



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127568

DfES Number: 581894

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 20/04/2004
Inspector Name Michael Kubiak

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Springfield Lodge Day Nursery
Setting Address Powder Mill Lane
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1NT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The partnership of Springfield Lodge Day Nursery Ltd 4653315

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Springfield Lodge Day Nursery Ltd
Address Powder Mill Lane
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1NT

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

Springfield Lodge Day Nursery opened over ten years ago and is set within secluded grounds, and is the children are cared for in various portacabins. This arrangement is a temporary one until their new purpose built premises which is on the same site is completed. Children progress through the nursery according to age and ability. Parking facilities are available.

The nursery operates from 07:00 to 18:30 Monday to Friday. The facilities are divided into age appropriate sections, supervised by qualified staff. All meals are provided on site by a cook.

There are currently 182 children on roll and this includes 42 funded three year olds and 23 funded four year olds. Two children have been identified as having special educational needs and one child who has English as an additional language.

There is a total of 31 staff working with the children and in addition there are support and administrative staff. Over half of the child care staff have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3. In addition five staff are currently undertaking additional training. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

This group is a recognised training centre and have received the Investors In People Award.

How good is the Day Care?

Springfield Lodge Day Nursery (Powder Mill Lane) provides satisfactory care of children.

Staff provide a welcoming environment and children are happy in the environment. The nursery is currently housed in a number of portacabins which is a temporary arrangement until the new purpose built premises are ready. The portacabins are in a poor state of repair and although staff have made the best use of the buildings the

situation is far from ideal. There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures, with some needing some minor amending and the issue of confidentiality needs addressing. There is an clear management structure and designated room leaders for each room.

Children have access to a range of toys and equipment and are able to self select however they are not always supplied with sufficient resources and there is a lack of resources that promote anti-discriminatory practice. There is poor organisation of group times which often result in children experiencing disruptions. Hygiene procedures are acceptable, however staff need to be more pro-active in reducing the spread of infection.

Staff listen to what the children say and they ask questions. The staff miss opportunities to encourage positive behaviour and inappropriate behaviour is not dealt with properly.

There is an effective partnership with parents and the nursery undertake parent questionnaires and following this, most recently have introduced contact book. There are noticeboards around the nursery and information is available to parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- Staff interact with the children at their own level and the staff are easily identifiable by the wearing of uniforms and tabards
- The environment is attractive and there are numerous displays of children's work.
- Older children are encouraged to select toys using a pictorial system.

What needs to be improved?

- the confidentiality of information, so that personal information is not openly displayed
- the hygiene procedures, in particular nose wiping
- the equal opportunities provision, including disability
- the child protection procedure, in line with current guidelines
- the organisation at group times, so that children experience minimal disruption
- the behaviour management strategies, so that they are effective and inappropriate physical contacts are not used
- the range of provision, in order that children receive access to a range of activities and sufficient challenge

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
3	Arrange group times effectively so that children experience minimal disruption.
3	Provide a range of activities so that children have sufficient challenge.
7	Ensure that staff are active in promoting good health and hygiene, and in particular with regards to wiping children's noses.
9	Extend resources that promote equality of opportunity, disability and anti discriminatory practice.
11	Ensure that behaviour management techniques are effective and are consistently applied by all staff.
13	Update the child protection policy in accordance with ACPC guidelines.
14	Ensure the confidentiality of personal information.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making acceptable progress at Springfield Lodge Day Nursery but there are some significant areas for improvement.

The progress children make in the area of mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good, but there are some significant weaknesses in the remaining four areas of the curriculum.

Children experience a variety of planned and spontaneous play and learning opportunities to enable them to progress in their development. These are used successfully to encourage children's counting and number skills and staff make good use of everyday routines such as snack times to develop and extend their understanding of events in their lives. However, staff do not manage the behaviour needs of the children effectively as a team or with consistency, resulting in some children becoming disengaged and others being distracted. Responsibility for organising and delivering activities is not effectively shared by the team and opportunities to extend all children's learning are sometimes missed. Staff plan and assess children's progress using a new system which will enable closer monitoring of their progress. There is a staff member who has trained to coordinate procedures and support children with special needs.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is some monitoring to evaluate the provision, but this has not had sufficient impact to increase the quality of learning experienced by the children. There is a structure to identify training needs of staff but this has yet to address the staff's understanding of how to effectively implement the curriculum as part of a team.

Partnership with parents is generally good, with a variety of information available to parents: on notice boards, in newsletters, handbooks, policies and through consultations. Parents are encouraged to share information through the use of weekly diaries and can contribute towards planning for children's development.

What is being done well?

- There is a variety of attractively displayed children's work which encourages a sense of achievement and pride in the children;
- Children have access to a variety of rooms to participate in activities;
- Children are encouraged to be independent and give out cups, plates and pour their own drinks. Their sense of responsibility is further enhanced by the use of a rota to choose activities during the daily routines.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of group times; to ensure that children are supported by all staff working as a team to enable them all to participate, and to ensure that planning includes a stimulating variety of accessible choices for all children
- the planning and organisation of outdoor play so that all children experience appropriate physical challenges regularly and frequently
- the management of behaviour so that children experience consistent, clear and appropriate messages which reinforce their moral education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress since the last inspection is limited. There were two key issues identified at the previous inspection; one was planning and the other concerned assessment records. Both issues have been addressed, although the systems in use have only recently been initiated so that staff need to continue building on these developments.

Planning is now identifying the stepping stones within the 6 areas of learning which are to be covered in the adult led activities. Staff are becoming familiar with the curriculum through planning and identifying the progress children are making and recording this. Plans outline what the learning intention of activities is, how the activity will be delivered, and resourced.

Staff are using a new system to record development for each funded child, showing short recorded observations which are referenced to the aspects within each of the 6 areas of the curriculum. A "tick box" method of assessment is implemented across each area of learning to show a summary of children's progress. Staff are beginning to identify the progress made and the areas for development for each child in reference to the Foundation Stage Curriculum. An element of this key issue will need to be on going so that staff continue to use these assessment records to build an accurate picture of each child's development.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children know some routines but are not given enough information to participate confidently in all routines and activities. Some children are confident speaking to adults, they ask what they want to play with and enjoy making choices about the toys available. They understand the rules and can explain these to others when playing games but often need more support and consistency from staff to participate with confidence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children recognise their first names and are keen to read these on cards, using these to lay their places at lunch and to identify their names by the sound of letters so that they can prepare for outdoor play when called. They enjoy stories, but are not sufficiently encouraged to notice print, or the sounds of letters and words or to discuss the pictures and ideas expressed. Younger children do not always experience appropriate tasks to encourage development of writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy playing board games with staff support and are able to match and compare numbers and shapes. They receive good individual support to help them count to 10 and to identify shapes, colours and sizes. Staff use mathematical language such as "over" and "under", helping children understand and make practical choices. Children develop their understanding of numbers through routine tasks like working out the date, switching on the lights when they are encouraged to count out loud.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are adept at using scissors to cut and past, making models from craft materials. Planned activities encourage children to observe, explore and describe properties and differences, as when water is mixed with sand. Staff make good use of opportunities during routines and activities to extend children's understanding of events in their lives and their feelings. The outdoor area is not sufficiently used to stimulate children's interest in the natural world and features of the locality.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children learn to handle scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and cutlery with increasing control. The use of outdoors is not well planned so that children have frequent and regular opportunities to be challenged. Children do have some opportunities to use the large and challenging climbing frame and staff are on hand to give support and encourage new skills such as helping children to jump and land safely. They enjoy manoeuvring tricycles, push along toys and throwing balls.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children participate enthusiastically in singing, using their imagination to move like mice and jump like frogs. They are encouraged to listen and distinguish between loud and soft sounds during movement sessions. Children draw and apply chalk in different ways but they are not always encouraged to experiment and explore during crafts. Children are able to choose role play activities and enjoy playing in "the office" and 'the hairdressers' but these choices are not sufficiently varied.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- organise group times to ensure that children are supported by all staff working as a team to enable them all to participate, and to ensure that planning includes a stimulating variety of accessible choices for all children
- plan and organise the outdoor play so that all children experience appropriate physical challenges regularly and frequently
- manage the behaviour of children so that they experience consistent, clear and appropriate messages which reinforce their moral education.

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.