



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 135034

DfES Number: 500175

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/12/2004
Inspector Name	Malini Parmar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Elgin Pre-School
Setting Address	Elgin Community Centre Harrow Road London W9 3RS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of The Committee of Elgin Pre-School 1028565
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Elgin Pre-School
Address	77 Bronte House Cambridge Road Kilburn London NW6 5BG

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 Elgin pre-school is a community playgroup which is situated on the Elgin Estate.

The setting is open Monday - Friday school terms only. Sessions 9.30 am to 12.00 noon and 12.45 pm to 3.15 pm.

There is a small, paved, securely fenced play area near the setting for outdoor play. Access to the premises is through the community centre entrance up a narrow staircase.

An intercom is used to monitor access to the playgroup. Children have access to a large hall children's toilets, staff facilities, storeroom and office branching from the main hall. Staff have additional access to the kitchen..

There is access to a fenced outdoor area, also there are regular outings to local facilities suitable for the children to use. The facility is easily accessible by bus. The group support children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

There are 3 members of staff orking directly with the children plus a full time volunteer. The group receive support from the PSLA and a teacher from the Early Years Partnership (EYDCP).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Elgin Pre- School provides a caring, welcoming environment for children. The educational provision is acceptable but weaknesses in teaching, planning and organisation, limit children's progress in all six areas of learning.

The overall quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff provide some worthwhile opportunities and work positively with children, encouraging them to be confident and promoting their self-esteem through praise. However, their lack of knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage does not ensure children's progress along stepping-stones towards the early learning goals. Staff give useful support to individual children and when working in small groups but they are not always effectively deployed to support and extend children's thinking. Consequently, while staff are busy with organisational tasks, children often receive insufficient attention and are not sufficiently engaged in purposeful play. The system for planning and assessment is developing. Staff meet weekly to organise the play opportunities but they do not identify children's next steps and use these to inform plans. Consequently, many opportunities lack sufficient challenge particularly for more able children. The routine and pace of session does not effectively sustain children's interest and motivation and children become restless in the extended whole group situations. Systems in place to support children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are secure.

Leadership and Management has significant weaknesses. Staff work as a committed team and training opportunities are available but these are limited by organisational priorities. The leader is yet to develop a formal system to identify the settings strengths and weaknesses.

Partnership with Parents is generally good. Staff welcome parents warmly and exchange information daily. Written information is available about the setting but limited amounts about the curriculum.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for children and during individual conversations and small group work, they provide useful support to children.
- Parents are made welcome and effective settling in procedures promote firm relationships. Staff are available at every session to exchange information and parents participate in the voluntary rota.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to plan and

provide a suitable programme of activities

- the effective use of observations and assessment in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning and use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities
- the organisation and deployment of staff to ensure children receive sufficient attention and consistently experience suitable challenges
- the pace and routine of the session to reduce the length of time children spend waiting in whole group situation
- the leadership and management of the setting; to ensure effective systems in order to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and that of the educational.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in utilising the spare storeroom to increase the provision of quiet areas for the children. The spare room is now designated as an area for quiet play and houses the books and props accompanying them.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are confident, they are beginning to develop cooperative relationships with their peers. They are developing their concentration and can for example complete puzzles. During free play they are not consistently engaged in purposeful play and frequently wander in search of other things to do. Children have little opportunity to access resources independently. The pace and routine of the session does not retain children's interest and they become restless in the extended whole group times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children speak confidently and are beginning to share ideas and talk about their experiences with adults and friends. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories with props. Children ably self-register as the sessions begin. Children are not sufficiently encouraged to notice print, or the sounds of letters and words. Activities are not extended to encourage children to label their own work or to include opportunities to write for a variety of purpose, such as in their role-play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children successfully identify shape and colour during group activities. They enjoy using sand and water but are not sufficiently supported to develop an awareness of space and measure during such activities. They learn about simple addition and subtraction through songs. However many spontaneous and everyday opportunities to demonstrate the meaning of numbers or use mathematical language are missed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children enjoy using construction kits to make models and learn about cultures and beliefs through topics. Activities such as making dough help them to notice change in colour and texture. Children spend little time investigating everyday objects and technology to find out how things work, some of the few programmable toys offered do not work. They receive insufficient chances to develop a sense of time. Little use is made of the outside area to stimulate interest in the natural world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have opportunities to refine and strengthen their small and gross movements through the daily routine. They ably paint, stick, jump and run. However, these activities are not planned according to individual needs and this makes it difficult to assess their effectiveness. Children receive insufficient opportunities to raise their health and bodily awareness.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
<p>Children clearly enjoy the daily opportunities to explore materials using their senses; they use these to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Occasionally, experiences to freely experiment are hindered by staff's over direction. Little time is spent exploring music or playing instruments. Children enjoy the daily opportunities for imaginative play, acting out familiar situations in the home corner. However, they receive insufficient support to build on their ideas and extend their play.</p>	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and stepping-stones towards the early learning goals in all six curriculum areas to plan and provide a co ordinated programme of opportunities
- develop the assessment to ensure observations identify children's next steps in learning and these are used to inform future plans
- improve the organisation and deployment of staff to ensure children receive sufficient attention and consistently experience suitable challenges and reduce the length of time children spend waiting in whole group situations
- ensure effective systems in order to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and that of the educational programme.

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.