



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 226202

DfES Number: 539437

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/11/2004
Inspector Name Alison Edwards

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Ellistown Playgroup
Setting Address The Community Centre, Ellistown CP School
Whitehill Road, Ellistown
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 1EN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Sarah Brown

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

Ellistown Playgroup was established in 1987. During hours of operation it has sole use of the community centre at the primary school in Ellistown in North West Leicestershire. Children use the main hall and lounge for play, with access to male and female toilets off the central lobby. Staff have access to kitchen and store room areas. The enclosed school grounds are used for outdoor play.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open in school term times from 09:30 to 12:00 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and from 13:15 to 15:15 on Monday afternoons.

There are currently 45 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 34 receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs.

Including the proprietor six staff work with the children of whom four hold relevant early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Ellistown Playgroup provides satisfactory daycare for children. The premises are suitably maintained and offer scope for indoor and outdoor activities. Furnishings and play materials are in good condition and generally suitable to children's stage of development and needs. Required adult; child ratios are maintained, but organisation does not yet ensure children are effectively grouped or that available space is best-used. Not all written records and procedures needed to support the running of the playgroup are yet in place.

Staff supervise children carefully and show a sound awareness of most safety, security and hygiene issues. They recognise their responsibility to act on child protection concerns, though the current policy does not fully reflect current national and local guidance. Although children's records include some information on

individual health, care and dietary needs, staff do not yet liaise effectively with parents to ensure this is sufficient to ensure appropriate care can be given.

Children usually settle readily and are relaxed and at ease in their dealings with staff and peers. They are often occupied and involved in various activities relating to most developmental areas. Staff usually work with children, talking and playing with them. Children usually show familiarity with, and acceptance of, established routines and begin to develop independent self-care skills.

A well-presented booklet provides parents with some useful initial information about the playgroup's policies and routines with some use of notice boards and newsletters to provide updated information. However, there are currently limited opportunities for staff and parents to share information about children's activities and progress other than in brief exchanges at arrival and collection time.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Children generally approach adults readily and begin to take account of each other's needs in play activities. They show familiarity with established routines, for example arrangements for snack and circle time, complying with staff instructions and behaving appropriately.
- Staff place a high priority on security, for example carefully checking any unexpected changes to collection arrangements. Staffing arrangements ensure appropriate supervision can be maintained. Staff show sound awareness of safety procedures such as emergency evacuation arrangements and routines checking of resources for damage.
- The easily-accessible and well-maintained premises are bright and airy and enable children to have independent access to toilet areas. The enclosed school grounds are available for outdoor play, offering easy access to extensive hard-surfaced and grassed areas.

What needs to be improved?

- arrangements to ensure all required documentation is maintained with particular regard to 1) written procedures to be followed if a child is lost or uncollected; 2) a daily record of the names of people looking after children; 3) inclusion of telephone number for Ofsted (the regulator) in the complaints procedure
- the child protection policy to fully comply with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and the National Standards for daycare with regard to 1) procedures to be followed in the event of any child protection allegation against staff and 2) contact details for local police and social services department

- more effective systems for regular exchange of information between parents and staff about children's activities and progress records
- more effective liaison with parents to ensure children's records include sufficient information regarding individual health, care and dietary needs to ensure appropriate care can be given
- more effective use of premises and key worker system so group size does not exceed 26 children and to ensure there are separate areas for different activities including sufficient scope for free movement and active play.

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.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
14	Ensure all required documentation is maintained with particular regard to 1) written procedures to be followed if a child is lost or uncollected; 2) a daily record of the names of people looking after children; 3) inclusion of telephone number for Ofsted (the regulator) in the complaints procedure.	07/01/2005

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Review organisational arrangements including effective use of premises and implementation of key worker system to ensure group size does not

	exceed 26 children and that there are separate areas for different activities including sufficient scope for free movement and active play.
9	Develop more effective liaison with parents to ensure children's records include sufficient information regarding individual health, care and dietary needs to ensure appropriate care can be given.
12	Develop more effective systems for regular exchange of information between parents and staff about children's activities and progress records.
13	Develop the child protection policy in accordance with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and the National Standards for daycare to include 1) procedures to be followed in the event of any child protection allegation against staff and 2) contact details for local police and social services department.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Ellistown Playgroup offers an acceptable standard of nursery education but has some significant areas for improvement. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, but progress in other areas of learning is limited by some significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is acceptable but has some significant weaknesses. Children are usually relaxed in their relationships and recognise what behaviour is expected of them. However, activities and routines are not always well-organised to promote their purposeful independent learning. Staff usually work directly with children but often lack secure knowledge of the foundation stage and of effective methods to support learning well. Systems to observe and assess children's progress are being developed, but records are not yet used well in short-term planning to ensure activities offer appropriate challenge and progression. Long-term plans do not yet ensure balanced coverage of all aspects of the foundation stage.

Leadership and management is acceptable but has some significant weaknesses. The proprietor and current staff are involved in continuing review of the provision with the support of relevant external agencies. However systems like regular staff meetings to share information and good practice have not yet been fully established. In addition, recent staff changes have resulted in the need to re-introduce systems to assess children's progress and so to enable evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the provision.

Partnership with parents is acceptable but has some significant weaknesses. Parents receive useful initial information about the playgroup and establish friendly dealings with staff. Although staff and parents occasionally discuss children's daily activities, systematic procedures to share progress information and make links between home and playgroup learning are not yet established.

What is being done well?

- Children are making steady progress in most aspects of their personal and social development. They usually settle readily into their activities and are relaxed and at ease in their dealings with staff and peers. They are often occupied and interested in their activities, showing an understanding of what behaviour is expected of them and beginning to develop independence in their self-care skills.
- Staff are usually deployed to work directly with children and spend time talking and playing with them.
- Children enjoy listening to a varied range of stories which are well-chosen to link with current topics and themes.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and of effective methods to help children learn
- organisation of activities, resources and daily routines to offer more purposeful and well-planned opportunities for children to explore and express their own ideas (particularly with regard to creative development), and consolidate and extend their independent learning
- effective use of long-term planning so all aspects of learning receive balanced coverage with particular regard to knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development
- effective use of assessments to inform short-term planning so this more effectively identifies how activities and teaching strategies can be matched to children's stage of development to provide better challenge and progression, particularly with regard to communication, language and literacy and mathematical development

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children generally settle readily and are developing relaxed and confident relationships with adults and peers. Familiarity with established routines helps them understand what is expected of them and to behave accordingly. They begin to develop independence in self-care skills such as toileting. Although they are generally interested in their activities, resources and routines are not always well-organised to extend their sustained and purposeful independent learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children often listen to well-chosen stories, but too rarely use books independently and purposefully. They talk readily about events and needs, but less frequently use language to explore their thinking and ideas. They enjoy familiar rhymes, but have too few well-planned activities to extend their understanding of rhythm, sounds and letters. They begin to make marks and symbols with increasing control, but lack challenging activities to extend their purposeful writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children often count by rote up to and beyond 10, though counting and number recognition activities often lack challenge and progression. They begin to name and recognise simple 2D and 3D shapes in craft and construction activities though organisation of resources and activities does not effectively promote purposeful independent exploration of shape, pattern and measurement. There are too few well-planned activities for children to learn about practical calculation and simple number problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children often use simple tools like brushes and spreaders in craft activities and build with commercial construction sets though design activities often lack challenge and purpose. Topic-based activities introduce them to some aspects of materials, living things and different cultures, although rarely include consideration of the past or the local environment. Children are too rarely encouraged to develop their curiosity by investigating and experimenting.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children begin to learn about health and hygiene in their daily routines and some topic-based activities. They often handle small tools such as crayons and brushes in adult-led and child-chosen activities, though these often provide too little scope for purposeful challenge and independent development. Children too rarely use available indoor and outdoor resources for well-planned and challenging activities to extend their large movement skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children sometimes enjoy simple pretend play, though this is not yet planned and resourced to best effect to promote sustained and co-operative imaginative play. They use a selection of materials and techniques such as sponging and stencilling, introducing them to colour and texture, but adult-led craft activities rarely encourage them to explore and express their own creative ideas. Children join in with rhymes and songs, and sometimes use musical instruments such as untuned percussion.

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 knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and of effective methods to help children learn
- develop organisation of activities, resources and daily routines to offer more purposeful and well-planned opportunities for children to explore and express their own ideas (particularly with regard to creative development), and consolidate and extend their independent learning
- develop effective use of long-term planning so all aspects of learning receive balanced coverage with particular regard to knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development
- develop effective use of assessments to inform short-term planning so this more effectively identifies how activities and teaching strategies can be matched to children's stage of development to provide better challenge and progression, particularly with regard to communication, language and literacy and mathematical development

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.