



Ofsted Report

Combined Ofsted Inspection Report

Cedars Nursery (Sunderland)
8th September 2003

Inspection of the nursery education provision
for funded three and four year olds



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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

The Cedars Nursery opened in 1996. It operates from a three storey, semi detached Victorian building, close to the city centre of Sunderland. The Nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 102 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 24 funded three year olds and no funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. None of the children have special educational needs or speak English as a second language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

Nineteen full time staff work with the children. 16 have early year's qualifications. Three staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child care Partnerships. (EYDCP)

How good is the Day Care?

The Cedars Nursery provides good quality care for children. New staff are recruited through student placements. There are

policies for students and volunteers ensuring that everyone is vetted and undergoes induction. Accurate and up to date records are kept, however the recruitment policy does not include a written statement on equal opportunities.

The nursery has a welcoming environment with children's artwork, information and photos of activities displayed on the walls. Children move about freely in the playrooms. Toys and resources are suitable to the age, stage of development in each room. They reflect diversity, although there are limited dressing up clothes.

Staff's awareness of health and safety is raised through the induction procedure. The premises are secure and monitored by CCTV. All visitors sign the visitor's book. There is a good commitment by management and staff ensuring that the majority of staff holds a current first aid certificate. Children's personal hygiene is not always encouraged before meals or snacks. There is a rolling programme of menus that includes vegetarian options. Staff are fully informed about children's special diets and allergies. Staff show a good awareness of child protection procedures.

Staff record children's achievements in their notebooks as they happen. Children are happy, settled, involved and eager to participate in organised activities. Staff and children have good relationships with each other. The special educational needs co-ordinator and child behaviour co-ordinator support staff when they have concerns about a child. Staff have a calm, positive approach. They encourage good behaviour and liaise with parents. Children's behaviour is good.

Partnership with parents is good. Information is shared with parents in a wide variety of ways. They are encouraged to participate with follow up activities at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- New staff are recruited through student placements, ensuring that management are familiar with their capabilities.
- Children are happy, settled, involved and eager to participate in organised activities. Staff and children have good relationships with each other. Staff are interested in what children have to say, they respond by using praise and encouragement. This impacts on children's self esteem through the positive attitude of staff.
- Children move about freely in the playrooms where space is organised into areas of play. Toys and resources are suitable to the age, stage of development in each room and are available at child height encouraging children's independence.
- Information is shared with parents in a wide variety of ways, parental brochure, parents evening six monthly, coffee mornings, newsletters and a daily information sheet on their child's day. Parents are encouraged to participate with follow up activities at home.

What needs to be improved?

- hygiene practise so that all children wash their hands before meals and snacks
- the equal opportunities policy to include a written statement on the recruitment, selection and monitoring procedure
- provision of role play resources to reflect diversity.

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

Promote good health and hygiene by encouraging children to wash their hands before meals and snacks.

Ensure role play resources reflect diversity. Include equal opportunities in the recruitment, selection and monitoring procedure.

How effective is the nursery education?

Cedars Nursery provides a welcoming atmosphere and offers high quality nursery education. Children are very well behaved, confident and happy. They settle well and effective teaching helps them make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff have developed a very good rapport with the children which enables them to feel happy and settled. They give excellent support and skilfully interact with children to extend their ideas. Staff use varied and interesting methods to introduce new skills and knowledge. Good planning ensures resources and staff deployment support children's learning well. The day is organised to provide a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities which are presented at a level that enables three and four-year-olds to participate well. Staff observe and assess aspects of children's behaviour and learning and use information to help them plan.

Leadership and management are very good. The strong leadership and well structured management system ensures a shared understanding of good early years practice. Staff work very hard to continually improve the care and education of children. There is a commitment to ongoing staff development and evaluation of practice.

Partnership with parents and carers is very

good. Parents receive clear and detailed information about the educational provision and are kept informed about their child's progress. They are provided with opportunities to contribute ideas, and be involved with their child's learning through simple home activities. Good systems are in place which enable parents to share what they know about their child. Staff use this information to help them plan.

What is being done well?

- Personal, social and emotional development is excellent. Children are confident, interested and able to work well in small groups and on their own if they choose. Behaviour is very good.
- Relationships within the 'Swans' group are excellent; staff value children's ideas and make learning fun.
- Spoken language development is a particular strength; children talk confidently in a variety of situations.
- Staff work well as a team to provide an interesting range of activities, good role models and a happy learning environment.
- The strong leadership and effective management structure ensures continued improvement through a commitment to staff development.

What needs to be improved?

- adult led activities so that the purpose of the activity is made clear to the children
- assessment so that systems clearly link to each of the early learning goals

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made very good progress in addressing the two key issues which followed the previous inspection. Staff make a variety of writing materials available. Children receive regular and varied opportunities to use writing skills in planned adult led activities and in child initiated activities, for example in role play situations. As a result, children's learning

is practised and reinforced on a daily basis. Staff have systems in place which encourage parents to share what their child knows and can do. Staff have developed simple activities for children to take home which complement learning that takes place at the nursery. Through these activities, parents have opportunities to give regular feedback, verbal and written, about their child's progress. Staff continually look at ways of using this information from parents to inform their planning. As a result staff can provide appropriate challenge for each child.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children settle well. They are very happy and keen to learn. They show enthusiasm and interest in new activities which are attractively presented. Children show developing confidence as they work in groups and independently. They show initiative as they select and adapt resources for their own ideas, for example, as they make tents from blankets for their game. They manage themselves well in matters of dress and hygiene routines. Behaviour is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop good speaking and listening skills. They thoroughly enjoy listening to well read stories and like to make up their own. Three and four-year-olds learn to sequence events in stories and receive good opportunities to develop pre-reading and pre-writing skills. They practise writing for a number of reasons, for example, to write their name on their work and to make appointments in role play situations. They recognise some initial letter sounds and rhyme in spoken word.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children receive a rich environment where they have ample opportunity to explore colour, sound, texture and many natural objects, using all their senses. They have great fun, for example, as they make 'smelly shakers' and identify a variety of scents. Children are developing a good sense of rhythm and know many songs. They often sing spontaneously during activities. They use their imagination well in play situations. A group of three and four-year-olds, for example, went on a camping holiday.

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 key issues following this inspection however, the following points should be considered.
- develop adult led activities further by highlighting the purpose of the activity to children at the start of each activity
- develop the assessment system further by ensuring progress towards each early learning goal is clear.

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

Children practise counting regularly in fun ways and for a purpose. Three-year-olds can group small sets of numbers correctly whilst the older children learn to compare sets of numbers and develop basic skills of calculation. They add one more and work out one less to solve simple problems. They are able to put numbers in order and reinforce learning as they sing number rhymes. Children learn to recognise and name shapes, follow and continue patterns using the good range of resources available.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop exploratory and investigative skills in interesting ways. They show interest and developing knowledge about the pets they care for. They eagerly use equipment, such as magnifying glasses to observe closely and have fun as they make the features on conkers and their own faces look 'huge'. Children show a developing awareness of time as they recall past events and learn about aspects of different cultures in meaningful ways. They operate simple equipment including the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children play together well and show developing skills as they negotiate indoor and outdoor space and climbing equipment. They are helped to develop hand to eye co-ordination as they use bats and balls and other small equipment. They develop an awareness about the importance of staying healthy, for example, as they learn about which foods are good for them and as they practise good hygiene routines. They show increasing skill in using tools, such as scissors and handle them safely.

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.