



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 260949

DfES Number: 510362

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/11/2004
Inspector Name Glenda Kathleen Field

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Sunflower Montessori Nursery
Setting Address Causeway Farm
 Middleton
 Saxmundham
 Suffolk
 IP17 3NH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Lucy Smith

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

Sunflower Montessori Nursery opened in January 1991 and is privately owned. The setting operates from two rooms on Causeway Farm in Middleton near Saxmundham.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00. A maximum of 16 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery's particular teaching method is Montessori. Three staff are employed, including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

Sunflower Montessori Nursery provides good quality care for children.

All staff hold recognised qualifications and are committed to attending ongoing training in order to provide continual improvement in their provision. They provide a well organised environment, children are highly independent in their choice of activities and resources.

Staff make good use of observations to plan for the next steps in children's learning. Good attention is paid to children's safety and their health and hygiene needs are promoted well. All staff have a good understanding of behaviour management strategies; they are calm and consistent with the children and children behave well.

The pre-school works in very close partnership with parents in order to help children to feel secure. Staff make time to talk to the parents and keep them informed regarding their children's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is good.

The setting agreed to ensure that planning permission for new hours of opening and increase in numbers of children is obtained; provide one toilet and hand basin for every ten children attending, and to ensure that fire drills are carried out periodically and recorded in line with recommendation made by the fire safety officer.

Planning permission for increased hours and numbers of children was obtained from Suffolk Coastal District Council on the 27th October 2003 . There are now two toilets and hand basins for use by the children within the setting and fire drills now take place and satisfactory records are kept.

These improvements help ensure the safety and well-being of children attending the setting.

What is being done well?

- Children's individual needs are met through planned activities and play situations that help to develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities
- The premises are warm and welcoming for children and parents and the provision has the necessary facilities to provide a range of activities to promote children's development.
- There is appropriate equipment to provide the children with a stimulating environment. The accessibility of the equipment promotes the children's independence.
- The staff employ consistent, firm behaviour management which is used alongside praise and encouragement, instances of negative behaviour are rare. The children respond well to staff's clear guidance and enjoy their play. Staff are helping to promote children's self confidence and self discipline.

What needs to be improved?

- there are no significant weaknesses arising from this inspection. However, the provider has plans in place to develop children's auditory awareness in the outside play area by the installation of bamboo chime bells.

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.

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 Sunflower Montessori Nursery School is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress toward the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The teaching is very good. The staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and how children learn. They effectively record observations to aid with completing records and planning for the child's next step. Planning enables staff to cover all areas of the curriculum, however, opportunities for children to use the computer are limited. Staff encourage the children to be independent and provide many opportunities for children to manage tasks themselves. Staff work directly with the children supporting their play and asking appropriate questions, extending the children's language and learning. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and the children behave well.

Leadership and management is very good. The manager has a hands-on role within the nursery enabling her to monitor the provision through observations and feedback from staff and parents. She is continually looking for ways to improve the provision and is in agreement to the introduction of a formal staff appraisal system. Regular staff meetings ensure all staff share their ideas and are kept informed.

Partnership with parents is very good. Termly open evenings give parents opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff. Parents are provided with good information regarding the Foundation Stage, and regular newsletters keeps them informed of termly topics and themes, visitors to the nursery and planned outings. The "Seedlings" parent and toddler group held weekly on the premises introduces prospective parents and children to the nursery setting.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills, they confidently manage snack time by handing out beakers and pouring their own drinks, use the toilet independently and washing their hands. Children take pride in their environment, they select and tidy away their own equipment. Staff respect and value the children by giving them responsibilities and opportunities to make their own decisions.
- Staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and the stepping stones to reach them. They work directly with the children, asking relevant questions encouraging the children to think for themselves, extending their language and learning.
- Children's communication skills are excellent. They interact well with each other during conversation and extend their vocabulary through discussions

with staff.

- Children are provided with excellent opportunities to involve themselves in mathematical activities. They have a wide range of resources, which they can use independently or with support if required.

What needs to be improved?

- monitoring and evaluating of the quality of teaching taking place
- opportunities for children to access ICT equipment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were two key issues arising from the last inspection:-

Children's understanding of changes that occur to their bodies whilst active.

Children are now fully encouraged by staff to recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they are active e.g. by recognising signs that an activity makes their body tired and feeling their heart beating after exercising.

Opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's assessment records with knowledge of learning from home.

Termly meetings are now held with parents to discuss their child's achievement records. Parents are able to add information to the records at any time.

The setting has made very good progress in addressing these key issues.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have excellent self-care skills, managing snack, selecting their own resources, dressing, toileting, and they take pride in their environment by tidying up the toys. Children are given responsibility and opportunities to make their own decisions, they are interested in the activities they select and show high levels of concentration. There is a happy working atmosphere and staff have high expectations for behaviour, children are polite, behave well and cooperate with each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Speaking and listening skills are well fostered during circle times, snack and group story time. Children chat about their experiences which helps them put their thoughts into words. Children are provided with an excellent range of books which they enjoy on a regular basis. Some children learn to read, using a simple early reading scheme. Children are beginning to recognise and to write their own names on pictures and older children write recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children encounter a range of mathematical experiences which are helping them develop appropriate concepts and which provide a firm foundation for number operations and mathematical thinking. Children are using calculation in practical activities such as giving out cups at snack time. Children sort and match, they use mathematical language to describe size and shape. Children confidently use numbers for counting and some older children can recognise numbers 1 to 10.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Learning is firmly based on practical activities and real life experiences. Children have opportunities to explore the natural environment on the farm, they look at all forms of habitats. Children learn to care for animals and have opportunities to handle the pets. Termly topics and sensory activities enable children to gain a better understanding of their environment, the wider world and their part in it.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have many opportunities to practice and refine manipulative skills, they use simple tools such as tweezers, spoons, turn screws, spread, roll dough and squeeze sponges. There are also lots of opportunities for children to practice and refine their balancing, peddling, climbing, kicking, throwing and catching skills. Children are becoming skilled at negotiating space as they ride around in the outside area and co-operate during floor play activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enjoy role-play using construction equipment and small world toys. Children regularly play musical instruments and sing together. They experience music, dance and movement with weekly ballet classes and visits from a pianist. Children have opportunities to paint and to experiment with different paint and print techniques and explore a range of craft media.

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 are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- staff appraisal system to assist in the monitoring and evaluating of the quality of teaching taking place and the increasing of opportunities for children to use information and communication technology.

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.