



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 105210

DfES Number: 582996

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/09/2004
Inspector Name Susan Ennis

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Applecroft Pre-School
Setting Address Ross Park Scout Hut
Applecroft Road
Stopsley, Luton
Bedfordshire

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Applecroft Pre-school 1059313

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Applecroft Pre-school
Address Ross Park Scout Hut
Applecroft Road
Stopsley, Luton
Bedfordshire
LU2 8BB

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

Applecroft Pre-school has been open for more than thirty years. It operates from Ross Park Scout Hut, Applecroft Road in the Stopsley area of Luton. The Pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 51 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This include 31 funded three year olds and 1 funded four year old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 and from 12:45 until 15:15.

A total of 6 staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Applecroft Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children. A high level of qualified staff and good adult : child ratios enable the children to present as confident and secure. Staff are deployed to meet the needs of the children giving support and encouragement. The premises are safe, secure and suitable. The large outside play area is used creatively. A system is required to ensure that the correct room temperature is maintained. A range of suitable and well maintained resources is provided. However the range of programmable toys extending technology development is limited. All regulations are met apart from that concerning a Lost Childs procedure. This is not currently in place and an action was agreed.

Positive steps are taken to promote children's safety within the setting including arrival and collection times. A procedure for safety on outings is required. The good health of children is promoted and positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Accident recording is to be more detailed. A comprehensive medication

policy is in place and the majority of staff hold a regularly updated first aid certificate. A variety of nutritious snacks are provided for the children catering for any special dietary requirements and allergies. All staff actively promote equality of opportunity and each child is treated as an individual. This is reinforced by the written Equal Opportunities policy. Children with special needs are supported within the setting and staff are aware of the steps to promote their development and welfare. Through training staff are aware of the procedures to be followed should child protection concerns arise.

A stimulating range of activities is provided encouraging all areas of development. The management of behaviour is age appropriate and consistent.

The relationship between staff and parents is good. Parents are kept well informed with regard to the Pre school itself and their child's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

N/A

What is being done well?

- there is a high level of qualified staff maintaining the good adult : child ratio
- there is good use of observations and resources to plan the children's next stage of development
- the snacks provided are healthy and nutritious
- the settings relationship with parents is good and informative

What needs to be improved?

- the policies regarding lost children and outings
- the system for ensuring a correct room temperature is maintained
- the range of resources to encourage technology development
- the correct recording of accidents.

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
6	Devise a Lost Child procedure	11/10/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
4	Ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature
5	Increase the range of toys to extend technology development
7	Ensure accident records are fully detailed

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education for three and four year olds at Applecroft Pre-school is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social and emotional development is particularly well planned and they make very good progress in this area.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a competent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Staff use assessments specifically to plan each child's progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Adult initiated activities are not always evaluated which can lead to some activities being withdrawn from the plans rather than adapted. They use the available resources and accommodation to provide a range of learning activities. Teaching methods are very effective in promoting children's independence and self esteem. Children are taught and understand consistent ground rules and routines responding in a positive way to them

The leadership and management of the pre school is very good. The Leader, staff and committee are committed to providing a high level of care and learning for the children and have a collaborative approach to all aspects of their work. Evaluations and information from parents are effectively used to make improvements and future plans.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are kept well informed regarding the setting and their child's progress through newsletters, regular meetings with their child's key worker and use of stepping stones books. Very positive feedback was received via the parent questionnaire and time spent talking to parents.

What is being done well?

- Staff use their knowledge and assessments specifically to plan activities and resources to enable child to progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. All staff and committee are committed to providing good quality care and education for all children
- Children are taught and understand consistent ground rules and routines.
- Parents are kept well informed regarding the setting and their child's progress through newsletters, regular meetings with their child's key worker and use of stepping stones books.

What needs to be improved?

- the provision of more practical opportunities to develop the children's use of calculation, information and communication technology and music
- the use of evaluations to ensure that activities are not withdrawn from the curriculum plans

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection.

Links between planning and assessment are developing well although the use of evaluation with extend this further.

Opportunities for children to select their own resources are being developed. Staff and committee are working on ideas to enable the children to have more choice about the resources selected for each session.

links with parents are now very good and this was reinforced by the parent questionnaires and conversations held with them.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's confidence and self esteem are very well promoted. They are positively praised and encouraged to persist with difficult tasks. They are well behaved and are aware of their boundaries. They choose between the available activities and are given time to complete them. They are developing an understanding that different people have different needs and are building links with the local community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's language is progressing well. They are developing their recognition of letter and phonic sounds. The letter C was letter of the week. Children were encouraged to think of items that began with C. They are developing their vocabulary and talk and negotiate with each other. They understand that print carries meaning and are learning the correct use of books. There are opportunities to mark make but these are limited and could be extended to more everyday activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children participate in a variety of activities which involve counting, number recognition and the use of space and measure. They pour their own drinks during the session and at snack time. Opportunities to use calculation are limited due to conflicting advise given to staff.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing their knowledge of the world around them through nature walks using magnifying glasses and binoculars. There is a daily discussion regarding the weather. They build and construct with a variety of bricks and other construction resources. The use of resources to develop information and communication technology knowledge is to be increased.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing physically using both large and fine motor skills. Hand eye co ordination is progressing through use of threading and sticking resources. They use small tools including rolling pins and chop sticks. Children peddle on bikes and develop jumping skills on the trampoline. Opportunities to move in a controlled manner and with imagination are limited.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are able to explore a range of different materials, colours, shapes and textures. Their imagination is well supported with props and resources. Children pretend that one object represents another, for example, a cardboard box as a house. More opportunities to use music and sound are to be encouraged.

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

- the provision of more practical opportunities to develop the children's use of calculation, information and communication technology and music
- the use of evaluations to ensure that activities are not withdrawn from the curriculum plans

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.