



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 509995

DfES Number: 581603

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/07/2003
Inspector Name Valerie Craven

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Aidan's Playgroup
Setting Address St Aidan's Church Hall
Southcoates Avenue
KINGSTON UPON HULL
HU9 3HF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Aidan's Playgroup Management
Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Aidan's Playgroup Management Committee
Address St Aiden's Playgroup
St Aidan's Hall, Southcoates Avenue
KINGSTON UPON HULL
HU9 3HF

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

St Aidan's Playgroup opened about thirty years ago and provides sessional care for the locality and surrounding areas. This well established playgroup is located in an urban area, on the outskirts of Kingston-Upon-Hull, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It is managed by a committee of church officials and parents, and on a day-to-day basis by the playgroup supervisor. Care takes place in the St Aidan's Church building, mainly in the large hall. Children have supervised access to the toilet facilities and a section of the outdoor area. The work of the playgroup forms part of the overall ministry of St Aidan's Church.

The playgroup has 36 children on roll, and is currently registered to care for a maximum of 26 children between the ages of two and a half up to five years old. This includes 9 three-year-olds in receipt of funding, and 18 four-year-olds in receipt of funding. Three of the funded children have been identified as having special educational needs. None of the funded children are learning English as an additional language. The playgroup is open for five sessions each week during local school term times. This includes three morning sessions and two afternoon sessions. Morning sessions take place every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, starting at 9.00 am and finishing at 11.30 am. Afternoon sessions take place every Tuesday and Wednesday, starting at 12.30 pm and finishing at 3.00 pm.

There are a total of six permanent part-time members of staff who work with the playgroup children. This includes staff who have a range of childcare experiences, some who hold recognised qualifications, whilst others are working towards these. Staff receive support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, including advisory teacher support, and opportunities to attend locally organised training courses. The playgroup staff are members 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?

St Aidan's Playgroup is a well established setting that serves the locality and surrounding areas well. It provides a welcoming and safe environment for children to settle and learn.

Children who are three-years-old and four-years-old are making generally good progress overall towards the achievement of the early learning goals. They are making very good progress in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Generally good progress is made in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

Quality of teaching is generally good. Staff provide effective and detailed plans for the educational provision. This includes short-term, medium term and long-term plans, all regularly evaluated to help inform future plans. There is, however, a limited range of strategies used by the staff to foster children's positive behaviour.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a clear commitment by the church officials, parents, playgroup supervisor and staff, to improve the care and education for all children. This includes future plans for an improved way of storing learning resources in the hall, ensuring that these are more readily accessible to the children. There is, however, scope to continue to regularly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. They are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, such as assisting during the sessions as part of a parent rota system, and involvement in the decision making process during committee meetings. Parents are provided with a range of quality information about the playgroup and its provision, are encouraged to share what they know about their child, and are well informed of their child's progress, supported by the use of a 'keyworker system'.

What is being done well?

- Staff's effective and detailed plans for the educational provision. This includes short-term, medium-term and long-term plans, all regularly evaluated to help inform future plans.
- The clear commitment by the church officials, parents, playgroup supervisor and staff, to improve the care and education for all children. This includes future plans for an improved way of storing learning resources in the hall, ensuring that these are more readily accessible to the children.
- Children's self-confidence, shown well when involved in exploration and investigation activities, such as when they handled a range of magnets, trying

to get some of these magnets to 'dance'.

- Children's early reading skills, fostered well in the comfortable and inviting 'book corner' area, including when they operate hand puppets to enhance the telling and retelling of favourite stories.
- Children's ability to recognise numerals 1-9, say numbers, and count reliably up to 10 everyday objects, promoted well through the use of a familiar puppet, known to the children as the 'counting crow'.
- Parent's active involvement in their child's learning, such as assisting during the sessions as part of a parent rota system, and involvement in the decision making process during committee meetings.

What needs to be improved?

- The development of children's personal independence skills.
- Opportunities for children to write their own names and to attempt writing for a variety of purposes.
- Children's understanding of addition when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old.
- The range of strategies used by the staff to foster children's positive behaviour.
- The frequency of the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The St Aidan's Playgroup staff have made very good progress since the last inspection, and this has had a positive impact on children's learning. There are three main improvements linked to the previous key issues:

Planning has been further developed, now giving more priority to the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This includes planning activities in response to an assessment of children's individual progress and needs, and ensuring that during 'free choice' times children have further opportunities to select from a varied selection of activities. The areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development have been reviewed. This ensures that there are now regular opportunities for children to select and explore from different media and resources, to find out about natural and made objects using all of the five their senses, and to use technology items to help support their learning. Staff have further opportunities to be involved in training, and more recently, to develop their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children are self-confident, shown well when involved in exploration and investigation activities, such as when they handled a range of magnets, trying to get some of these magnets to 'dance'. They have formed good relationships with each other and the staff, clearly illustrated during small group work. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to develop their personal independence skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy. Children are developing their early reading skills, fostered in the comfortable and inviting 'book corner' area, including when they operate hand puppets to enhance the telling and retelling of favourite stories. They are encouraged to talk and listen during 'group time'. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to write their own names and to attempt writing for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in mathematical development. Children are able to recognise numerals 1-9, say numbers, and count reliably up to 10 objects, promoted well through the use of a familiar puppet, known to the children as the 'counting crow'. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to develop an understanding of addition when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are encouraged to develop their exploration and investigation skills, such as in a stimulating activity using magnets. This includes forming questions about why magnets might be attracted to each other or not, enabling some of the magnets to 'dance'. There are good opportunities for children to use technology items to help support their learning, and they are developing their joining and building skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in physical development. Children are able to travel around, under, over, and through large equipment to promote their climbing skills, such as working on an indoor challenging climbing frame, organised to reflect a 'pirate ship'. They are developing their sense of space through indoor and outdoor activities, and their small muscles through handling a wide range of tools and objects. This includes art and craft tools, mark-making and writing implements.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in creative development. Children are encouraged to use their imagination through role-play activities, such as going on a 'treasure hunt'. They enjoyed looking for a 'treasure box' by following the clues contained on a 'treasure map', including the instruction that 'x marks the spot'. They are able to explore colour, including doing 'window painting' and participating in many art techniques, with opportunities to mix paints to make new shades of colours.

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

- Staff should address the following key issues in their action plan:
- Provide further opportunities for children to develop their; personal independence skills; ability to write their own names and to attempt writing for a variety of purposes; understanding of addition when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old.
- Extend the range of strategies used by the staff to foster children's positive behaviour.
- Regularly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

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.