



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 206856

DfES Number: 585371

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/11/2004
Inspector Name Lynne Moodie

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Smalley Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Church Hall
Main Road, Smalley
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 6EF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Smalley Pre-School Playgroup 1033193

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Smalley Pre-School Playgroup
Address Church Hall, Main Road
Smalley
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 6EF

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

Smalley Pre-school Playgroup is operated from the church hall in the village of Smalley and serves the local community. The playgroup is run by a committee. It is registered to provide care for 24 children each session between the age of two and five years-of-age. At present there are 30 children on roll of whom 14 three and four-year-olds are in receipt of funding. The playgroup is open each weekday morning between 09:00 and 11:45 during the term times of local schools.

The children use the large main room which can be divided into two areas. They also have the use of a hard play area outside the hall. At present no children attending the playgroup speak English as an additional language or have been identified as having special educational needs. There are six members of staff working with the children, five of whom hold recognised child care qualifications. The setting benefits from the support of 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?

Smalley Pre-school Playgroup provides a colourful and welcoming environment in which children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The provision for personal, social and emotional development and physical and creative development is particularly well taught and children make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff have very good knowledge of the early learning goals and are skilled in the use of questioning to extend the children's learning. They use high quality resources to plan stimulating activities. They manage the children well and have high expectations for their behaviour, which is very good. The planning of the curriculum covers all the early learning goals in all six areas of learning and shows how more able children can be challenged through extended activities. It does not show however, a balance between teaching through activities directed by the staff and those chosen by the children. This means that steady progress towards all the early learning goals is not ensured.

The leadership of the setting is generally good overall. The two leaders have developed a committed team who work well together. They share the vision to have happy children who develop as individuals. They have ensured that staff have good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum. Professional development of staff is monitored and an action plan devised to address identified weaknesses. Assessments cover all early learning goals. They do not however, inform the planning for the next steps of children's learning. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is informal at present.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are encouraged to stay in the setting regularly to join in with activities and this has a positive impact on children's learning. They are well informed about the educational provision taught in the playgroup and encouraged to share their knowledge of their children.

What is being done well?

- The staff have very good knowledge of the early learning goals. They have a collaborative approach to all of their work and are skilled in the use of questioning to extend the children's learning.
- The staff plan many opportunities for the children to develop their skills in using language for communication and for thinking.
- Through interesting and exciting activities the children are encouraged to explore and investigate objects, materials and living things using all their senses as appropriate.
- Children become confident in using numbers as labels and for counting through playgroup routines and planned activities.

- The staff have developed a very good relationship with parents and carers which has a positive impact on the children's learning.
- The staff have high expectations for the children's behaviour. In response the children are thoughtful, able to share fairly and to take turns in using the high quality resources. Their behaviour is very good.

What needs to be improved?

- the inclusion of ongoing information, gained from parents about their child's progress, in the formal assessment procedure
- the planning for teaching the early learning goals through a balance of activities directed by the staff and those chosen by the children
- the use of the already comprehensive assessment procedure so that it informs the planning of the next steps of children's learning according to their individual skills, knowledge and ability.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff are now confident in their knowledge of the early learning goals, which has improved the quality of their teaching. Planning and assessment now include all the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. The assessment procedure includes early information gained from parents about their child's knowledge and skills. It does not yet however, include ongoing information gained from parents about their child's recently acquired progress.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are excited and eager to learn. Through being encouraged to talk during activities they are becoming confident in speaking to familiar groups. They are building good relationships by taking turns and sharing equipment fairly, such as when stirring ingredients when making biscuits. The children's behaviour is very good and supported by staff who explain what is right and wrong. They are developing independence, for example, by wiping their own hands before snack times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Through listening with enjoyment to stories and singing songs such as 'When You're Happy' the children are developing their language for communication. The staff support their extending vocabulary by talking about the 'huffing' wind and the stars they see at night. Staff engage the children in role play to talk about imagined experiences. Linking sounds and letters, reading, writing and handwriting are taught informally which means that steady progress in these areas is not ensured.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff provide many opportunities for counting through planned activities and daily routines. The children count forwards and back using their fingers. They count the number of stamps they make in the 'post office' and sing number songs. Opportunities for them to calculate using addition and subtraction are missed at snack time when staff put out the correct number of yogurts and chairs. Shape, space and measure are taught informally which means that steady progress in these areas is not ensured.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The children investigate objects and materials using all their senses. They smell perfumed soap, feel dry pot-pourri and use hand lenses to look at bugs. The children bake biscuits, looking carefully at the ingredients, before and after cooking, and taste the results with enjoyment. Through learning about Chinese New Year, Diwali and Easter they are learning about their own culture and those of other people. Weakness in planning means that not all early learning goals are taught systematically.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff provide many opportunities for them to move confidently and in safety. Through the use of the climbing frame the children are learning to travel around, under, over and through equipment. They show an awareness of space through using equipment such as the large buggies, trikes and tractors in the outside area. Through eating fruit at snack time they learn the importance of keeping healthy. The children use a wide range of tools such as a food grater, kebab sticks and scissors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

They mix paint to investigate colours when making their number line. Using fabric and feathers they design and make a collage picture of a hat. The children investigate the feel of wet and dry corn flour and use sticky paper to make stamps in the 'post office'. They use recycled boxes, paper and glue to make a remote control for their television. They dance and sing sometimes accompanying themselves with drums, shakers and tambourines. They listen to taped music when baking their biscuits.

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

- ensure that the assessment of the children's attainment and progress informs the planning procedure so that they are taught the next steps of their learning, according to their individual skills and ability, through a balance of directed and non-directed 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.