



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 311883

DfES Number: 582426

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	16/07/2004
Inspector Name	Jean Evans

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Hardman Centre Playgroup
Setting Address	Hardman Centre, Dryden Road Low Fell Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 5HP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Committee of The Hardman Centre
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Committee of The Hardman Centre
Address	Hardman Centre, Dryden Road Low Fell Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 5HP

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 Hardman Centre Pre-school Playgroup is located in a day centre which was originally a Methodist church. The Centre as a whole functions under the umbrella of the Methodist Church, partly funded by local government and partly by charitable trusts.

The playgroup uses the hall area, which is sectioned into specific areas of play, as well as the toilets and kitchen. Elderly residents from the community also share use of the premises.

The children attending are from the local community of Low Fell in Gateshead. There are currently 36 children aged from three to five years on roll, of whom 23 three-year-olds and 13 four-year-olds receive nursery funding. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs. There are no children currently attending for whom English is an additional language, although there are appropriate procedures in place.

The playgroup is open every weekday morning during term times from 08:45 until 11.30. Four staff, two leaders and two assistants, work with the children, and all have a recognised qualification in child care. In addition, the playgroup receives professional support from Sure Start Gateshead and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Hardman Centre Pre-school Playgroup provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. The programme for personal, social and emotional development is a strength.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, and of the stepping stones, and use this effectively to ensure that children have a good balance of experiences across all six areas of the curriculum. They use appropriate methods to meet the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, and foster good relationships at all levels. They set high standards for behaviour, resulting in caring children who are aware of the consequences of their actions. They plan to modify their management of time and children so that large group situations are minimised, and to replace the present planning and assessment systems with the introduction of new documentation from Sure Start Gateshead to ensure greater links with the Foundation Stage Profile.

The leadership and management of the playgroup is very good. The highly committed and dedicated staff team work closely to improve the care and education of all children. The involvement of an advisory teacher helps staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses and take appropriate action. Pre-school Learning Alliance membership provides additional support.

The playgroup shares a very good partnership with parents who are given detailed information about the provision through formal meetings, notices and newsletters. There is effective daily exchange of information about the children's achievements and progress between key workers and parents. Parents are actively involved in their child's learning to enable continuity of learning between home and playgroup. A 'home links' section on plans explains clearly how parents can share and extend playgroup activities with their child.

What is being done well?

- Close, consistent teamwork results in secure, confident children and parents, and the fostering of good relationships at all levels.
- High expectations for behaviour ensure that children are sensitive to the needs of others, and aware of the consequences of their actions.
- The strong emphasis on the development of children's oral language skills results in children who are confident speakers and attentive listeners.
- The effective partnership with parents enhances children's learning opportunities.

What needs to be improved?

- Opportunities for children to write for a purpose in different play areas.
- Organisation of children into smaller groups for routines such as circle time, snack time and registration to extend learning opportunities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made with the one point for consideration following the last inspection relating to tracking children to ensure that they all access the good variety of activities on offer to them. Staff have been working closely with their advisory teacher to complete an audit of every play area in order to identify how learning opportunities can be developed further. They are following this audit by developing individual play areas and monitoring the subsequent success of their actions.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

This learning area is a strength of the playgroup, resulting in interested, excited and motivated children. Older children express their needs, views and feelings verbally, and younger children confidently seek help with personal needs. They are forming very good relationships. Older children are sensitive and caring, whilst younger children are learning to work as part of a group. They demonstrate very good behaviour, with older children supporting their younger friends effectively.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use language well to negotiate with one another. They listen attentively, and respond eagerly, to songs, stories and rhymes. They are highly imaginative in their use of language, especially during role-play and when creating stories with small world equipment. They handle books with care and enjoyment and are beginning to understand that print carries meaning. Overall, however, there are insufficient opportunities for children to attempt writing for a purpose during play situations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count with confidence and solve simple problems involving counting. Effective use of number rhymes supports this skill. They are developing an understanding of addition and subtraction through practical activities and during everyday routines, such as registration and snack time when they count the number of boys and girls and decide upon the total. They use appropriate language to describe and compare shape, position, size and quantity, for example, as they create a train layout.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children use their natural curiosity to explore and investigate the world around them using an interesting variety of resources, and through a range of well-planned experiences. They are developing very good designing and making skills. When making hats, older children are able to select the resources they need for the task and younger children learn about how to use the available tools and materials. They use the computer and other technological resources effectively to support their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently and imaginatively, and use large apparatus safely. They particularly enjoy practising for their sports day, demonstrating awareness of the space around them and an ability to handle equipment and negotiate obstacles with growing skill. Access to a very good range of small and large equipment encourages the development of a variety of movement skills. Older children enjoy manipulating construction equipment to create complex structures using nuts, bolts and screws.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions, with individual results. They incorporate different techniques such as marbling and printing into their creative expression. They are highly imaginative in art and design, music, dance, role-play and stories. Exciting involvement with a local music group has enhanced their musical awareness. They express ideas, thoughts and feelings in new and interesting ways, and enjoy sensory experiences such as baking.

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 the following:
- continue with the planned re-organisation of daily routines presently involving large groups of children, such as circle time, snack time and registration, so that children's learning can be enhanced by more appropriate smaller group situations.

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.