



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127702

DfES Number: 523780

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/03/2004
Inspector Name Jenny Kane

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Old School House Nursery II
Setting Address Ashburnham, Ashford Road
 St Michaels
 Tenterden
 Kent
 TN30 6SR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Fiona Brissenden

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

The Old School House Nursery has been registered since 1997 and is privately owned and managed.

The nursery curriculum is based on the Montessori philosophy and principles. It operates from an annex to the provider's home in a rural area of St Michaels, near Tenterden. There is access to a safe, enclosed outside play area. The group serves the local and surrounding area.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 15:30 during term-time for children aged two years to five years. There is a facility for a limited number of children aged between two years and eight years to attend during the school holidays. Children attend on a sessional or extended day basis.

There are currently 78 children on role aged from two years to five years. This includes 22 funded three-year-olds and 26 funded four-year-olds. The group supports several children with special needs.

Three full-time and seven part-time staff work with the children. Five hold early years childcare qualifications and three hold current first aid certificates.

The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). They are also members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

How good is the Day Care?

The Old School House Nursery provides good quality care for children.

The owner and her staff have worked together for several years. The staff team have a good knowledge of child development and the Montessori philosophy. The prospectus shows clear aims and objectives, however some of the policies need updating. The premises are welcoming and children's work is well displayed. There are good outdoor play facilities, which children use on a daily basis, and

opportunities for nature walks. Children have access to a good range of toys and equipment. They are encouraged to care for the toys and put them away after use.

The children are cared for in a safe environment where good attention is paid to personal hygiene. Children enjoy helping feed the animals and understand the need to wash their hands afterwards. Children are encouraged to be independent, taking themselves to the toilet, choosing from activities and handing food round at snack time. However, it would be beneficial if they could pour their own drinks. Children have very good relationships with the staff who are able to meet individual and special needs.

The children enjoy a good range of activities which are interesting and meet all abilities. The topics and activities are very well planned, staff motivate children well and encourage all children to participate. Children enjoy a purposeful yet flexible routine, they make choices about the equipment they use and because they are well occupied their behaviour is very good.

The relationships with parents is very good and they receive good written and verbal information about the service. Staff are available to discuss any concerns and to feedback regarding the children's care and progress. Staff are friendly and approachable which encourages parents to share information about their child. Parents have the opportunity to express their views and ideas through the parents forum and to join in various social events throughout the year.

What has improved since the last inspection?

N/A

What is being done well?

- Staff plan the sessions with thought and care providing a good range of interesting and age appropriate activities and topics. They are aware of meeting each child's individual need.
- Children have many opportunities to help look after and feed the animals. They also go on nature walks around the grounds.
- Children enjoy using the outdoor play area and garden on a daily basis.
- The calm atmosphere encourages children to feel confident and settled. They have good relationships with other children and are confident when moving on from the nursery to the school room.

What needs to be improved?

- The formal systems for staff supervision and appraisal
- The opportunity for children to help themselves to water and pour their own drinks
- The record of visitors and the updating of written policies.

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
2	Implement formal systems for staff supervision and appraisal.
8	Consider providing a system where children can help themselves to water and pour their own drinks.
14	Introduce a record of visitors which show times in and out and is signed by the visitor. Review and update written policies.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Old School House Nursery is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all the six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Montessori philosophy and principles. They also have a good understanding of the early learning goals and the stepping stones, which enables them to provide a wide range of interesting and purposeful activities. Clear systems of observations and assessments are used to plan children's individual learning. Staff support children well during activities, including those with special needs. Children are very independent, they choose toys and activities and put away equipment when finished. The children's behaviour is very good.

The leadership and management is very good. The owner also manages the nursery and takes a very active role. She supports her staff well and delegates to her very able supervisor and team leaders. The staff work well as a team, supporting each other well and meeting on a regular basis to plan the curriculum and activities. The team have a positive attitude to staff training and development and are open to making changes and improvements.

The partnership with parents is very good. They are kept well informed about the curriculum and key workers maintain good daily contact with parents, feeding back information about the children's achievements and progress. Staff are friendly and approachable, enabling parents to share information about their children. There is very good sharing of information regarding topics and themes with the parents, both verbally and in writing. The parents take an active interest in their children's progress, are involved in their child's education and continue the learning at home. The manager is keen to work with parents and has set up a forum, enabling parents to meet regularly and to have the opportunity to express their views and opinions about the service.

What is being done well?

- Children have many opportunities to find out about the wider world, celebrate festivals and explore other cultures. The topic work is well displayed and staff make the subject enjoyable for the children by providing a good range of objects and props.
- Children express themselves very well during role play scenarios. There are good resources provided to enable the children to be creative and think for themselves during art, craft and music activities.
- Children are making very good progress in the areas of literacy and mathematics. Very good equipment is available, work is well displayed and

staff make the learning process meaningful.

- The book and computer areas are very well used. There are many opportunities for children take part in singing, action songs, movement sessions, listen to music and use instruments.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning so that it links clearly to the early learning goals and the six areas of learning, whilst continuing to work to the Montessori philosophy and principles. This information should then be shared with the parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery was given three actions:

- 1) Improve opportunities for children to take part in role play, make up their own stories and to practice writing and drawing in imaginative situations.
- 2) Enable less experienced staff to develop their questioning skills so that they extend children's reasoning.
- 3) Develop opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to their child's assessment records throughout the year, in addition to the final reports.

The nursery has made very good progress in all these areas:

- 1) The role play area has been developed and a mark making area is available. Both these areas are now strengths.
- 2) Staff have given this area thought and have improved their questioning skills. They now make good use of language during all activities and encourage children to think for themselves.
- 3) There are now regular consultation meetings with parents where children's progress and assessment records are discussed and shared.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy, interested in activities and participate well. They have very good relationships with staff, other adults and their peers. Children choose from activities and move around their environment with purpose and confidence. They are independent, taking themselves to the toilet, selecting toys and putting on coats. Children are kept well occupied and behaviour is very good. They have excellent opportunities to explore the wider world, celebrate festivals and explore other cultures.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers and communicate well with adults. They enjoy singing and action songs and join in enthusiastically. The book area is used well, children are interested in stories and they use books to find out information about topic work. There are very good displays of letter and word around the room and areas are well labelled. Children can identify sounds and letters and have a good knowledge of phonics. They make good use of the mark-making area and use writing in role play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children participate in a very good range of counting activities throughout the session, in particular at register, snack and group time. The mathematics equipment is displayed attractively and is well used. Children have a good understanding of addition and subtraction and can count up to 10 and often higher. There are good opportunities to explore number, shape, size, volume, colour and quantity during activities, topics and role play. Staff make all the activities meaningful and enjoyable.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn about the environment around them, go on nature walks around the grounds and help feed and care for the pet rabbits. They have regular access to a computer and programmable toys, sharing well and taking turns. Children have a very good understanding of their own and other cultures. There is a very good range of resources which reflect equality of opportunity. Children explore difference and diversity through a variety of interesting projects, themes and festivals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use the outdoor play area on a daily basis and they go on regular walks. There are many opportunities for climbing, balancing, throwing and catching using a range of large equipment. Children take part in regular PE and movement sessions and listen well to instructions from staff. Children move around their environment safely, avoiding obstacles and others. Children show very good control when using small tools, they handle scissors, hole punches, brushes, tweezers and pencils well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which encourage their creativity. They use their imaginations well during music, dressing up and role play scenarios where they share and co-operate. Children take part in regular music and movement sessions where they listen and respond well. Staff encourage children to develop their senses, use their imaginations, participate in new experiences and to communicate their own ideas in art and craft.

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:

- enlarge the planning so that it links clearly to the early learning goals and the six areas of learning, whilst continuing to work to the Montessori philosophy and principles. This information should then be shared with the parents.

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.