



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 316853

DfES Number: 580422

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/01/2005
Inspector Name Jannet Mary Richards

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Hollins Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Hollins Community Centre
Hollins Lane
Bury
Lancashire
BL9 8AY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Hollins Pre-School Playgroup Committee
1041102

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Hollins Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Address Hollins Community Centre
Hollins Lane
Bury
Lancashire
BL9 8AT

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

Hollins Pre-School Playgroup has been established since 1972.

It is run by the Hollins Pre-School Playgroup Committee and operates from the community centre in the semi-rural area of Hollins, Bury. The group currently uses the main hall and small adjacent room. There is a small enclosed area for outdoor play.

The pre-school playgroup operates sessions from 09:00 to 11:30 and 13:45 to 15:45 Monday to Friday during school term times.

A maximum of 34 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 61 children in total on roll. Of these 31 children receive funding for nursery education. Most of the children who attend live in the local area. There are no children currently attending who have special educational needs. There are no children currently attending who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school playgroup employs a total of 12 staff who work on a part-time basis. Three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Hollins Pre-School Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children.

Good staff to child ratios ensure that children receive individual attention and are supported in their play. The setting has had some recent changes in staffing, and currently does not have sufficient staff employed with child care qualifications. Temporary management arrangements are in place for the afternoon sessions which are satisfactory.

The staff interact well with the children, promoting their enjoyment and sense of fun. They use praise and encouragement frequently to promote good behaviour.

Children use the main hall for most activities, and this provides sufficient space for a range of play activities which the children enjoy. Younger children attending the morning sessions often spend time in a smaller room where the choice of activities is insufficient, which sometimes leads to boredom.

Health, hygiene and safety procedures are followed well in practice ensure that children are safe, and the staff are planning on introducing fruit and breadsticks for snack time to promote healthy eating.

Most safety measures are in place, and the staff supervise the children well at all times. Some staff are soon to attend child protection training to increase their knowledge of this issue.

The small play room is also used for storage, and further advice is needed relating to use of this area for children.

The staff work well with parents and carers. Parents are well informed about what the children do each day, and are made to feel welcome in the setting.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the time of the last inspection the setting was required to address six issues. Three issues related to staffing. The playgroup now ensures that all staff comply with vetting procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. They developed an action plan in relation to staff qualification requirements which were met for a period of time. Since then, however, there have been changes in staffing and at the current time there are too few qualified staff working with the children. Changes in management of the pre-school has led to temporary management arrangements for the afternoon session which are to be addressed to ensure that suitable management cover is available on a permanent basis.

Good progress has been made on three issues raised relating to policies. The pre-school has updated the child protection, behaviour management and complaints procedures, which has led to improvements in the documentation relating to pre-school practices.

What is being done well?

- Partnership with parents is good. The welcoming atmosphere and open communication ensures that parents are well informed about the pre-school activities.
- The staff develop good relationships and interact well with the children. They praise and encourage the children often and promote an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment.
- Good staff to child ratios ensure that the children receive a good amount of individual attention. This is particularly apparent when new children are settling in and receive good support from the sensitive staff.

What needs to be improved?

- the staffing arrangements to ensure that permanent suitable management arrangements are in place, that at least half of the staff have appropriate qualifications, and to ensure that there are clear communication links between the morning and afternoon session staff to promote consistency
- the safety and use of the small play room
- the grouping arrangements and range of activities for younger children attending the morning sessions
- the snack-time provision

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Ofsted has received one complaint about this provider since April 2004.

The complaint related to safety and hygiene standards of the premises (national standards 4, 6 and 7).

The complaint was investigated and appropriate action taken by the provider to address the areas of concern, including employment of contract cleaners for the building.

The provider continues to remain qualified for registration.

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
2	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2	01/02/2005

	qualification in childcare, and how suitable long term management arrangements for the afternoon session will be met. Include details about how the two sessions will work together to ensure consistency.	
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
3	Review the grouping arrangements to enable younger children attending morning sessions to access a wider variety of play activities.
6	Seek fire safety advice relating to the use of the smaller play-room and act on advice given. If, following advice this area is used by children ensure that the radiator is made safe or inaccessible.
8	Review the provision for snack time to promote healthy eating.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Hollins Pre-School Playgroup offers good quality educational provision which helps children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children's progress in personal social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is generally good. Children make less progress in communication language and literacy due to significant weaknesses in this area.

Teaching is generally good.

The staff's good understanding of the foundation stage and provision of an interesting range of activities helps children to make good progress. They plan activities to promote the six areas of learning, though do not plan and provide sufficient activities to promote children's early writing skills and access to books. The staff provide an organised play environment where they support children directly during play. They question the children appropriately to encourage learning and the children respond well to the frequent praise and encouragement they receive. The pre-school has a good range of equipment which is used well in planned activities, though children are not always able to access a wide range independently to extend their own play ideas.

The staff use assessment systems to monitor children's progress. They get to know the children well. They have not yet developed systems to link the assessments of what children can do with planning the next steps in their learning.

There are good systems in place to support children with special needs.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff working with the pre-school children have a strong commitment to the development of the provision. They are supported directly by a manager who works alongside them offering good support and supervision.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes to children's progress. Parents are very welcome in the setting. They are well informed about the curriculum.

What is being done well?

- The setting is effective in fostering children's confidence and independence and promoting a positive approach to learning.
- The staff team working with the pre-school children work well together, and have a strong commitment to further development of the educational provision.

- Children are provided with interesting first hand experiences to find out about the world in which they live through, for example, walks in the local area to observe features of the environment and when they have visitors who talk to them about the jobs they do. At the time of the inspection they are particularly interested to learn about the solar system.
- Children are developing good counting and number recognition skills through everyday routines and activities and more specific planned activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the range of resources available at all times to extend choice and give the children opportunities to extend their play and learning ideas, and consolidate what they have already learned
- planning and assessment systems, to ensure clear links between what children can do and the next steps in their learning
- the opportunities for children to access books for enjoyment and reference, and to practice their early writing skills during meaningful play activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the time of the last inspection three issues for development were identified.

The first was to develop the assessment systems for recording children's progress and use them to identify and plan what children need to learn next. Since the inspection there have been staff changes in the management of the pre-school. Children's progress has continued to be assessed, though the staff have not yet developed these sufficiently to ensure that they provide an up to date record which can be used to plan the next steps in children's learning. This remains a key issue from this inspection.

The second issue was to provide more opportunities for children to access art and craft materials. The children now access art and craft materials regularly, often through focussed activities which are led by adults, and have opportunities to create in two and three dimensions using a range of different materials. They also have some daily access to resources such as paint and pencils, though do not access a wide range of creative media during free play.

The third issue was to make more use of children's free play activities to promote learning. The staff now provide a range of free play activities each day and effectively support children as they play, by asking questions to encourage their learning through play, for example.

Overall the setting has made generally good progress on the issues raised.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have a positive disposition to learning, they are confident in the environment and eager to explore activities. They work well alone and in groups, they concentrate and persist at activities which interest them, though do not access a wide range of resources to extend their play ideas. They develop good relationships with staff and friendships with others in the group. They respond well to frequent praise and encouragement.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

The children are developing good skills in speaking and listening. They talk confidently in front of the group at circle time, and listen to what others have to say. They enjoy stories, predicting what might happen and talking about the pictures, though do not access books independently for reference or enjoyment. They do not often practice early writing skills during play or develop a good understanding that print carries meaning and we write for a purpose.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make good progress with number skills. They use many opportunities to count to ten and beyond, they count the number of rockets and recognise the numbers to ten on their space display, for example. Children learn about shape from well planned activities such as identifying shapes on buildings when they take a walk in the local area. They use mathematical language often during play, when they go over, under and around objects on an obstacle course, for example.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have a strong sense of exploration which they use to investigate how and why things happen, when they move a paper boat by blowing through a straw, for example. They enjoy learning about the world in which they live. They have visits from people who help us such as the fire service, and go for walks to explore the local area. They are keen to learn about the planets in the solar system. They often learn about different cultures and beliefs when they celebrate festivals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use many good opportunities and a range of equipment to practice movement and co-ordination both outdoors and indoors. They use large movements and negotiate space well when they complete an obstacle course for example. They use a range of tools such as pencils and scissors to practice fine motor skills, and they develop good co-ordination skills when they pour their own drinks at snack time.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children enjoy creating in two and three dimensions using a variety of media such as paint, collage, clay, often during focussed activities, and with a limited selection during free play. They enjoy singing familiar songs each day, and have some planned sessions to explore the sounds of musical instruments. They have opportunities to use a role play area at all times to develop their imagination.	

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

- Increase the range of resources available at all times to provide more choice and give the children opportunities to extend their play and learning ideas, and consolidate what they have already learned
- continue to develop the planning and assessment systems, to ensure clear links between what children can do and the next steps in their learning
- increase the opportunities for children to access books for enjoyment and reference, and to practice their early writing skills during meaningful play 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.