



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 403386

DfES Number: 522202

INSPECTION DETAILS

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| Inspection Date | 14/07/2004 |
| Inspector Name | Glenda Pownall |

SETTING DETAILS

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| Day Care Type | Full Day Care |
| Setting Name | Sonning Common Pre-School |
| Setting Address | Grove Road Sonning Common Reading Berkshire RG4 9RJ |

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

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| Name | The Committee of Sonning Common Pre-School |
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

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| Name | Sonning Common Pre-School |
| Address | Sonning Common CP School Grove Road, Sonning Common Reading Berkshire RG4 9RJ |

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

Sonning Common Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1966 and moved to the current site in 1981. It operates from a terrapin building in its own garden. It is located in the primary school site in Sonning Common. It serves the local area.

There are currently 67 children on roll. This includes 18 three-years-olds and 37 four-year-olds who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. No children with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language currently attend.

The group opens five days a week term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:45 and 12:45 until 15:15. The group also offer a lunch club in the pre-school building. The Four Plus group operates on Tuesday mornings and Friday afternoons. 'Wrap around care' for 20 children aged 3-5 years is provided in the early years unit within the main school building. This is staffed with pre-school staff.

There are 10 part-time staff working with the children. Three staff have relevant early years childcare qualifications to level 2 or 3 and two staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority. A parent management committee runs the group, which is also responsible for managing Sonning Common Kites wrap around care.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Sonning Common Pre-School provides good quality nursery education overall, which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development is very good.

Teaching is generally good. Most staff display a good understanding of the early learning goals, using good questioning techniques and extending activities. Planning covers all areas of learning and is flexible to accommodate the needs of all children. It is evaluated to support future plans. Staff know the children well and verbally pass on observations to key workers. The assessment system is not consistently recorded. It does not identify the progress of all children or highlight their targeted next steps in learning. Staff offer children lots of praise and encouragement. The staff team is not consistent in their management of children and their behaviour.

Leadership and management are generally good. Staff know their roles and sessions generally run smoothly. The education programme and quality of teaching is adequately assessed through discussion with staff, liaising with the committee, listening to parents and observing during sessions. There is a good range of resources covering all areas of learning. Children are not provided with regular opportunities to explore a range of media or technology. The supportive committee carries out annual staff appraisals and provides funding for any identified training needs.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are informed of their child's daily progress through effective communication with staff. They are provided with a written report as their child leaves the setting. Not all parents are made aware of their child's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by helping in sessions and sharing their skills and knowledge.

What is being done well?

- The range of opportunities for children to practise writing for a variety of purposes is very good.
- Staff use good questioning techniques that encourage children to think for themselves.
- Children's awareness of healthy living is fostered effectively through a variety of activities.
- Some staff use their initiative to reinforce and extend children's understanding of calculation.

What needs to be improved?

- the assessment system to record children's progress towards the early learning goals, identify their targeted next steps in learning and share their progress with parents
- the management of children and their behaviour to ensure the group policy is followed and consistently applied
- the opportunities children have to experience and explore a variety of media and technology.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The improvement since the last inspection has been generally good. Children are now provided with further opportunities to develop their awareness of other cultures. For example, the pre-school now has links with a nursery in South Africa. Children exchange pictures and photographs with the children and learn about their customs and how and where they live.

Children sit and listen attentively to whole group stories. Staff in the Four Plus session do not effectively hold children's attention. They are not consistent in applying the setting's behaviour management policy. As a result children receive mixed messages of how to behave and the inappropriate behaviour of some children overshadows group times and activities. This is carried forward as a key issue in this report.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children settle straight into the session, which is prepared for their arrival. They make decisions about which activities they wish to join in and can select some resources for themselves. Most children listen to what is said and persevere to complete tasks. In the Four Plus session children receive mixed messages of how to behave and inappropriate behaviour overshadows some activities. Staff offer encouragement to children and their work is displayed, which builds up their sense of self-worth.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children speak confidently in one to one and whole group situations. They retell real events and develop stories during imaginative play. Children are developing an awareness of letters and the sounds they make during activities linked to the daily routine. Children enjoy using books on an informal basis. They listen to stories and suggest what might happen next. Children are provided with many opportunities to practise their writing skills including in the home corner and writing a score chart.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children count as part of the daily routine. Some children can count to 10 and beyond. Good visual aids are provided to help children recognise numbers. Some can identify the numerals one to nine. Some staff use their initiative at activities to reinforce and extend children's understanding of simple calculation. For example, they encourage each child to total their skittle score. Children use mathematical language to compare size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children have access to a range of resources to design and construct. For example, children build towers with blocks and co-operate to design a train track. Children have some access to technology. They are able to follow simple program instructions using the computer with adult support. Staff use open-ended questions to encourage children to think and extend their understanding of the world around them. Children are developing an awareness of other cultures and traditions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children enjoy a variety of physical activities to develop large-muscle skills. They move confidently with control and show awareness of space. They develop an awareness of health and personal hygiene through daily routines. Good practice enables 'Four Plus' children to change their clothes and warm up and cool down before and after exercise. Children access a good range of tools to increase their small-muscle skills. They manipulate scissors, paintbrushes and pencils with increasing dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children enjoy singing songs from memory and use their imaginations to create new lyrics. Children enthusiastically participate in music and movement and some are developing a sense of rhythm, for example, moving their bodies and clapping in time with the beat. Children are not provided with regular access to a range of media to explore and express their own ideas. They play together imaginatively in the home corner, with small world resources and outside. They plot stories and agree roles.

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

- devise an assessment system to record children's progress towards the early learning goals, identify their targeted next steps in learning and share their progress with parents
- ensure staff management of children and their behaviour follows group policy and the policy is consistently applied
- provide regular opportunities for children to experience and explore a variety of media and technology.

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.