a team. Their skills complement each other and they are

willing to help and cover each other to ensure the needs of the children are met.

What needs to be improved?

- Staff awareness and use of mathematical language in every day activities, particularly to describe shapes.
- Full implementation of the new medium term planning and evaluation formats to enhance monitoring and evaluation of the balance and breadth of the planned and delivered curriculum, ensuring opportunities to climb or look at living things are included.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Whilst no significant weaknesses were found at the last inspection generally good progress has been made on the points the playgroup were asked to consider.

Children now have many opportunities to count as well as link sound with letters. These include a 'number' and 'letter' of the week to provide a focus and this information is shared with parents. Children now enjoy an exciting and stimulating range of role-play activities, for example an Igloo, as part of the home corner during the week on 'Snow and Ice'.

Staff now take full account of the ages and stages of the children's development during planning and running daily activities.

The need to develop the children's independence has been given consideration; for example the children are able to self-select resources or help themselves to drinking water during the session. However, the layout of the building and the continued attentive nature of the staff has limited the progress in ensuring that staff always promote children's independence in carrying out routine tasks.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are enthusiastic and interested as they happily explore all activities in an environment that reflects varied cultures. They form good relationships with each other and adults. The children's behaviour is generally good, sitting quietly when appropriate; they are learning to share and take turns. Children confidently access resources. Staff limit opportunities to develop their personal independence through sometimes doing tasks that children could do for themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children and staff engage in many conversations. The children are stimulated in language for thinking as they listen and join in with stories, especially when staff pose questions such as 'what happened next?' There are examples of print round the room and the children are becoming aware of letters and their sounds, especially with the 'letter of the week', when finding their name cards at snack time or writing their name on their work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children benefit from opportunities to count and learn number names through a range of activities. They join in with enthusiasm number songs involving counting down to zero, such as, when the crocodile eats the monkeys 1 by 1. They gain ideas of shape and space as they complete jigsaws. Children have few opportunities to use mathematical language and ideas to solve problems in general activities, such as when painting to describe the shape of bread at snack time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children build with blocks and explore an exciting range of materials from ice to rice pudding. They can use the computer and other technical equipment, such as the toy microwave in role play. They learn about a wide range of cultures and also about the local environment as they go through the shopping centre to the outside area. There are limited opportunities for children to learn about living things.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Inside the children use a range of small implements and tools, pencils, paint brushes and glue spreaders with confidence and safety. Also inside the children can clamber over and along a climbing frame. Children enjoy being outside with the space to run round and pedal bikes. Planned opportunities for children to progress in climbing and balancing are limited. The nature of the outside area limits regular opportunities for these activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
The planned and delivered curriculum for developing the children's creative skills is very good. The children have opportunities to develop their creative skills as they paint, draw, sing, listen to stories or get involved with extended role-play. They enjoy listening to music and singing enthusiastically to the keyboard accompaniment of the visiting musician who also gets them to move in time to the music and to listen to the many different sounds the keyboard can make.	
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

- Increase staff's knowledge and awareness of the use of mathematical language in every day activities, particularly to describe shapes.
- Complete the implementation of the new medium term planning and evaluation formats to ensure breadth of the planned and delivered curriculum including opportunities to climb, balance and look at living things.

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.