



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221912

DfES Number: 595665

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/05/2004  
Inspector Name Susan Christine McGuire

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Little Pips Pre-School  
Setting Address C/O Offord Primary School, Millers Close  
Offord D'Arcy  
St. Neots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE19 5SB

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Little Pips Pre-School

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Little Pips Pre-School  
Address Offord County Primary School  
Millers Close, Offord D'Arcy, St Neots  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire  
PE19 5SB

## 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 Pips Pre-school opened in 1998. It operates from it's own mobile building located in the grounds of Offord D'Arcy Primary School, which is situated in the centre of the village of Offord D'Arcy. The Pre-School serves the village and the surrounding area.

There are currently 22 children from 3 to 5 years on roll. This includes 14 funded 3 year olds and 6 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and none who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08:50 until 11:45.

Two full-time staff work with the children, both of whom have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

Little Pips Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children.

The staff are well-qualified and regularly take part in further training to keep their skills in working with children current. Good procedures are in place for the supervision of students and volunteers. Staff and parent volunteers are not always deployed effectively within the session, however, as qualified staff often prepare snacks and clear tables leaving the volunteer to work with the children. The premises is shared with another group, and the setting has little identity of its own in the storage of equipment and display areas. Well-documented policies and procedures are in place.

Staff follow good routines to help the children play safely both indoors and out.

Fire-practices are carried out in conjunction with the school but the setting does not have it's own procedures for emergency evacuation of their premises. Children are encouraged to manage their personal hygiene independently. Snack-time is a pleasant, social part of the session which the staff join in with, and the refreshments provided are varied and nutritious.

Staff create a relaxed atmosphere and a provide a good balance of indoor and outdoor play. There is a range of activities always available for free-choice, but these do not always take into account the stage of development of the children in attendance, as they often lack challenge for the more able child. Behaviour is well-managed, and staff cater well for children who have special needs.

There is a good partnership with parents. Their involvement in the setting is encouraged and valued. They are kept well-informed about the setting through newsletters, parent's brochures, and in daily informal discussions with staff.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

N/A - no actions were identified at the transitional inspection.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff foster very positive relationships with the children. They show interest in the children and know them well. Children respond to adults with confidence.
- Behaviour is managed very well. Children are encouraged to resolve conflict for themselves and to show consideration for others.
- Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with a range of helpful, written information about the setting, and are kept well-informed about their children through easy access to their records and daily discussions with the staff.
- The running of the setting is underpinned by well-organised policies and procedures. These are readily-accessible where appropriate and confidential information is kept securely.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the deployment of staff and volunteers so that the needs of the children are met
- opportunities for older and more able children to be stimulated and challenged
- the welcome provided by the organisation of the premises so that the setting has some identity
- the procedures for emergency evacuation of the premises.

**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
6	Develop the fire evacuation procedures to include procedures initiated by the setting as well as those which are initiated by the adjacent school.
2	Ensure that staff and volunteers are deployed in a way which best meets the needs of the children.
3	Provide stimulating activities which challenge older and more able children.
4	Further develop the welcome given to parents and children by organising the premises so that there is some identity given to the setting.

## 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 Pips Pre-School is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas except communication, language and literacy where there are significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff foster good relationships with the children. They are interested in them and know them well. Clear boundaries for behaviour are given to which children respond positively. Considerate behaviour is valued and praised. Few unplanned opportunities are taken by staff to extend learning. Staff have knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals, but planning does not show clear links between learning intentions and activities and the six areas of learning are not covered sufficiently, especially literacy. Assessment records are not used effectively to plan the next steps of learning.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff and committee have positive, supportive relationships. The setting benefits from having consistent membership of the committee, whose Chairperson has taken training in the Foundation Stage. Good procedures are in place for induction of new staff, and the system for staff appraisals works well. The staff show good teamwork within the sessions. All are committed to improving the provision for the children and continually self-assess but the weaknesses in the planning and assessment had not been identified.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents speak highly of the setting and express confidence in the staff who they find approachable and helpful. They are regularly provided with a range of written information about the setting throughout the year. A well-presented welcome pack is given to new families which includes information about the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Parents have opportunities to share in their child's learning e.g. contributing to assessment records and a shared book scheme.

### What is being done well?

- Children are very happy and confident in the setting. They are learning to share and take turns, and to consider the feelings of others.
- Children's imagination is being well-developed through role-play, in which adults take part if invited. The children enjoy dressing-up, and creating scenarios with small-world equipment.
- Staff create a relaxed environment and foster positive relationships with the children.
- Leadership and management is very strong. All are committed to the improvement of the care and education of the children. They carry out frequent self-assessments and act on their findings to improve identified

weaknesses.

### **What needs to be improved?**

- the planning, to adequately cover the six areas of learning and to clarify the learning intentions of activities
- Assessment records, so that they are used to effectively plan the next steps of learning for individual children
- the programme for communication, language and literacy, so that it adheres closely to the stepping stones identified in the early learning goals.
- opportunities for children to develop design and construction skills and to explore methods of joining.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Limited progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the key issues raised at the last inspection.

As required, the planning has been further developed to include aspects of mathematics which relate to addition and subtraction. These are now part of everyday routines such as snack-time. The exploration of letter-sounds, rhyme and name-recognition and writing is still insufficiently included, however, and plans still show no adaptation of activities for more able children.

Assessment records have also been further developed as required, but they are still not used effectively to plan the next steps of learning for children.

These two aspects will be carried forward.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children separate from their carers easily and approach adults in the setting with confidence. They are encouraged to share and take turns, to consider other people and think about the consequences of their actions, and so are developing a sense of right and wrong. They are independent in their self-care and enjoy responsibility within daily routines e.g. serving snack. Insufficient time is given, however, to developing listening skills and confidence in participating in whole group activities.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are using language well to describe real and imagined events and to negotiate with each other in play. They enjoy group story although this is often short and participation is not encouraged. The book area is unappealing and seldom used spontaneously. There are insufficient opportunities for children to recognise and write their names and other simple words displayed in the room. They do not regularly write in role play and opportunities for varied mark making are limited.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can recognise and sequence numerals and count objects confidently. They match and sort by shape and colour and can create simple patterns with peg boards. Unplanned opportunities are taken to problem solve at snack time but staff miss opportunities to extend activities for more able children e.g. discussing symmetry in butterfly craft activity. Children have insufficient experience of weighing, comparing and predicting what fits in e.g. during sand and water-play.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing a sense of their community and the people who work in it through visitors e.g. vet. They observe change in plants they have grown and explore the natural world in topic work e.g. mini-beasts. Knowledge of their own and other cultures is given by celebrating festivals and IT skills are fostered through computers and in role-play. Opportunities are missed to develop a sense of time in the daily routine and there is scant experience of design and joining different materials.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show good control over the tools they use and can transport large objects safely. They manipulate construction toys well e.g. Duplo, but there is insufficient provision of malleable materials e.g. playdough for and scissors are not freely available. The outside play space is used excellently to develop skills in climbing, balancing, crawling, jumping and landing safely, but children have insufficient opportunity to pedal, steer and negotiate objects. Body awareness is rarely discussed.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Generally Good

Children access paint freely and enjoy experimenting with mixing colours. Their imagination is being well-developed through role-play and with small world activities, in which staff become involved if invited. Musical instruments are used to explore sound and rhythm, but there is little spontaneous singing. Children have limited access to a variety of media and construction materials through which to express their own ideas.

**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**

- Key issues
- Improve planning so that:
  - the six areas of learning are covered adequately in long-term plans;
  - the learning intentions of activities show clearly in weekly plans;
  - assessment is used effectively to plan the next steps of learning for individual children.
- Develop the programme for communication, language and literacy so that adheres closely to the stepping stones identified in the early learning goals.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop design and construction skills, and to explore different methods of joining, as free choice activities.

*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.*