



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127336

DfES Number: 522747

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 18/10/2004
Inspector Name Fran Fielder

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Little Owls Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Toc H Hall
78 Cambrian Road,
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN4 9HW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Little Owls Pre School Playgroup 1022260

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Little Owls Pre School Playgroup
Address Toc H Hall
78 Cambrian Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN4 9HW

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

Little Owls Pre-School has been established for 28 years. It operates from the TOC H Hall on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells. There are kitchen and toilet facilities. There is no outdoor play area. It serves families from the local community.

There are currently 26 children, aged from 2 to 4 years, on roll. This includes 16 funded three year olds and 3 funded four years olds. The setting supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group open five mornings a week during term time. In the autumn term the group do not operate on Thursdays. Sessions are from 09.15 until 11.45. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are ten members of staff who work with the children, four of whom hold a recognised early years qualification. There are two members of staff who are enrolled on training programmes. Five members of staff hold a current first aid certificate.

The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) and receives support from an advisor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Little Oaks Pre-School Playgroup provides good quality care.

An experienced staff team work well together to ensure consistent care for children. The hall used by the group is spacious and bright and well laid out to ensure children can easily move from one activity to another. There is a good range of toys and materials and many resources reflect our diverse society. All records are in place and well maintained. Policies and procedures are clear and well known by staff but the child protection procedures lack sufficient detail.

Regular risk assessments enable staff to identify potential hazards and minimise

accidents. Good routines for hand washing help children understand the need for good personal hygiene although the routine at snack time is less effective. Snacks and drinks are nutritious and help children develop good eating habits. Staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and know how to proceed if they have concerns. Children are valued as individuals and their differences acknowledged. The provision for children with special needs is good and those who speak English as an additional language are supported.

Children are happy and confident and develop good relationships with staff and peers. Children enjoy a broad range of well-planned activities that help develop independence and cater for all tastes. There is no outdoor area but staff plan well to ensure a good balance of physical and quiet play indoors. Staff listen to children and join in child initiated games. Behaviour management is good and children respond to well deserved praise.

Parents receive a prospectus that gives good information about the provision. Regular newsletters and a notice board inform parents of play themes. Parents find staff friendly and approachable. There is no formal feedback but parents can make appointments and access their children's records at any time.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Good progress has been made since the last inspection when several actions were raised. They related to documentation, risk assessments and health and hygiene issues. The group agreed to include all required documentation, policies and procedures and to review those already available to ensure they meet the requirements of the national standards.

They also agreed to carry out a full risk assessment to identify areas that could pose a risk. They were asked to implement better procedures to prevent cross infection.

All policies and procedures are in place with one omission from the child protection policy. Staff have a good knowledge of all procedures which guide them in their daily practice and enables them to provide appropriate care for the children. All records and documentation have been reviewed and adapted to meet the requirements of the national standards.

A full risk assessment has been carried out and improvements made where necessary. A daily check ensures all areas used by children are safe.

New procedures are in place to prevent cross infection. Staff and children are aware of the routines for hand washing.

What is being done well?

- Relationships between staff and children are very good. Children are very confident and staff are attentive and ensure children are secure and happy.
- Behaviour management is good. Children respond well to staff's request for good behaviour and take responsibility by helping to clear away toys. Staff

are good role models and children are well behaved and polite to staff and peers.

- Staff are friendly and receptive to parents views. Staff work closely with parents to ensure good quality care for the children. Regular verbal feedback informs parents about their children's development and the provision.
- Space and resources are well planned and used to ensure a good balance of interesting and stimulating activities which are accessible to all.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of snack time to ensure children wash their hands immediately before handling food
- the information contained in the child protection policy

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.)

Not applicable

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
7	organise snack time so that children can wash their hands immediately before handling food
13	ensure the child protection policy includes the procedures to be followed if an allegation of abuse is made against 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 Little Owls Pre-School Playgroup is of good quality. Overall, children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Progress in personal, social and emotional development, and creative development is very good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a very good understanding of how children develop and learn. They plan a range of activities based on real life situations that help children progress in all areas. Staff use appropriate behaviour management strategies and children respond well. Staff are good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner.

Relationships are good and staff interact well with children supporting their learning especially in role play. They use skilful questioning which helps children organise their thoughts and extend their creative ideas. Staff observe and assess children but do not use this effectively to plan the next steps in each child's learning. Short term planning does not identify learning objectives or show how individuals will be challenged. The provision for children with special needs is good.

Leadership and management are generally good. Staff work well as a team and clear communication allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme. There are clear aims for the provision and staff are made aware of these during meetings and appraisals. These aims reflect a commitment to improving the quality of care and education. There is no formal system to monitor and evaluate the teaching or activities.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents receive good information about the foundation stage. Staff involve parents in their child's learning by asking them to bring in items for the interest table and by inviting them to share knowledge and skills. Parents receive informal feedback on their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children respond positively to staff, develop good social skills and behave well. They are keen to join in with activities and their levels of concentration are high. Their confidence and independence is promoted through the sensitive support of the staff and easy access to resources.
- Children are encouraged to use their imagination and express their ideas in a variety of ways, but especially in group role play. They enjoy participating in singing sessions and regularly explore sound and musical instruments.
- Staff manage children's behaviour well by using lots of praise and encouragement. This enables children to learn the consequences of their

words and actions and the effect it has on others. It also helps create a good learning environment for children.

- Staff are keen to improve the educational programme for children. They are enthusiastic and receptive to new ideas. They are willing to increase their knowledge of the foundation stage of learning. They support all children well in their learning and encourage independence.

What needs to be improved?

- the short term planning to ensure appropriate challenge for all children
- the system to monitor and evaluate the educational provision
- the opportunities for children to learn about other cultures

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection when they agreed to increase staff's knowledge of the stepping stones, particularly in mathematics and one aspect of communication, language and literacy.

Staff have a better understanding of the foundation stage of learning and some have attended training. This has helped staff to plan appropriate activities that help children progress in all areas of learning. Staff make good use of songs and circle time to increase children's understanding of calculation. Some children lack sufficient challenge but overall, they are making generally good progress through the stepping stones.

Children learn to link sounds and letters. They recognise their names on labels and place mats and are beginning to write their names competently.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very well motivated and concentrate for extended periods at self-chosen activities. Children show independence and confidently choose from a range of activities. Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers and adults. They are beginning to understand the need to share and take turns when playing together. Children behave very well and respond to requests for good behaviour. They understand the rules within the setting and abide by them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children speak confidently to peers and adults. They talk openly during circle time about themselves and their families. Their listening skills are good and they take turns when speaking in large and small groups. Children recognise the initial sound of their own name and attempt to write these. Some children are beginning to form letters correctly. Children enjoy story time. They spend time 'reading' and sharing books with friends and adults but books are sometimes used just to fill time.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently by rote. They enjoy number rhymes and songs and are beginning to use fingers to represent numbers. Children are beginning to understand the concept of simple additions and subtraction and many can say what is one more or one less. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing well. They make patterns using beads and pegs. Some children lack challenge when counting and looking at numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children investigate using their senses. They have many opportunities to learn about changes that occur when melting ice, making jelly and grinding corn. Children demonstrate good cutting and joining skills. They select and use appropriate materials and tools competently to create collages and models. Children learn about their environment through visits to local amenities, such as the supermarket and the pet shop. There are insufficient opportunities for children to learn about other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. They show good co-ordination when jumping, running and balancing. They respond and move enthusiastically during music and movement sessions. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They are competent when selecting and using small equipment such as scissors, glue sticks and paintbrushes. There are insufficient opportunities for children to learn the importance of good personal hygiene and how their body works.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their senses to explore and describe experiences. They make and play their own music musical instruments. Children use their imagination and express their ideas in different ways. They act out well-known scenarios and stories during role-play. Group role play and acting out stories such as 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' enable children to act out fears in a safe environment. Children express themselves creatively through paintings, drawings and make collages.

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

- use observations made on children to extend the short term planning to include the learning objective and differentiation so that all children are appropriately challenged
- devise and implement a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the educational provision
- introduce more opportunities for children to learn about other cultures

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.