



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127571

DfES Number: 518632

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/06/2004
Inspector Name Susan Jennifer Scott

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Aidans Nursery
Setting Address The Vicarage, St. Gregorys Crescent
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 4JL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Aidans Nursery

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Aidans Nursery
Address The Vicarage, St. Gregorys Crescent
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 4JL

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

St Aiden's Nursery School opened in 1979.

It operates from a large Church hall with a storage room in the Westcourt area of Gravesend. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 25 children from two and a half to five years on roll. This includes ten funded three-year-olds and four funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens three mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08:55 until 11:50.

There are four part time staff who work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. There is one staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA), they receive support from the field officer and are managed by a committee. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

St Aiden's Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

The nursery have exclusive use of the premises when open and a variety of appropriate equipment is provided for the children to use. The staff team work well together and share responsibilities for delivering a variety of activities for the children. Four staff have completed First Aid training and the supervisor and deputy are qualified to level three. All staff are aware of the written procedures and policies

and carry these out as part of their responsibilities. The documentation needs some adjustments to meet the requirements.

The hall is clean, safe and has access to outdoor play space, though this is limited in its use. There is good security and staff pay attention to safety. Routines for eating and hygiene are appropriate, although not always consistent, but they offer children a relaxed routine where they feel secure.

The staff work well as a team to plan a stimulating range of practical activities which encourage children to make choices and to learn. They are flexible in supporting children's behaviour and meeting their individual needs. There is a clear commitment to, and support for children with additional or special needs and the staff have adopted procedures to enable them to support children's development through the use of individual education plans.

The relationship between parents and staff is good: parents are very satisfied and feel their children make good progress. Parents receive a variety of verbal information and are informed of events taking place in the group through the regular use of newsletters. They can access a variety of information provided by the group and they can consult their children's records during the sessions. Staff are considering extending the opportunities that parents have to contribute towards their children's records.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- There is a good understanding of procedures for children with special needs and staff observe, assess and support them, reviewing progress regularly so that children can take part in the planned activities
- The staff have a good understanding of behaviour issues: they provide positive role models and encourage the children with praise so that their confidence and self esteem develops well;
- There are relaxed and positive relationships with parents; these help develop children's confidence and support all aspects of their learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the documentation; so that it is brought up to date
- parent's opportunities to contribute to ongoing records of children's development
- the administration of medication
- the inclusion of procedures to be followed in the event of a complaint in the

policy document for parents.

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	Ensure that the register is accurate at all times.
7	Ensure that parents sign to acknowledge any medicines given to children.
12	Make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint.
12	Provide opportunities for parents to contribute regular information on their children's progress.
14	Ensure all documentation is reviewed and updated as appropriate.

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 St Aiden's Nursery is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of practical activities, both in and out doors, and understand what children learn from them. Resources of are good quality and organised to increase children choices, though there are occasions when children would benefit from more detailed planning. Staff are skilled at developing children's conversations, they encourage them to explain their experiences and talk about what they are doing. Group activities for the funded children are presented in a relaxed manner, but are not always extended to provide sufficient challenge for the older, more able, children or opportunities to explore for the younger children.

Staff observe and assess children's learning in each of the six areas. However, their assessments are not always clearly linked to planning for the next steps in children's learning. As a result, they do not provide a secure basis on which to provide for, or to assess individual progress.

The leadership and management of the day nursery is generally good. The staff team are well motivated and are supplemented by committed volunteers who enjoy their work. The supervisor monitors and supports the staff team, working with them to plan the programme, and the manager of the neighbouring setting oversees the provision, although there is not a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in place yet.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents regularly talk to staff about their children and are encouraged to support their children's learning at home. There are procedures to encourage parents to share information and contribute to planning for their children's learning when they first begin at the nursery. Records of transfer inform them about progress children have made.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide good recognition praise and encouragement for children which encourages and motivates them so that they engage in learning with enthusiasm and a sense of self esteem;
- Staff provide good support for children to develop and progress by using gestures, explanations and examples for children to observe and apply; such as when using the play dough and during a listening activity;
- Story times are relaxed and fun for the children who enthusiastically participate by using the "props" in the story sacs.

What needs to be improved?

- the assessment and record keeping system: to provide a clearer link with the stepping stones and early learning goals
- the planning and preparation so that activities and resources cater for children of different stages and abilities
- the attention given to children's awareness of: i) writing, and of the sounds of different letters and words; ii) counting, and the use of numbers to calculate such as "less or more than".

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection the nursery have made generally good progress by:

Displaying some examples of children's work and previous topics have been illustrated and displayed. Children have been provided with a variety of media which is freely available use a selection of materials during activities.

Several items have written labels and children are involved in choosing the right labels during some routines, although this is not consistently encouraged except at snack time. An element of this key issue is carried forward in a key issue for this inspection.

A climbing frame and balancing equipment have been purchased and are provided inside and outside regularly and children are able to access these freely.

Several items of technological equipment have been obtained by the nursery and are regularly provided for the children to use.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children behave very well: they learn to share and take turns, and to be polite and considerate by observing the staff who are good role models. Children's confidence and self-esteem are successfully nurtured by staff who are sensitive to their needs and encourage them to take care of their personal needs, such as washing their hands. They are encouraged to be independent and to voice their preferences and ideas; enabling them to choose between activities and select resources for themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with staff; they enthusiastically enact imaginary play scenarios linked to the stories. Many children recognise their first names and are beginning to write these independently with well-formed letters. They recognise name labels although their interest in writing and reading is not consistently exploited during role play opportunities or routines.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The children develop an awareness of weight and capacity through the use of resources such as sand and water as they fill and empty different containers. They benefit from good support to help them count to 10 and to recognise shapes, colours and sizes. Their understanding of numbers is encouraged during activities such as working out the date, or counting the numbers of boys and girls present. However, their progress is limited by lack of consistent practice to reinforce their learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children explore the use of technological equipment including calculators, keyboards and telephones. Access to varied books, dressing-up clothes and puzzles promote respect for a variety cultures. The outdoor area and neighbouring garden are used to stimulate children's interest in the natural world: they observe the weather and the growth of seeds and plants. Planned activities encourage them to refine their construction skills: they make models and musical shakers from recycled materials.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy challenges, such as balancing along the beam and manoeuvring tricycles along the path. Staff are on hand to give support and encourage skills like walking sideways and forwards and to use the stepping stones with confidence. Children learn how to use scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and small scoops in the sand tray with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children participate enthusiastically in music and singing, they are spontaneously encouraged to sing and march in time to song. They are encouraged to listen to simple rhymes, and use their voices and musical instruments to practice loud and soft sounds. Children draw freely and enjoy applying paint in different ways. Role play activities are varied and interesting and children enjoy playing imaginatively although the quality of their play varies with the amount of support they are given.

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 assessments and recording systems to provide a clear link with the stepping stones and early learning goals
- plan and prepare for activities so that they cater for children of different stages and abilities
- increase children's awareness of i) print, the sounds of different letters and words, and of
- ii) counting and the use of numbers to calculate such as "less or more than" during practical activities and routines.

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.