



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 304964

DfES Number: 514687

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/01/2005
Inspector Name Jane Shaw

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Athey Street Playgroup
Setting Address Park Royal School
Lyon Street
Macclesfield
SK11 6QX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Athey Street Playgroup 1016616

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Athey Street Playgroup
Address Lyon Street
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 6QX

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

Athey Street Pre-school is organised and managed by a committee of parents and carers. The pre-school first opened in 1981 and operates from two rooms within a mobile building within the grounds of Park Royal Primary School in Macclesfield, Cheshire. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00 term time only. All children share access to a small secure enclosed outdoor play area, there is also access to parts of the school grounds. They have access to a small kitchen for the preparation of snacks and drinks.

There are currently 86 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 55 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the immediate vicinity to the pre-school. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Six of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications, the two other staff are working towards appropriate qualifications. In addition, staff are undertaking additional training and qualifications.

The pre-school, is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. As the setting is in receipt of funding for nursery education they have access to a Foundation Stage teacher and other advisory staff from Sure Start Cheshire.

How good is the Day Care?

Athey Street Pre-school are providing good quality care for children.

There is a high ratio of qualified staff within the team who are committed to further training to enhance their skills and knowledge. The organisation of the children, staffing, available space and resources is good and is providing the children with a good learning environment. The premises are welcoming with many examples of the children's work on display, along with other relevant information for the parents and

carers. All documentation is in place, however, some details are missing from the attendance register and some clearances are outstanding for the committee.

The children are being cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment, regular risk assessments and daily visual checks are carried out. Staff encourage the children to have good hygiene practices and many children are able to undertake these tasks independently. The children are offered fresh, healthy snacks and drinks.

The children are offered a good range of activities and opportunities which are planned around themes and involve the children in interesting and stimulating activities and experiences. Planning is undertaken for all children as individuals and as part of a group, this ensures that children have access to a range of play experiences to aid their learning and development. All children have the opportunity to, and are encouraged to, participate in all activities. Children with special educational and individual needs are well cared for and supported. Staff have an understanding of child protection issues and appropriate behaviour management techniques.

There is an effective partnership with parents and carers who speak positively about what the group has to offer their children in terms of their care and education. Parents and carers have access to good information on activities, they receive regular written and verbal feedback on their child's progress and development.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The registered providers were asked to address two actions following the last inspection, these related to records and policies.

The registered providers were asked to ensure that the registration system shows times of arrival and departure. The pre-school have introduced a registration system that records actual times of arrival and departure of all children. The attendance of all staff and visitors is recorded on the register, but actual times of arrival and departure are not recorded. This will be made a recommendation following this inspection.

The registered providers were also asked to ensure that the medication policy reflects practice. An appropriate medication policy is now in place which looks at the prior permission, decision and provision of medication to children on an individual basis.

The completion of these actions ensures that children are safe at all times and that parents and carers are aware of the group's policies and procedures.

What is being done well?

- The pre-school employs a high ratio of qualified staff who are committed to further training to enhance their existing good skills and knowledge. Staff are well organised and deployed during daily sessions. A morning meeting prior

to the children's arrival ensures that all staff are clear about the objectives of the session and the care of the children in general.

- Good planning, organising of the premises, staffing and resources enables children to make good progress in terms of their learning and general well-being. Themes and activities are well supported by a good range of resources and equipment.
- Staff work well with children with special needs and individual problems, working closely with both families and other agencies/professionals, they provide appropriate resources to enable them to participate fully in all activities.
- Staff interaction with the children is good, children's self confidence is fostered well and their behaviour is good.

What needs to be improved?

- the obtaining of clearances for all members of the committee acting as the registered person
- the recording of actual times of arrival and departure of all staff and visitors on a daily basis.

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.)

There are no complaints to report from 1st April 2004.

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
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1	undertake appropriate clearance for all members of the pre-school committee who act as the registered provider.
2	ensure that the actual times of arrival and departure for staff and visitors is recorded on a daily basis.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at Athey Street Pre-school is acceptable and of high quality enabling children to make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are well deployed giving good support and encouragement to children enabling them to learn well. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Learning Goals and are given good guidance from senior staff on what they should be expecting children to learn from the activities provided. Appropriate resources are available to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to participate fully. Activities are appropriately matched to the children's level of skill and development, as a group and as individuals, providing them with sufficient challenge. Planning is detailed and well evaluated. Staff undertake good observations of children's progress and achievements and use these to plan future topics and the next steps for all children.

Leadership and management of the setting is very good. Regular staff and daily meetings take place which involve the planning of the curriculum, objective setting for sessions, evaluation of activities and establishing the next steps for children. Staff are well guided by senior staff in what children are expected to learn and how to evaluate observations and achievements. Senior staff evaluate the provision as a whole and are clear how they would like the group to develop, in particular, working with children with English as an Additional Language.

An effective partnership with parents and carers is in place. Access to written information on the educational provision, Early Learning Goals, planning and topics is available through information on display and on discussion with staff. Parents and carers have introductory visits and are invited to open evenings where they are able to meet key staff to discuss their child's progress and view records of achievement and assessment.

What is being done well?

- There is a high ratio of qualified staff working with the funded children. Staff have a good awareness and understanding of the Early learning Goals and how children learn. Leadership and management by senior staff is good, they give good guidance to other staff on what they should be expecting children to achieve from specific activities and how to evaluate their observations of children's development and achievement.
- Staff interaction with children is effective and supportive. Staff are clear about what they are expecting the children to learn from activities and give good support and encouragement. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, are good role models and as a result children's behaviour is very good.

- Staff group children well into small key worker groups. Staff assess children's abilities, skills and dispositions prior to allocating to a group to ensure that children are placed correctly to enable them to participate well. Staff complete good observations on children and develop individual play plans for targeted children.
- A well balanced curriculum involves the children in interesting activities across the six areas of learning. Plans are detailed and show what the children are expected to learn. These plans are well evaluated and are used with assessments of children's progress to plan for future activities and the next steps for children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the development of existing skills and expertise in working with children with English as an Additional Language.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school have made very good progress in response to the three key issues raised following the last inspection in 2001.

The setting were asked to continue to develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage and Early Learning Goals; use the knowledge to plan activities to challenge children who learn more quickly, to further develop planning, and to track children's progress and achievements.

Staff knowledge continues to develop as they attend regular local network meetings which focus on the Early Learning Goals and other appropriate training. Staff plan the curriculum for both groups and individuals and use observations of children's development and achievements in this process. Planning and children's achievements are well monitored and evaluated and used to plan the next steps for all children. Individual children are targeted where appropriate, this includes the more capable children.

The second key issue asked the group to review the organisation and management of large group activities to ensure that maximum use is made of staff time and of the good resources and accommodation, in order to support children's learning most effectively at all times. Daily sessions involve the children in large group times where children confidently join in with discussions, these times are well supervised and supported by staff. Children are grouped into small key worker groups for parts of the session, where they have opportunities to undertake specific activities, giving children opportunities to develop confidence and ability to speak in front of one another.

The final key issue asked the group to fully exploit all the opportunities for children to write for different purposes, to recognise and use numbers and solve simple problems in everyday contexts. Children have access to a writing area and writing materials within role play areas. Children also have access to a maths area. Writing

and maths are included in all sessions including everyday contexts.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and independent arriving happy and eager to participate. They are independent as they select toys, equipment, decide upon activities to be involved in and undertake personal tasks. They are developing relationships with one another, playing co-operatively at activities. They are encouraged to share and take turns with toys and equipment. They sit quietly and listen to stories, instructions and to others as they speak both as a full group and in smaller groups.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

With staff support and encouragement children show confidence when speaking in front of others and are developing good language and vocabulary skills. They are able to think and describe objects and what they feel like when using a 'feely' box. They sit quietly and listen to stories, to each other when talking and to instructions given by staff. Good opportunities are made available for children to practice their writing skills, many are able to write their own name, others make marks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff include mathematics in many activities and as a result children are developing their understanding of numbers, counting and other mathematical concepts as they count each other at small group register time. Children are able to recognise written numbers as they select the correct number card for the children in their key group and consider mathematical concepts as they establish which is the biggest group. Children have a good understanding of shape, the number of sides and corners.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have access to a range of technological toys and equipment and are able to use these well, showing good skills when using a computer keyboard and mouse. They competently design and make three-dimensional models from a range of construction toys within the designated construction area. Staff plan themes to enable children to look at early science, history and geography. Children experiment and record their predictions during a sinking and floating experiment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

A range of equipment and activities enables the children to develop physical skills, they use small tools and equipment with competence using scissors, whisks, paintbrushes and pencils as they write. They are able to use a knife to spread as they help with snacks. Planned activities involve the children in music and movement and large physical play to extend their skills of climbing and balancing. Children and staff discuss keeping themselves healthy and have regular visits from the dentist.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Displays of children's work shows they are able to use a variety of textures and techniques in their art and craft work, having opportunities to use natural and other materials to create abstract patterns as they make animal prints. Children are involved in experimental play using water, sand, play dough and other materials. A well resourced sensory area enables children to use and develop their senses. Whilst looking at habitats children describe the materials they feel in the 'feely' box.

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 the following point for consideration should be considered in the Action Plan:
- continue to develop existing skills and expertise in working with children with English as an Additional Language.

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.