



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507888

DfES Number: 518752

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/09/2003
Inspector Name Christine Cutts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-School
Setting Address Lower Way
Thatcham
Berkshire
RG19 3RR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-School
Committee 1075366

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-School Committee
Address Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-School
1 Lower Way
Thatcham
Berkshire
RG19 3RR

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

Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates within Thatcham Children's Centre. The Pre-School serves the local area.

The pre-school has use of two rooms, a large hall and a smaller group room and access to a large out-side play area of grass and tarmac, with barked adventure play area.

There are currently 26 children from three to five years on roll including three children who have been identified as having special educational needs. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending for whom English is a second language. The pre-school is currently receiving funding for seven four year olds and 36 three year olds.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Morning sessions are from 09.15 until 11:45 and afternoon sessions are from 12.15 until 14.45.

Seven staff work with the children. They work on a rota basis depending on the numbers of children attending each session. They also currently have extra one to one workers supporting a children with a special educational need. Three members of staff are qualified and another two are currently undertaking the D.P.P.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership (E.Y.D.C.P).

How good is the Day Care?

The Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-school provides good care for children in a warm and welcoming environment.

The accommodation allows for a variety of activities and very good resources are made available for the children to choose from. The out-side play area is used effectively to extend the play opportunities of the children.

Qualified staff and management work well as a team to support the children's learning. Relevant documentation is in place to enable the pre-school to care for the children, although it lacks some necessary detail.

Children's health and welfare are well promoted, with staff encouraging good health routines. Informal risk assessment procedures are currently in place. High staff ratios enable the staff to spend time getting to know the children and identify the individual needs of the children. The pre-school has an effective special needs and child protection system in place. Although the child protection procedures do not say what to do in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member.

A good range of resources and planned activities promote children's understanding of others and provides positive images of diversity within our society. The children are supported and encouraged in their learning with planned and unplanned activities to meet the developmental needs of children covering all areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is generally good in a lively and busy atmosphere supported by staff who help the children understand the rules of the pre-school

Parents support the pre-school and show that they are happy with the care given and the information on their children progress and care.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection was a transitional inspection and did not highlight areas of improvement

What is being done well?

- Staff undertake regular training to update and extend their understanding of child care and education.
- The pre-school is organised to give children a very good range and variety of activities to meet the developmental needs of the children in all areas.
- Staff support children's learning appropriately in order to extend children's understanding and promote safety.
- Good use is made of the out-side play area to extend the children's learning opportunities.
- Very good range of resources are used to promote equality.
- Staff get to know their key children and work with parents to meet the children's individual needs. Initial assessment forms help the pre-school to become aware of any special requirements of the children their likes and dislikes.

What needs to be improved?

- an operational plan that cover the requirements under the National

Standards;

- formalising of risk assessment procedures on the premises to identifying action(s) to be taken to minimize identified risks ;
- child protection procedure to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff.

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	establish an operational plan that covers the requirements under the National Standards.
6	conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying action(s) to be taken to minimize identified risks
13	review child protection procedure to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals, with areas of strength in physical development and personal social and emotional development.

Thatcham Children's Centre Pre-school offer's children a welcoming and stimulating environment in which good use is made of the accommodation and resources to promote children's learning in all six areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is generally good with staff supporting children to develop an understanding of right and wrong and the rules of the pre-school.

Quality of teaching is generally good with staff having a secure knowledge of the individual children and their progress on the stepping stones, although this is not always clearly reflected in the children's records. The pre-school are currently developing their children's development record system.

Staff praise, encourage and support children's learning and provide good quality activities for children to play with imagination. Planning does not always reflect the learning out-comes from the activities provided.

Children with special educational needs are well supported within the group with an effective system for identifying, monitoring and supporting children with special needs.

Management and leadership is generally good with staff working well together. The supervisor is committed to building good staff relationships. A shared commitment to early years is clearly visible and management and staff are committed to extending their understanding in early years education. Effective relationships exist between committee and the pre-school staff with both feeling supported, with well defined roles.

Partnership with parents and carers is generally good and parents are actively involved in the life of the pre-school. Parents are supportive of staff and contribute to topics. Comments received show that parents appreciate the information exchanged on their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children work well together co-operating in play and learning with each other, children naturally share resources and take turns. Behaviour is generally good with children encouraged by the staff to be polite and respect each other and equipment.
- Children are well supported by staff with activities that encourage children's

love and understanding of books and how the text is read from left to right and top to bottom in the English language.

- There are effective relationships between the pre-school and parents and carers which helps the pre-school meet the needs of the children in their care.
- The pre-school provides good opportunities for children to develop involved imaginative play, well supported by staff. Staff's support of spontaneous activities was good.
- The pre-school offer a range of good activities to promote children's physical development using good quality equipment.

What needs to be improved?

- the continued development of children's progress records to clearly reflect their development on the stepping stones and the next step needed;
- planning to show grouping of children and to reflect the learning out-comes targeted with planned activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made good progress since the last inspection and now have an effective system to identify, monitor and support children with special needs.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are active in their learning, are generally well behaved, show confidence and are developing independence skills. Staff give children the opportunity to talk about themselves and their experiences individually or in a group, building children's self-esteem. The children work well together and co-operate to achieve tasks, they share and take turns and understand the rules of the pre-school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk confidently and use language effectively to negotiate and make their feelings understood, building their competence with language through social interactions. Children show an enjoyment of books choosing to 'read' to adults and others, and supported by adults learn elements of stories and books. There are good opportunities for children to practice emergent writing in a variety of ways, in role-play areas, free drawing and with water and brushes during out-side play..

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Some children count with adult support to 10 and others can count beyond this independently. Children use mathematics for problem solving in every day situations with good practical activities provided by the pre-school, including the ladybird game and familiar number rhymes and songs. Children name shapes including circle and triangle and use mathematical language appropriately.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The children learn about different cultures and religions through a range of resources provided by the pre-school. Children are well supported in thier use of technology toys. There are planned opportunities for children to use tools with play dough and craft activities. Children learn about growth and change with planned topic's and looking at the change in season's. Children have the opportunity to experience different musical instruments during the current topic.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The curriculum allows for planned physical development sessions to cover all aspects of this area of development, with some opportunities to use of large play apparatus and dance. The pre-school use space effecively inside and out to support this area of learning well. Children display good ball skills, using bats and balls, football and skittle games. Activities to support pencil control and using tools with control are well promoted by the pre-school.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

There are good opportunities for children to express themselves in a variety of media. Staff allow children the freedom and space to develop involved and imaginative role play. Children express their ideas, thoughts and feelings using two and three dimensions, colour and texture with painting, play dough, role-play areas and small world play.

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

- to continue to develop children's progress records to clearly reflect their development on the stepping stones and the next step needed;
- review planning to show grouping of children and to reflect the learning out-comes targeted with planned 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.