



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN 305301**

**DfES Number:**

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date      10/12/2004  
Inspector Name      Susan, Helen Spencer

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type      Full Day Care, Out of School Day Care  
Setting Name      Smallworld Pre-School  
Setting Address      Leftwich Primary School  
                                 Old Hall Road  
                                 Northwich  
                                 Cheshire  
                                 CW9 8DH

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name                      Mrs Sharon Walton

## 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

The Smallworld Pre-school and Link Club is owned by Smallworld Pre-schools and Link Clubs Ltd and one of six owned by the group. It opened in 2001 and operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of a school. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and also has access to some of the school's facilities. It is situated in Northwich, a town in central Cheshire.

The setting opens during school term time only. It welcomes children for two sessions daily, the first from 09.00 until 11.30 and the second from 12.15 to 14.45. Occasionally children stay all day.

It is registered to care for 22 children. There are currently 45 children aged between two and a half and four years on roll and they attend for a variety of sessions. Twenty nine children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a few children identified as having special educational needs. It has no children who speak English as an additional language and has no experience of working with such children but would welcome them in the future.

The nursery employs seven staff all of whom work with the children. They all have an early years qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives also support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare partnership.

## 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 Smallworld Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in mathematical, physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world and generally good progress in the other two areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Topic planning is detailed and linked well to the Stepping Stones. The acted-out storytelling sessions are very high quality. The registration sessions are too long and children find it difficult to concentrate. Children's behaviour is managed well because staff state clearly their expectations, e.g. before going out onto the playground. The teaching of children with special educational needs is very good.

Assessment procedures are very detailed. Key workers observe children at tasks and at play. Their notes are recorded on the child's profile. These notes influence the planning of future tasks for the child and are used as the basis of the annual reports.

The leadership and management of the day nursery are generally good. The setting runs smoothly because clear policies and procedures are in place, all staff have job descriptions and the management structure is known by all. The owner is always on site and has regular contact with parents. The setting strives to improve even further the provision for children and has made significant improvements since the last inspection. However, management does not have a complete overview of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning because the appraisal system is not robust enough.

The partnership with parents is very good. The setting has high quality induction procedures in place that keep parents informed and allow them to settle their child into the pre-school smoothly. The key worker system is used well by parents to get information on their child and the high quality reports at the end of the year are valued.

### What is being done well?

- Children are confident and happy because they have positive relationships with adults in the setting.
- Children really enjoy and learn a great deal from the wonderful story telling sessions when staff act out the story rather than reading it from a book.
- Children have extensive knowledge of number. They practice touch counting daily and learn about numerals from stimulating activities, like the 'parcel game'.
- Children like activities in which they feel shaving foam, spaghetti and other wet substances because they are fun and they broaden their vocabulary as

they try to describe what they are touching.

- The teaching of children with special educational needs is high quality. Staff include these children into most activities, encouraged other children to join in their games and allow them to 'have a go' all the time.
- The information pack for parents when their child first joins the setting is very good.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning so that the management has a clear picture of the many strengths and few areas for development of provision
- the amount of time children spend seated and relatively passive during the registration routine
- the correction of the weak speech patterns of a few children by staff.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The setting has made very good progress on the three key issues from the last inspection. The first asked them to ensure that their planning covered all six areas of learning. Their planning is now closely linked to the national guidance. Children's learning in the six areas of learning is specifically and carefully planned into topics. The second issue was to improve the use of assessment. An assessment system is now in place, which is known and used well by everyone. It measures children's progress against the Stepping Stones and observations also influence future planning. The third issue concerned giving more able children further opportunities to develop their writing and calculating skills. Children now have more opportunities to mark make during role-play and staff actively encourage their skills. They also have a good understanding of numbers and numerals. The 'rising 5' sessions, which start in the January term, are said to prepare children for reception class.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children bid farewell to their parents without a backward glance because they are warmly welcomed by staff. Many are confident to answer questions or identify the numeral on a present in front of the whole group. They persist well at tasks and are encouraged to 'have a go'. Children take care of personal needs and show concern about others, like the children who are absent. They behave well but a few find it difficult to concentrate for long periods during the long 'registration' sessions.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Most children communicate their needs and ideas quite well through speech but a few children speak indistinctly and staff do not correct them enough. Children are entranced when listening to wonderfully acted-out story of the Three Bears. They also handle books sensibly. A few children 'hear' letter sounds, e.g. in their name, however, staff miss chances to make children aware of rhyming words. Children's mark making is encouraged during role-play, where they 'write' cards and label presents.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children sort objects and toys confidently by colour and by size when playing with the elephants or presents. Some copy quite complex patterns of beads. Children have a good knowledge of number. Most of them 'touch' count accurately to ten and some beyond that, e.g. at registration time. Children recognise some of the numerals and a few write some of them. Children have a good knowledge of the basic flat shapes, identify them around the room and some children draw them in the air accurately.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children benefit greatly from the use of the school's grounds and the locality to extend their understanding of the world around them. The well-planned topics develop the use of their senses and their vocabulary. They 'crunch' through autumn leaves, observe the weather and talk about how the mixture will change as they add coloured dye to the play dough. Children know that they were younger and smaller in the past. They also enjoy making models from construction kits and junk materials.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move safely around the room and walk, run and hop well outside, mimicking the action of hopscotch. They are challenged when using the school's equipment during fair weather, climbing and balancing well off the ground. Children move imaginatively in response to music and pretend to move as animals do. They handle small tools and writing implements, like chalk and pencils, with improving control. They build with blocks, place jigsaw pieces carefully and move trains and cars around tracks.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children play imaginatively in the Christmas grotto acting out wrapping presents, 'writing' gift tags and posting everything in the letter box. They also play cooperatively in the home corner. Children really enjoy the singing session. They join in gleefully with words and actions after selecting the song by choosing an object from a sack. Displays of children's art work reflect the good range of techniques the children have learned, like sponge printing, finger painting and bubble painting.

**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**

- implement a policy and procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning
- review the time spent as whole group at registration time
- train staff to correct weak speech patterns.

*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.*