



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 317397

DfES Number: 519715

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 18/09/2003
Inspector Name Christine Carole Ogden

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Ravenscar Kindergarten
Setting Address 8 Eden Street
 Carlisle
 Cumbria
 CA3 9LR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Emmy Sealey

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

Ravenscar Kindergarten is privately owned and managed by Mrs Emmy Sealey. It is located in the Stanwix suburb of Carlisle, approximately 2 miles north of the city centre. The setting has been registered for 15 years and children are accommodated within a two storey building adjoining the owner's private residence. Ravenscar serves the immediate and extended areas since many parents commute to the city for work, and the children move on to several feeder primary schools.

The accommodation comprises: downstairs - an entrance hallway, kitchen, cloakroom area, conservatory and 3 small interconnecting central play rooms for the pre-school children, rear play room and adjoining narrow play area for the 2-3 year olds, and toilet area; upstairs - a horseshoe-shaped play area and adjoining toilet with wash basin for the 2-3 year olds. There is an enclosed rear garden with lawn, flower beds and patio area. and a covered area which is used as an outside classroom. The nursery pets include a canary and 2 love birds in the conservatory, fish in the upstairs play room, and a guinea pig whose cage is located within the outdoor classroom.

Ravenscar is open from 08:30 to 17:30 on weekdays. It is registered for a maximum of 36 children aged from 2 to under 8 years, with a maximum of 3 children aged 5-8 years. There are currently 24 funded 3-year-olds and one funded 4-year-old on the nursery roll. Currently there are no children with identified special educational needs or with English as an additional language, though one child is bi-lingual. The children are supported by 10 staff (including 2 relief nursery nurses), the majority of whom are qualified to Level 3. The Manager and her officer-in-charge are qualified to Level 4.

Ravenscar is a Member of the National Day Nurseries Association and of the British Association for Early Childhood Education.

How good is the Day Care?

Ravenscar Kindergarten provides good quality care for children. Staff provide a

warm, welcoming and stimulating environment for all children. Children have access to a wide range of resources and are supported in their learning by qualified and experienced staff. The setting is well organised and managed.

There is a good awareness of health and safety issues in most areas of the nursery. Children are supported in learning about and developing good personal hygiene practices, and their individual care needs are met well overall.

Children are involved in interesting planned activities and are keen to learn. They interact well with one another and with adults. Children enjoy the daily nursery routine which gives them opportunities for individual and group play. Staff encourage and value children's good behaviour and there are positive strategies in place to promote it.

Staff have a very good relationship with parents. Parents are kept well informed about their children's individual progress through written and verbal communication.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Five actions were raised at the last inspection:

There was no clear written policy regarding the administration of medication. Such a policy is now in place and medication forms now require the written consent of parents prior to and following the administration of medication to their children.

Parents were previously giving blanket consent for the administration of non-prescription medication. Parents are now required to give specific instructions for the administration of specified non-prescription medication in accordance with the previous action.

The nursery was asked to include a statement about notifying Ofsted of any serious injury or death to any child or adult within their policy documents. The nursery is aware of this regulation and it is included within their documentation.

The nursery was asked to ensure that the first aid box was regularly checked to ensure that its contents correlated with the list of required contents. The first aid box is very well stocked and is stored safely in the kitchen. It is checked on a regular basis by a designated member of staff.

The nursery was asked to ensure that staff are aware of the need for confidentiality regarding children's medication consent forms. Staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality and information is shared on a 'need to know' basis. Such information is entered on separate sheets for each child.

What is being done well?

- The nursery has effective procedures in place for recruiting and supporting staff. Staff have access to training which meets their individual needs and those of the nursery. There is an emphasis placed upon effective team

working which is assisting the retention of an experienced and very well qualified staff team.

- Children enjoy a wide variety of interesting and well-resourced activities which are planned around key themes through the nursery year. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and they offer a good balance of teacher-led and free play opportunities for the children throughout the day. The nursery space is used creatively, in particular the outdoor classroom and attractive rear garden.
- Equal opportunities is promoted well within the setting. Children are supported in learning about their own and other cultures, and to respect and value each other's similarities and differences. Staff have a good awareness of anti-discriminatory practice and most have had the opportunity to undertake further relevant training.
- Children enjoy the nursery routine and are clear about how they are expected to behave within the setting. They receive lots of praise and encouragement for positive behaviour. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and provide good role models. There is a friendly and warm atmosphere within the nursery and children's individual contributions are recognised and valued.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Emmy's husband has designed and built an incubator. During the spring months the nursery children can observe the hatching of fertilised eggs into chicks. This is a very exciting experience for all the children and the staff and forms part of children's learning about New Life and Springtime. (Standard 3)(Knowledge and Understanding of the World)

What needs to be improved?

- the nursery risk assessment to ensure that areas for improvement are identified, e.g. staircase which currently has no child-height hand rail, loose concrete bird bath on concrete column in the garden
- the child protection procedures. The ACPC is not a direct point of contact. There should be someone with overall responsibility for child protection issues at all times.

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
1	Update clearances for staff where they were completed more than 3 years ago.
6	Monitor effectiveness of risk assessment and ensure that identified risks are minimised (e.g. children using the stairs).
13	Revise the child protection procedures.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Ravenscar Kindergarten provides very good quality nursery education. Children enjoy learning through a wide range of interesting activities and are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of Learning. Planning covers all the areas of learning with activities that reflect the stepping stones guidance. The organisation of staff and resources enables all children to make very good progress. Children's behaviour is well managed and staff listen and respond to the individual needs of the children. The interaction between the adults and the children is excellent.

The leadership and management is very good. Emmy Sealey, the owner, works closely with staff to ensure that the curriculum and activity planning results in well-balanced and resourced activities for the children. There is a strong commitment to supporting the experienced and well qualified staff team, and to remaining updated on good child care practice. The skills and experience which the current staff bring to the setting are recognised and valued.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's learning. They receive good quality written and verbal information about the nursery and its aims. They are well informed about their children's achievements through written diaries and assessments.

What is being done well?

- There is a strong commitment to supporting and enhancing staff skills and child care practice through an appraisal system and ongoing training opportunities. Most members of staff have an area of responsibility within the nursery setting, linked to key National Standards. This reflects an open and democratic management style which recognises the quality and experience of the current staff group.
- Children enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities which are planned and well-resourced. They have opportunities for individual free play and teacher-led activities in both small and large groups. All children are developing self-esteem and self-confidence, evidenced by lively and wide-ranging discussions with the nursery staff at circle time.
- Staff have excellent relationships with the children and provide them with good role models. They encourage good behaviour through the use of praise and encouragement. This fosters a happy and stimulating environment where children can learn through their play.
- The owner and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning.

Some parents have visited the nursery to share their knowledge and skills of, for example, musical instruments and food from other cultures. Open evenings are held not only to update parents on their own child's progress but to share information about the early learning goals within the Foundation Stage of Learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the differentiation of activities within the planning to meet the needs of more able children
- the more frequent use of information and communication technology within the planning of activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no significant weaknesses identified at the time of the last nursery education inspection in June 1999. Two points for development were identified and have been addressed well:

(1) There was little planning evidence to improve climbing and balancing skills. These are now integrated within a physical play rota. The rota ensures that children have opportunities to enjoy a variety of physical play experiences both within the nursery building and in the outdoor garden area: and

(2) Books were not displayed in a way which attracted the children, although there were plenty of books available. The nursery now has designated shelving for books on both floors of the nursery. Some of the books are displayed on the top shelf, others are conventionally positioned. The selections of books are changed on a regular basis. There are floor cushions for the younger children and two child-size settees for the pre-school children located near the books so that children can sit comfortable and enjoy their chosen book.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children enjoy the nursery routine and are motivated to learn. They enjoy a range of well-planned activities which allow them to relate to others within both large and small groups. Children are developing self-confidence and self-esteem through opportunities to make choices for themselves and to be independent.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in communication, language and literacy. Children happily engage in group conversations and are encouraged to share their experiences and feelings. Staff support children in learning to listen to one another. Children enjoy handling and looking at books and stories, songs and rhymes are enjoyed throughout the nursery day. They have access to writing materials and are being introduced to a new phonic reading scheme to help link sounds to letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in mathematical development. Counting and number recognition is promoted in a fun and interesting way through a range of planned and free play activities. Children have many opportunities to learn about shape and size, and the concepts of more and less.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. They are keen to explore their natural environment and to investigate different materials and objects. They are supported in learning how to use the computer. Staff offer children opportunities to learn about their own culture and those of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in physical development. Staff use a physical play rota which ensures that children have a variety of physical play experiences whilst at nursery. Children have opportunities to use both small and large equipment and tools for a variety of purposes. The children particularly enjoy music and movement, and accessing the outdoor activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making excellent progress in creative development. There are opportunities to draw, colour, paint, chalk and enjoy role play on a daily basis. Staff organise regular musical activities involving the use of home-made and conventional musical instruments, songs and rhymes. Children are encouraged to explore a wide range of interesting materials and media, and they are learning to express their ideas creatively.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There were no key issues raised at this inspection. Two points for consideration for improvement were:
- Provide more frequent opportunities for children to access information and communication technology within the planning of activities.
- Identify how differentiation can be achieved for more able children within the activity planning.

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.