



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 305167

DfES Number: 530617

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	20/10/2004
Inspector Name	Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Owls Pre-School
Setting Address	Rudheath Youth Centre Gadbrook Road, Rudheath Northwich Cheshire CW9 7JL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Jeanette Catterall
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 Owls Pre-School is an independent, privately funded pre-school for children aged two years six months to statutory school age. The group has been registered under the current ownership since September 1999. It operates from two designated rooms within the youth centre at Rudheath. The youth centre is situated on the outskirts of the village adjacent to Rudheath County Primary School. The group is currently registered to accommodate 22 children at any one time and is open Monday to Friday 9.00 to 11.30, plus 12.30 to 15.00. Children are cared for on a sessional day care basis. The group accommodate three and four year old children in receipt of funding. The registered person who holds an NNEB qualification, employs two supervisors who are qualified to NVQ level three in Child Care and Education, and take responsibility for the day-to-day management of the group. In addition, one other member of staff is employed who is training to NVQ level two in Child Care. One member of staff holds a First Aid qualification. Children attend from the immediate community and surrounding areas of Northwich.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Little Owls Pre-School provides good-quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for their personal, social, emotional, communication, language, literacy, and mathematical development, is well-planned and they make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a secure understanding of the areas of learning. Planning is very conscientiously completed by individual staff members who plan and lead a range of activities to sustain the children's interest. However, the planning is not co-ordinated to ensure the expected learning intentions are consistently delivered. Staff provide a happy, caring learning environment and effectively manage children's behaviour by skilfully helping them to accept the needs of others, to share and to take turns. Assessments of the children's progress are conscientiously recorded. Systems are being developed to support the needs of children with English as an additional language.

The leadership and management are generally good. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Regular minuted staff meetings are held. Annual appraisals occur and staff are encouraged to undertake ongoing training, however, some of the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation of the pre-school are not yet fully implemented. All are committed to improving the care and education of children.

Partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents have a positive view of the pre-school. They are well informed about its routines and practices. The newsletter provides an update of forthcoming events and weekly themes. However, parents are not made aware of the six areas of learning, or of planned learning activities. Annual parents' evenings are held, but opportunities are limited for parents to regularly contribute to and be informed of their child's development records.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy and eager to learn. They interact well with their peers and adults. They are well behaved, respect each other, share and take turns.
- Children love stories, maintaining well their attention, concentrating and sitting quietly. They listen to the reader, participate when invited and respond sensibly to questions.
- The many opportunities provided to count both forwards and backwards, and to recognise numerals engage the children well and help them to solve simple mathematical problems.
- Staff work enthusiastically to provide purposeful, interesting activities. They are very good role models and build trusting relationships with children by their emphasis on mutual care and respect. Children's behaviour is very

effectively managed through praise and encouragement.

What needs to be improved?

- the co-ordination of the planning to ensure consistency between the long, medium and weekly plans
- the communication with parents so they are aware of the areas of learning, the planned weekly activities and learning intentions, and the opportunities for them to contribute to and be informed of their child's development records
- opportunities for children to explore, investigate, express ideas and ask questions.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

A special educational needs policy has been agreed.

Children are now very aware of the changes that occur in their bodies when they are active.

Parents receive information about their child's progress and attainment at a parents' meeting just prior to the child leaving and moving on to school. Although parents eventually receive information about their child's progress and attainment, this is not an ongoing process.

Parents are not given regular opportunities to contribute to and be informed of their child's development records.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing in confidence, happily engage in activities, concentrate for sustained periods of time and are able to sit still and listen. They are well behaved and respond well to guidance from staff. The children show great respect for the environment and each other as they tidy away, share and take turns. Their personal independence is fostered appropriately, for example at snack time and when putting on shoes following physical activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are encouraged to express their needs, talk about themselves, and listen to others. They enjoy stories and demonstrate delight when joining in during story time. Children often sit quietly looking at books, handle them carefully, and know that print carries meaning. Many recognise some letters by sound and shape, and some are keen mark makers, while others are starting to write their own names, and a few others recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing good counting skills through lots of opportunities to practise both counting and the recognition of numerals. Most can count to five and some count confidently to ten and beyond. Many understand the concept of more or less and are starting to solve simple mathematical problems. Most are beginning to use mathematical language to describe size and position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have an understanding of past and present events and recall experiences within conversations, describing well significant personal events. Many were fascinated by their topic on mini-beasts. However, some children do not explore and ask questions about how things work, for example when they were using magnets. They have access to a computer and most use the provided construction kits to design and assemble a range of structures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's fine manipulative skills are developing appropriately as they use a range of pencils, scissors and small construction materials. They use a range of equipment in the outside play area, although opportunities for using climbing equipment are limited. They show a good sense of spatial awareness and control during dance and movement activities, although this is limited by the confined space available. Children are aware of the effects of and the need for cool down following exercise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children enjoy exploring colour, texture and shapes as they express themselves using a variety of media, especially when making their 'spider' biscuits. They enjoy participating in role play based on their experiences, although some children do not always explore music by using songs, musical instruments and rhymes to freely express and communicate ideas and feelings.	
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

- co-ordinate the planning
- ensure parents are more fully aware of the six areas of learning and the planned weekly activities and learning intentions, while increasing their opportunities to contribute to and be informed of their child's development records
- ensure children have more opportunities to explore and investigate, and are encouraged to express ideas and ask questions.

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.