



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507866

DfES Number: 581591

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	26/03/2004
Inspector Name	Jenny Scarlett

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Cowdown Day Nursery
Setting Address	Cowdown Farm House, Cowdown Lane Andover Hampshire SP11 6LE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Cowdown Nursery Ltd 3131558
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Cowdown Nursery Ltd
Address	Cowdown Farm House Cowdown Lane Andover Hampshire SP11 6LE

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

Cowdown Nursery opened in 1996. It operates from the ground floor of a farmhouse on the outskirts of Andover. The nursery has access to six playrooms and a large fully enclosed garden with two sheep in an adjoining paddock. The Nursery serves a wide geographical area.

There are currently 32 children on role. This includes five funded three and four year olds. All children attend full time. None of the children has been identified as having special needs or whose first language is not English.

The nursery opens five days a week fifty weeks of the year. Sessions last from 08:00 to 18:00.

Eleven full time staff work with the children. Seven have Early Years qualifications to NVQ level II or III. Two staff members are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. Two staff members are furthering their qualifications through training. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Cowdown Day Nursery offers satisfactory care for children. Staff develop good relationships with the children and their parents. The staff team are committed to updating their childcare skills and knowledge with regular training. The managers provide appropriate support to the staff and demonstrate sound knowledge of the requirements for registration and the National Standards for Full Day Care. All documentation is in place, however procedures for child protection, behaviour, attendance registers and complaints lack the necessary detail.

Staff give priority to ensuring the safety of the children as stated in the policies and are vigilant of the security procedures. Good hygiene is promoted and the children are encouraged to become independent in their personal care. A good range of healthy meals are offered and staff foster the children's independence appropriately.

Children develop confidence and are secure in their environment however there is no appropriate seating in the under twos room for staff to work with and feed the children comfortably.

The staff ensure the children have access to a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities with a well planned curriculum to promote and enhance the children's play and learning, indoors and outdoors. There is appropriate support for children with special needs. Staff are caring and sensitive to the children's needs and children's behaviour is well managed.

The staff have very good relationships with parents. The parents support the nursery and liaise with staff daily. Children's progress is recorded and shared with parents both formally at regular planned open days and informally through daily discussions. Parents receive regular information relating to the setting, its policies and curriculum.

What has improved since the last inspection?

N/A

What is being done well?

- The high ratio of qualified staff and staffs' commitment to updating their childcare knowledge and skills results in the nursery providing an effective play and learning environment where the children can progress, feel settled, are confident and generally happy.
- The nursery provides an effective play and learning environment for the children indoors and out. Outdoors the nursery is well resourced with tractor tyres, planks and crates which allows the children to enjoy vigorous physical activities. The adjoining paddock and surrounding woodland is used effectively to promote outdoor games, explore the environment and visit the two nursery sheep.
- Children are happy and settled in their environment, they move around freely and with confidence. All the children have good access to the water play room and the well designed spacious sand pit.
- Staff organise effective transition packages to meet the individual needs of the babies and toddlers when transferring children from one room to another.

What needs to be improved?

- procedures for complaints, behaviour, child protection and recording staff and visitors attendance.
- the provision of appropriate seating for staff working with the under twos so that they can work with and feed the children comfortably.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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
2	develop procedures for recording the time of arrival and departure for staff and visitors;
4	provide appropriate seating for staff working with the under twos so that they can work with and feed the children comfortably;
11	ensure that there is a named staff member who is responsible for behaviour management issues and keep a sufficiently detailed record of significant issues and share this with parents;
12	make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the regulatory body;
13	develop procedures to protect staff from allegations of abuse.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Cowdown Day Nursery provision is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Effective teaching helps the children make very good progress in Personal Social and Emotional Development, Mathematics and Physical development.

Teaching is generally good with some missed opportunities to develop the children's early writing skills, music and promoting technology in some activities. The strengths in Personal Social and Emotional Development, Mathematics and Physical development are due to the interaction from staff, engaging the children in stimulating well planned activities and consolidating the children's learning.

Planning of the curriculum is effective and covers the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones however plans do not always show how continuous basic provision is provided. Observations and assessments kept of the children are clearly recorded and show children's progress although staff do not always take forward what needs to be recorded in the next steps of learning. There are effective systems in place to provide good support for children with special needs.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is good support from within the company. A well structured management system and a shared understanding and commitment to early years is visible. The managers know their staff well and utilises their individual strengths and skills within the setting.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well informed about the setting its activities and curriculum with good opportunities to speak to staff on a daily basis. Parents receive well documented progress reports through termly planned open days and information sharing. Written information about the provision is made available for all parents.

What is being done well?

- The staff establish a good working relationship with parents through regular discussions and well documented information relating to their child.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They are confident, interested and able to work on their own. Their behaviour is well managed due to the clear expectations of staff.
- Staff set challenges for children that increase their thinking and skills with practical first hand experiences to discuss, explore and investigate.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to initiate or choose an activity for themselves thus encouraging independence and self reliance.
- The staff provide an effective play and learning environment for the children

indoors and out. Children are happy and settled in their environment, they move around freely and with confidence.

- Staff use good consolidation techniques through repetition, questioning and revisiting topics to enhance the children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to access real life technological items in their play and learning;
- opportunities to develop emergent writing skills and write their names on own pieces of work;
- planning of the curriculum to show how continuous basic provision is used to promote broad learning objectives;
- opportunities for the children to play musical instruments and listen to varied mediums of music;
- staff's recording of where children are in their learning so that they can help them move on to the next stage.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in meeting the targets set.

Following training on the foundation stage and special educational needs, staff demonstrate sound knowledge of the Early Learning Goals and stepping stones and plan a purposeful curriculum for the children. Key characterises to the planning include sufficient detail for practitioners to make the best use of activities and experiences to promote the learning intentions of all children. Staff have attended a varied range of courses to develop their overall skills and knowledge in all aspects of the child care provision. A system for appraisals and identifying staff's individual training and development needs has been implemented to monitor and continually develop individual training needs.

Staff place more emphasis in planning activities to develop mathematical thinking, particularly in problem solving and simple number operations and the vocabulary involved. Staff provide good opportunities through practical activities to develop children's knowledge of comparing numbers such as less than and more than and promote the associated vocabulary involved.

Staff provide wider opportunities for children to browse through books independently to further their enjoyment of books and develop early reading strategies. The library visits twice a month and the Jolly Phonics reading system has been implemented. A well stocked rack of books is available with a good variety of suitable reading materials available including books the children have made themselves.

The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world still has minor weaknesses. Staff plan themes throughout the year to teach the children aspects of

their lives, other cultures and the environment. Programmable equipment has been introduced such as a computer however staff do not provide opportunities for children to experience real technological items in their play.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show good concentration skills and express their needs confidently. Staff provide good opportunities to develop children's independence skills and they confidently work independently at a variety of activities. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, share toys and resources, readily take turns and co-operate with each other. Children are praised in their work and play helping build their self-esteem and confidence. They confidently use their initiative to expand activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact and talk with each other and adults confidently. Children use language well to negotiate and express their ideas with each other and adults. Their spoken language and writing skills are developing well as a result of the good range of planned and spontaneous activities to promote the alphabet by shape and sound. There are missed opportunities for children to develop emergent writing skills or to be encouraged to write their names on own pieces of work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently up to and beyond ten and many recognise numbers up to nine. They learn to use numbers in everyday situations and show that they understand size and shape through practical activities. There are good opportunities to extend the children's understanding of matching and comparing such as growing beans and completing puzzles. There are good practical activities to begin to solve problems such as design and building with bricks and junk modelling.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good opportunities to talk about their families and past present events in their lives. They experience a good range of activities to learn from first hand experiences and aid them to learn to use their senses such as cooking. Children show confidence in design and making skills using a range of recycled materials. They show confidence with the computer however there are missed opportunities to promote the use of technological resources in their play and learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children experience varied opportunities to promote their physical skills. The extensive outdoor area provides good opportunities for vigorous play. Children are advanced and skilled in their physical skills through well planned and spontaneous activities. Many of the children are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills. Children are confident in their independence skills and show a good awareness of basic hygiene.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
<p>There are good opportunities for children to develop their imagination in art and design with varied accessible resources to explore a variety of media and materials. Children respond enthusiastically to new experiences and are confident in communicating their thoughts and feelings. Children use their imagination well with a good range of resources available to promote their imaginative skills however there are missed opportunities for the children to listen and move to music.</p>	

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 opportunities for children to access real life technological items in their play and learning;
- opportunities to develop emergent writing skills and write their names on own pieces of work;
- planning of the curriculum to show how continuous basic provision is used to promote broad learning objectives;

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.