



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221729

DfES Number: 520426

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/12/2003
Inspector Name Denise May Smith

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Mepal and Witcham Pre-School
Setting Address Brangehill Lane
Mepal
Ely
Cambridgeshire
CB6 2AL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Mepal and Witcham Pre School 1057125

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Mepal and Witcham Pre School
Address Brangehill Lane
Mepal
Ely
Cambridgeshire
CB6 2AL

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

Mepal and Witcham Pre-school opened in 1996. It operates from a mobile building within the grounds of the primary school. Mepal and Witcham Pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 12 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 3 funded 3 year olds and 7 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs but does not have any children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five sessions a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:05 to 11:45 hrs.

Six staff, in total work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Mepal and Witcham Pre-school provides good care for children.

The staff team is long established and they work very well together. The good staff/child ratio ensures children are well-supported in the setting. The environment is very welcoming to both children and their carers; children's work is valued and displayed attractively. Policies and procedures are clear and purposeful.

The staff have a good awareness of safety issues and ensure children's safety. However, the risk assessments undertaken are not currently recorded effectively.

Snack time is organised as a social time and designed to promote children's independence. The snacks provided are healthy and nutritious and take account of children dietary needs. Suitable measures are taken to prevent the spread of infection and children are encouraged to develop good personal hygiene practice.

A broad range of fun, interesting activities are provided and appropriately supported by adults ensuring children's learning in all areas is promoted. Good attention is given to children who have special needs, the staff have worked hard at developing these skills and are now well placed to act in the best interest of any child. Staff are good role models and are very positive with the children. Children are polite and well mannered; behaviour is good.

Parents are well-informed about the setting when they join. They are kept informed about their children through the daily exchange of information at collection time and by having access to their children's records which are presented in individual folders. However, there is no provision for parents to review their children's achievements if they cannot access the centre on a regular basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the committee of Mepal and Witcham pre-school agreed to, ensure that written permission is obtained to enable them to seek medical advice and or treatment, to update the complaints procedure to include Ofsted as the registering authority and to update the child protection policy in line with the local ACPC guidelines. Written permission is now in place and the two policies now contain the relevant information.

What is being done well?

- The good organisation of the group ensures that the children's needs are met effectively. Staff
- have a good understanding of food and nutrition, which encourages children to develop healthy eating attitudes.
- The commitment of the staff to ensuring that all children can access the provision and that the experiences offered meet all of the children's needs and they are appropriately supported.
- Positive behaviour is valued and encouraged by staff who act a good role models. As a result children behave well.
- The comprehensive planning of the curriculum covers all areas of learning. This ensures children have access to a broad learning experience. The good range of well maintained, age appropriate toys and equipment helps to create a stimulating environment.

What needs to be improved?

- The recording of risk assessments
- Access to children's records for parents who may not be able to come into the group

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
6	Ensure that the risk assessments undertaken are recorded
12	Devise procedures, which ensure parents who cannot access the group on a daily basis, can review their children's records.

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 Mepal and Witcham Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their physical, mathematical, personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff provide a stimulating learning environment and generally have a good understanding of the foundation stage. This enables them to plan a broad curriculum. Staff assess the children well, but this does not directly relate to the stepping-stones. The next steps for children's learning are not formally identified and so do not influence planning. The team is well established, they are friendly, approachable and are deployed well. Staff are very positive with the children and meet their needs sensitively. The provision supports children with special needs effectively and provision is made to ensure that all children are included in all activities.

Leadership and management is generally good. The manager is a very good role model to the staff team and leads by example. They work hard together in order to provide a good quality of education for the children and are keen to develop their practice. There is not currently a system for self-evaluation or staff appraisal. The committee and staff have worked tirelessly and successfully to ensure that the temporary re-location of the playgroup does not interfere with the service provided.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are welcomed into the setting and are encouraged to be actively involved with their children's learning. They are able to approach staff and discuss their children's progress daily. However, there is no formal process for reporting children's progress. Parents who are unable to access the group may miss this information. Displays of photographs are used to illustrate to parents the six areas of learning.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident in mathematics. They use numbers throughout play situations and in context.
- Children are happy and confident. They behave very well and their self esteem is fostered appropriately.
- Good use is made of the physical environment. The regular outings and visitors into the group enhance the learning opportunities for the children and develop their explorative natures.

What needs to be improved?

- The assessment of children; linked to the stepping stones, used to identify what children know and can do, to identify the next steps of learning for children and to inform the short term planning
- The settings ability to assess its own strengths and weaknesses to aid further development. For example - self evaluation, staff appraisals or parents questionnaires.
- The feed back to parents regarding the children's progress towards the early learning goals.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan to develop the point for consideration resulting from the last inspection.

Very good opportunities are provided to offer children varied opportunities to calculate, these are integrated into the daily routine and use practical resources.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, motivated to learn and they know the routine well. They are interested in the activities and work well together in small groups. Children have good relationships with each other and adults. Their confidence and independence is fostered through daily routines, such as washing hands, being the weather helper, pouring drinks and putting their coats and aprons on. Children learn very good manners, are polite and considerate. They respond to the positive staff role models.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use language to negotiate with peers and adults. They link sounds to letters and match sounds to the alphabet. Children enjoy mark making in a variety of situations with good emphasis being placed on writing for a purpose. Some children are able to form letters correctly. Children enjoy listening to and joining in with familiar stories, can read familiar words understanding that print carries meaning. Books are used for reference to support topic tables.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are skilled at using mathematical concepts across many play situations. They recognise shape, size and quantity and use appropriate language to describe position. Children say and use numbers in context counting reliably to 10 and beyond. They recognise and recreate patterns and use mathematical concepts to problem solve. Staff, make good use of introducing concepts of calculation and relating adding and subtraction to combining groups of objects via planned and spontaneous activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn about the environment and the natural world through an interesting range of planned and spontaneous activities. There are regular opportunities to use information technology, which underpins learning in other areas. Children build and construct using a range of objects and tools. Children enjoy talking about past and present events in their own lives and those of others. There is a planned programme to learn about other cultures and the very good resources are used appropriately.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Very good opportunities are planned, both indoors and out, all year around which, encourage children to climb, jump, slide, balance and develop a sense of space. Children move confidently to music and during general physical activities. They have awareness of their own bodies and of others. They use tools and equipment in a variety of activities, with control and a developing awareness of safety. Children learn about the importance of staying healthy through discussion and planned activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy a wide range of songs, rhymes and ring games. Music is used to support learning and for enjoyment. Children express their ideas and develop their imaginations in a variety of ways through planned and spontaneous activities such as role play. They enjoy exploring colour and texture and construct in 2 and 3D. They have daily opportunities to create models linked to topics and themes, but, opportunities to express themselves and create choosing from a range of materials is limited.

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

- further develop the assessment of children so that it is: linked to the stepping stones, used to identify what children know and can do, to identify the next steps of learning for children and to inform the short term planning
- devise strategies, which will enable the setting to assess its own strengths and weaknesses, to aid further development, for example, self-evaluation, staff appraisals or parents
- questionnaires
- develop the processes to feed back to parents on the children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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.