



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 146430

DfES Number: 546148

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/11/2004
Inspector Name Margaret Coyne

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Datchworth Pre-School
Setting Address Datchworth Village Hall
Datchworth Green
Datchworth
Hertfordshire
SG3 6TL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Datchworth Pre-School 1026232

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Datchworth Pre-School
Address Datchworth Village Hall,
Datchworth Green
Datchworth
Hertfordshire
SG3 6TL

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

Datchworth Pre-School opened in 1994 and operates from the village hall in the village of Datchworth which is located in a rural area of Hertfordshire. The children have access to two rooms and share access to an enclosed outside area.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00 until 11.45 with the option of an additional lunch club on a Tuesday and Thursday from 11.45 until 13.00. The pre-school is open for 38 weeks of the year.

There are currently 34 children aged from 2.6 years to under 5 years on roll. Of these 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and also has systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Six of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The pre-school has obtained the Herts Quality Standard award.

The nursery receives support from an early years teacher and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Datchworth Pre-School provides good care for children.

The premises are well managed. The environment is bright and cheerful and made welcoming with attractive displays of the children's art work.

Most records and documentation are in place which promote all aspects of the children's care, learning and play. These are clearly written and revised. However care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained for medical records. Staff

implement a thorough risk assessment which clearly identifies any areas of risk. Children's personal hygiene is promoted well and staff ensure all toys, equipment and premises are clean and safe. Snacks are varied and nutritious and parents are active in providing healthy items for snack time.

A high level of qualified and experienced staff support the group which has a positive impact on the children's care and learning. High staff ratios ensure the children receive individual attention and support. The playroom is arranged in clearly defined areas and children move easily and safely between activities. The activities on offer are purposeful, interesting and stimulating. All children are included and staff will adapt an activity to ensure it meets the individual needs of a child. There are supportive systems in place to assess and monitor any child with special needs. Excellent interaction between staff and children clearly supports all children's development. Children's behaviour is managed well. Staff deal with children in a calm and positive manner, encouraging them to share and take turns. The calm environment has a positive impact on the children when playing.

The group has established effective relationships with parents. Information is available, staff are friendly and approachable and systems are in place to share information. This includes daily discussions and formal parents consultation meetings. A parents involvement policy has been adopted to help parents play an active role in their child's

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to|:

Ensure that accessible individual records are kept on the premises, with full staff details, training, recruitment and qualifications, to produce an operational plan for the safe conduct of outings and to provide information for parents about how to make a compliant.

All actions have been addressed. Staff fill in a form detailing personal details including qualifications, recruitment and training. A suitable outings policy has been introduced and is implemented. The complaints policy has now been amended to include the regulators details.

What is being done well?

- The pre-school make good use of their premises. It is used to it's full potential and the children are secure in their surroundings. The room is arranged in clear, defined areas so children can move safely and freely around the activities. Attention to detail and high levels of supervision ensure the safety of children and adults. Children are able to explore and take risks within a safe environment. The outdoor space is well utilised with a grass area and safety surface. Children are able to experience nature first hand as they feed and watch the birds.
- The presentation of toys and activities encourage the children to take part and show respect for the equipment. Dressing up clothes are hang on a rack

that is easily accessible and attractive to the children. All activities are available for every child to take part and are age appropriate for individual stages of development.

- There are effective relationships with parents and carers. Information is exchanged through daily chats between key workers and parents and parents consultation meetings are arranged by appointment. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's care, learning and play.
- The staff's relationship with the children is excellent. The pre-school provides a good range of toys and resources that meet each child's individual needs and promotes their self-esteem. Children are happy and confident and the staff present themselves as positive role models. The children are learning to respect and value those around them and their environment. Children behave well and respond positively to direction from staff.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation, with regard to a procedure to follow in the event of any allegations made against a member of staff.
- confidentiality, with regard to children's medical details.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
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7	Ensure confidentiality is maintained for all children's medical records.
13	Devise a suitable procedure to follow in the event of any allegations made against a member of staff.

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 Datchworth Pre-School is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of practical activities which are stimulating and challenging in most areas. Planning clearly shows what the children are expected to learn, although the use of evaluations are limited. Children's assessments have been identified as an area to extend to clearly record children's progress. Resources are well organised to increase children's independence and motivation. Staff develop children's language and listening skills and mathematical knowledge well. They use open-ended questions to encourage children to think for themselves and reinforce learning in most areas. However this is not always extended for younger or less able children. Some creative activities are over directed by adults. Good systems are in place to support children with special educational needs. A range of purposeful activities and opportunities are provided to encourage children to explore and express themselves through play. Children behave well and respond to direction from staff.

Leadership and management is generally good. The group benefits from a dedicated leader who works closely with a committed staff team. The manager involves staff in different aspects of children's learning, ensuring all staff play an active role in providing an effective educational program.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents have ample opportunity to talk informally with staff and attend consultation meetings to discuss their child's progress and achievements. Parents are provided with information so they can be involved with their child's learning and extend this learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority which helps children to gain in confidence and fosters feelings of security. Staff relationships with the children is excellent. They provide children with opportunities to become self-motivated, responsible and independent. Children are well behaved and know what is expected of them with clear, age appropriate boundaries.
- Children are confident speakers and listeners. Staff develop children's confidence to speak as part of the group and the staff's open-ended questioning skills are purposeful. Children take turns to talk and interact well developing good conversation skills. They listen well to others and concentrate during story time. Staff introduce the children to a wide range of

books both factual and fiction.

- Staff present many valuable experiences for children to explore and investigate using natural and man made resources. They experience growth and change through well planned activities and can explore their local environment.
- Staff are responsive to the needs of all children with particular care provided for any child with a special need. Children are included in all activities and have a high level of support. Activities are adapted to suit each child's needs. Individual play plans are in place to provide staff with further insight to ensure children can get the most from the activities on offer.

What needs to be improved?

- the systematic approach by staff to record children's development, and make clear evaluations of the activities
- the balance between some adult and child directed activities
- the challenge for younger and less able children to enable them to begin to develop their skills in some aspects of literacy and mathematics.

What has improved since the last inspection?

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

They have increased time for the children to take part in discussions particularly during registration time which encourages children to gain confidence to participate using their language skills as part of the group. Writing materials have been introduced in role play and the group have purchased additional early reading books and large story books to further develop the children's interest in reading. Staff's awareness of introducing older children to different mathematical concepts has been raised with training sessions and new resources to reinforce children's knowledge of calculation, counting and using computer software to develop children's knowledge in this area.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have developed good relationships with each other and adults. They show pride in the work they produce and concentrate well. Behaviour is very good and children are aware of what is expected of them. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Children are confident and happy. They have developed good independence skills as they move freely around the activities and during snack time when they serve each other and pour their own drinks.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident speakers and listeners, they enjoy familiar stories anticipating what comes next. They access the book corner enjoying books in small groups. Staff introduce children to new vocabulary and use open ended questioning skills. Children eagerly engage in conversations with others. Older children's understanding of letters and sounds is developed along with their writing skills i.e. making paper money for the shop. These opportunities could be extended for younger children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have a growing concept of numbers and counting and can recognise numbers i.e. when drawing and using the play money in the shop. They recognise and match shapes and link this into their free play as they talk about the shapes of the shopping in the basket. They recreate patterns using playdough and peg boards. Older children confidently use their mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems. However staff should consider how they can begin to introduce this to younger children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's natural curiosity is well fostered by staff as they learn about the natural world, grow and plant seeds and feed the birds. They enjoy visits into their local environment and discussed the animals seen at the Zoo. Staff plan interesting opportunities for children to explore and investigate using simple experiments. Children competently use the computer operating simple programs that support other areas of learning. Staff introduce children to different cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children take part in a range of activities to develop their large motor skills. They climb, balance, run and jump, using the trampet, caterpillar, bikes and balancing equipment. Children's hand and eye coordination is growing as they take part in ball games and throw and aim balls into the net. Children are able to use tools with skill and dexterity for example threading, using scissors, glue spreaders, pencils and brushes and when manipulating construction equipment and small world figures.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy creating using a range of colours, textures and techniques. They have opportunity to work independently and as a group creating colourful wall displays using different textures i.e. Noah's Ark collage. However some creative activities are over directed by adults. Children enjoy singing and experience sounds with musical instruments and voices. Well planned role play experiences encourage children to interact together, use language skills and their imaginations.

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 a systematic approach by staff to record children's development, to clearly identify their progress against the stepping-stones and make clear evaluations of the activities
- Create a constructive balance between adult and child directed activities, particularly in relation to the opportunities for children to use their own imaginations and free expression during creative activities.
- Extend the challenges for younger and less able children to enable them to begin to develop their skills in some aspects of literacy and mathematics, particularly in relation to basic letter formation, linking sounds to letters in familiar words and practical problem solving skills.

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.