



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221914

DfES Number: 540796

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	24/05/2004
Inspector Name	Emma Louise Bright

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Chestnut Playgroup
Setting Address	The Cathodean Centre High Street, Linton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 6AX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Chestnut Playgroup 1090719
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Chestnut Playgroup
Address	The Cathodean Centre High Street, Linton Cambridge Cambridgeshire

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

Chestnut Playgroup was established over 30 years ago. It operates from the Cathodean Centre in the village of Linton. The group serves the local area.

There are currently 47 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 20 funded three-year-olds and 23 funded four-year-olds. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The group currently supports a number of children with special needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:00. There are extended sessions available for children in the last half term before they go to school.

There are eight part time members of staff working with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. There are three members of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from an Early Years Mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

How good is the Day Care?

Chestnut Playgroup provides good quality care for children.

The staff provide a particularly attractive and welcoming setting for children in their care. Children can move about freely and choose from a broad range of interesting and exciting activities, which ensures children are busy and active throughout the session. The well qualified staff team are effectively deployed within the setting to ensure that children receive good support in their activities. All documentation is in place. It is clear, detailed and implemented by the staff, which helps to underpin the good practice and ensures children's safety and well-being. However, there is one small detail missing from one of the policies.

The staff demonstrate a very sound awareness of safety issues and security is very good. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children are safe during their play. Children are encouraged to learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine. Staff provide children with a well-balanced range of snacks and drinks to help them understand about healthy eating. The staff have a good knowledge of child protection and procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe.

Children's behaviour is very good; staff are consistent and use praise and encouragement effectively. This reinforces the children's good behaviour and promotes the children's confidence and self-esteem. The staff interact well with the children, they talk and listen respectfully to them, encouraging them to think and demonstrate what they know. The staff are very supportive of children with special needs and this enables them to participate in activities at their own pace.

The group develops very good relationships with the parents. Comprehensive information is both gathered and shared with the parents so that children feel secure within the group. Parents are kept well-informed about the planned activities and are encouraged to approach the staff at any time.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the group agreed to comply with the recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer and produce a full written complaints procedure.

Following the Fire Safety Officers inspection, the group have complied with the recommendations made and a written complaints procedure is in place and available to parents.

What is being done well?

- The staff have attended a wide range of training courses which ensures that they are up to date on new developments in early years practice. Children benefit from being cared for by an experienced, qualified staff team.
- Very good safety arrangements are in place and clearly implemented. The staff are particularly vigilant and help children to understand about the dangers, which means children can play safely at all times.
- The partnership with parents and carers is good and ensures that children are cared for according to parents wishes. Parents are given excellent information so they know about their child's progress and are they are actively encouraged to participate in their child's learning.
- The group maintains very good records and documentation, which are regularly reviewed and up dated. This enables the staff to care for the children appropriately and keep them safe.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The excellent outdoor area is used all year round as a further classroom in which children have rich opportunities for learning. Staff and children have created a garden, growing plants, vegetables and fruit so that children can discover and

explore the natural world. Children are encouraged to use their observational skills, recording the growth of plants and are excited by their discoveries.(Standard 4)

What needs to be improved?

- documentation, to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

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

Std	Recommendation
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

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 Chestnut Playgroup is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and they use this knowledge to plan an excellent range of interesting and practical activities for children to experience. The staff are enthusiastic about how children learn and they make very good use of the environment and resources to stimulate children's interest. The staff use particularly good questioning skills to encourage children to think and give them lots of opportunities to demonstrate what they know. Staff build very good relationships with the children and they know them well; children respond to their positive behaviour management. There is an effective system in place to support children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language.

Leadership and management is very good. The Lead Practitioner offers effective support and leadership and is committed to providing a high quality learning environment. Training is given high priority. The staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; they work well together to offer children a very good early years experience. With the support of a well-organised committee, this ensures the smooth running of the setting.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff have good relationships with parents and ensure that they have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress. Parents receive good information about the setting, its provision and aims for children which keeps them informed of the curriculum and the group's daily activities. Parents are encouraged to take part in their child's learning through a variety of opportunities. Very good links have been established with the local school, and this ensures the transition from playgroup to school is easier for both children and parents.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident, independent learners, approaching planned and self-chosen activities with enthusiasm. They display great enjoyment in the rich opportunities and experiences on offer.
- Planning is very good. It is based on a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and is delivered very well due to the staff's clear understanding of how children learn through practical, meaningful activities.
- Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Staff provide a broad range of well-planned activities and experiences for children, particularly through the excellent use of the outdoor area where children explore and observe nature.

- The very good support given to children with special educational needs ensures that all children can access the curriculum and the setting.

What needs to be improved?

- children's contribution to the setting's written rules for good behaviour.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Children have rich opportunities to explore words and numbers in planned and spontaneous activities. Varied captions and signs display words and numbers and children use them spontaneously in their play.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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This is the highlight of the group. Children relate well to each other and adults, confidently expressing their needs and ideas. They concentrate well, persevering with tasks and staff offer good support so they continue to develop this skill. Children share resources and co-operate well with each other. They demonstrate good personal independence skills. Children have high levels of self-esteem, they respond well to the positive messages given to them and their behaviour is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's language skills are developing very well; they speak confidently to a familiar audience and have good opportunities to practise this skill. Children enjoy listening to well-read stories, they join in enthusiastically and predict what happens next. They enjoy mark making during role-play and throughout many of the activities offered; their early writing skills are developing very well. A word rich environment is provided; children show a great interest in words and how they are formed.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use numbers and counting in their play and in planned activities. They recognise numerals and staff develop children's understanding of simple calculations through planned and spontaneous activities. Children use appropriate vocabulary to describe size and shape and use positional language in their play. They recreate patterns and use mathematical concepts to problem solve. Staff provide interesting activities, such as measuring baked beans so children learn about weight and capacity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use their observational skills to explore the environment, their community and the natural world. Regular visitors to the group further support learning. Children build and construct using a broad range of objects and tools; they are inquisitive to learn how things work. They have regular opportunities to use information technology and make good use of the range of programmable toys. Children enjoy talking about past and present events in their own lives and the lives of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have lots of good opportunities to develop their physical skills. They enjoy the challenge of balancing on beams and stilts and confidently negotiate pathways as they manoeuvre their tricycles around obstacles. Children use small tools and equipment in a variety of activities with increasing control. They learn about the importance of staying healthy through well-planned topics and are developing a good awareness of healthy practices, particularly healthy eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colour and texture through a range of exciting activities and enjoy observing what happens when two colours are mixed together. They have good opportunities to design and create models from junk. Children enjoy a range of songs, rhymes and ring games, joining in enthusiastically. They explore sound and music through interesting musical instruments. Children draw on their experiences and imagination in role-play situations, which support topic related activities.

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 significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- further enhance opportunities for children to contribute to the setting's written rules for good behaviour.

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.