



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 317577

DfES Number: 585434

INSPECTION DETAILS

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| Inspection Date | 20/10/2004 |
| Inspector Name | Stephen Andrew Blake |

SETTING DETAILS

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| Day Care Type | Sessional Day Care |
| Setting Name | Plumbland Playgroup |
| Setting Address | Parsonby Aspatria Wigton Cumbria CA7 2DQ |

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

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| Name | Plumbland Pre-School Playgroup 1037375 |
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

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| Name | Plumbland Pre-School Playgroup |
| Address | Parsonby Aspatria Wigton Cumbria CA7 2DQ |

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

Plumbland Playgroup was established 14 years ago and is located within Plumbland Primary School in the village of Plumbland approximately 20 miles west of Carlisle. The playgroup serves the immediate and extended rural communities. The playgroup occupy a classroom within the school and parents use a dedicated entrance to the playgroup room. During registered session times, the playgroup has sole use of the playroom.

Plumbland playgroup operate Monday to Friday 12:30 - 15:00 during term time only. Currently there are 4 children on the register and 3 of these are funded by the nursery education grant. There are no children with identified special needs and none for whom English is an additional language.

Children have access to the main playroom, school toilets, the enclosed play area annexed to the playroom, the school playground and the school adventure playground. Children do not use the cargo net or the tumble bars within the adventure playground.

There are 2 full time and 3 relief members of staff. Although appropriately experienced, both full time staff are new to the provision this year. The manager holds an appropriate child care qualification, the deputy is working towards an NVQ level 3. Parents also participate in playgroup on a voluntary basis.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Plumbland Playgroup provides significantly weak nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

The quality of teaching is significantly weak. The manager is appropriately qualified and the deputy is working towards an appropriate qualification. They are new to the provision but appropriately experienced. The manager has attended training on the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Available space is generally well planned.

The relationship between staff and children is good. Staff use some unplanned learning opportunities well. The short, medium and long term plans are linked and planned activities can be seen in operation.

Staff do not plan individual activities or monitor the impact of these activities on children's learning. Staff do not record children's achievements. The absence of these systems restricts children's learning across the curriculum. Staff do not keep written assessments of children's learning and therefore assessment of learning is not used to inform future planning. Staff sometimes offer insufficient challenges to children and on these occasions children become bored and this impacts on their behaviour. Children have insufficient access to I.T resources and this restricts their knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of leadership and management is significantly weak. Most key issues raised at the last Nursery Education Inspection have not been addressed. The committee are supportive for example, through fundraising. The new manager and deputy are beginning to identify systems to monitor children's learning.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents exchange verbal information with staff daily and have access to their child's work. Displayed information regarding Foundation Stage learning is good. Parents find staff approachable and participate on the committee. Opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning are limited.

What is being done well?

- The partnership with parents. Parents participate on the management committee and have access to written information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Parents find staff approachable and are confident in the ability of staff to meet the needs of their child.
- The relationship between staff and children. Staff take time to listen to and value children's contributions. This promotes children's confidence and self esteem.

What needs to be improved?

- the system of assessment so that children's learning is clearly monitored
- the system to ensure assessment of children's learning informs future planning
- the system to ensure that all staff are aware of the desired learning outcomes for each activity (this system should ensure that the activity is monitored and evaluated in terms of its impact on children's learning)
- the range of planned activities to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged and stimulated
- the system to ensure that issues raised at the last inspection are addressed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous Nursery Education Inspection took place on 18th and 20th November 2000. Four key issues were identified.

The subsequent Action Plan has provided a wider range of technology to support children's learning and extended children's opportunities to develop climbing and balancing skills but these developments are limited. The Action Plan has not developed methods of recording children's observations and has not developed assessments to monitor progress towards the Early Learning Goals for the six areas of learning. This remains a key issue.

Staff have obtained I.T equipment with the intention of supporting children's learning. However the computer is inoperative. Staff have purchased a small number of programmable toys. These are present in the playroom but are inaccessible to children. Staff do not make these resources accessible to children and the planning does not indicate the use of these resources. This remains a key issue.

The Primary School has invested in a good quality outdoor adventure play area and children attending Plumbland Playgroup access this area when not in use by school children and when weather permits. The Playgroup has undertaken some minor building work and this has provided children with a dedicated enclosed outdoor grassed area. Staff plan yoga sessions for children on Monday's and use the nearby village hall for PE on Friday's. These improvements are good. On Tuesday to Thursday, opportunities for children to develop climbing and balancing skills indoors is very limited. Staff do provide musical activities where children are encouraged to move to music but these are very short and inadequately directed resulting in missed learning opportunities. This is a key issue.

Staff have not developed assessments to monitor progress towards the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. This is a key issue.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children enjoy working together and express themselves confidently through discussions and activities for example, when making chocolate apples. They take turns and share resources for example, when completing puzzles together. Children are relaxed and interested for example, when cutting pumpkin masks. They generally behave well towards each other and staff but where activities lose focus, children become bored and this affects their behaviour for example, throwing templates and running around.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children use language appropriately for example; describing their 'sausages' when working with play dough. Impromptu opportunities to develop language and communication skills are sometimes used well for example, describing what the chocolate apples smell like. Children use impromptu opportunities to draw and paint and this develops their handwriting skills. Planned opportunities for writing and handwriting are insufficient and this restricts children's communication, language and literacy.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children are beginning to recognise numbers and count in familiar context. They access resources and opportunities that extend their mathematical learning for example, cutting shapes in mask making and using the abacus. Children use impromptu opportunities to compare numbers and show an understanding of addition and subtraction for example counting chocolate apples and biscuits. Children are beginning to explore volume and identify shapes for example circles and triangles.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children enjoy activities to help them explore and investigate for example, looking at pumpkins on the Halloween theme. They participate enthusiastically in adult led activities for example, when making chocolate apples to examine hot, cold and smell. Children are beginning to learn about other people's cultures and activities. Children do not have sufficient opportunity to access resources to extend their knowledge and understanding of information technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children move around the available space confidently and have a good understanding of their health and bodily needs for example, washing hands before snack time. They use small tools and equipment with confidence for example, glue sticks. Children access a good range of outdoor equipment that promotes their physical development. They enjoy planned indoor activities on Fridays but do not have indoor opportunities to extend their climbing and balancing skills on other days of the week.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children explore their imagination through planned resources and activities for example, when using play dough or making Halloween pictures. They enjoy impromptu opportunities to extend their imagination for example, when discussing 'going shopping'. They make use of accessible materials to paint and draw. Children enjoy reciting rhymes from memory. There are insufficient opportunities for children to extend their creative development through the use of musical instruments.

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

- establish a system of assessment so that children's learning is clearly monitored
- establish a system to ensure that assessment of children's learning informs future planning
- establish a system to ensure that all staff are aware of the desired learning outcomes for each activity (this system should ensure that the activity is monitored and evaluated in terms of its impact on children's learning)
- review the range of planned activities to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged and stimulated
- establish a system to ensure that issues raised at inspection are addressed.

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.