



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 145872

DfES Number: 519405

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	01/11/2004
Inspector Name	Beryl Baggs

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Weymouth St Playschool
Setting Address	Christchurch Hall Upper Marsh Road Warminster Wiltshire BA12 9PG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Weymouth St Playschool 1027714
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Weymouth St Playschool
Address	Christchurch Hall Upper Marsh Road Warminster Wiltshire BA12 9PG

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

Weymouth St Playschool was established more than thirty years ago and operates from Christchurch Hall in Warminster. It is managed by a committee of parents who employ the playleader and staff team.

It is registered to care for up to 26 children from two years to under five years. It is open during school term times from 08:50 to 11:45 Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 08:50 to 14:45 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The playschool does not provide overnight care.

Children play in the main hall with access to a side room for small group activities. There is independent access to toilets and children use the car park for outside play in fine weather. Children bring a packed lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

There are 27 children on roll of whom 4 four-year-olds and 11 three-year-olds receive nursery education grant. There are currently no children with special educational needs and no children use English as an additional language.

The committee employs seven staff of whom six hold or are working towards a childcare qualification. The playschool is supported by the Early Years Advisory Teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Weymouth St Playschool provides satisfactory quality care for children. There is an experienced staff team with good skills for working with children. They work well with the children and more than meet required ratios. The welcoming hall displays children's work and alphabet/number friezes. Children's activities are set out for immediate play and space is used well. There is a good system in place to ensure toys and equipment are safe, clean and complete. The grouping of the children means that sometimes children are not fully engaged in activities, for example during the physical play session. Staff records are not complete or kept together.

Children only go home with authorised adults. Staff are aware of hazards for children and keep them safe. Staff promote good hygiene. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before handling food. Staff have good awareness of food allergies and ensure children's needs are met. Additional support is offered to children with special educational needs. Staff have a good understanding of signs of a child at risk. The special educational needs policy does not include terms used in the Code of Practice and staff knowledge and understanding is limited.

There is a wide range of interesting activities which attract and encourage learning through play. Children behave well and staff are involved in play to encourage good behaviour. Staff are aware of the stage of development for each child and challenge each child appropriately in planned activities. There are limited images of other cultures, disability and gender roles in everyday play materials and topics for the children.

Parents are warmly welcomed, greeted with smiles and encouraged to stay and play. Parents have good opportunities to see children's development records and discuss children's progress with key workers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- Children have a wide variety of play activities to choose from. Activities are attractive and interesting.
- Good use is made of the large hall and side room to provide whole group and small groups games for the children.
- Staff have good awareness of children's dietary needs. Children with food allergies are well cared for.
- Staff manage children's behaviour well, playing with them and praising good behaviour. Children know the playschool routines and what is expected of them.
- Parents have good opportunities to see children's development records and discuss children's progress with key workers. They share information daily with staff in a relaxed and friendly way.

What needs to be improved?

- the grouping of children when two to under-five-year-olds are present in the same session to ensure the children are engaged and involved in activities
- the storage of staff documents to be able to identify clearances, qualifications and training attended and to record induction, performance reviews and employment details

- the positive images of other cultures, disability and gender role in everyday play materials and topics for the children
- the special educational needs policy to include a clearer reference to the Code of Practice and improve staff knowledge and understanding of the stage of support.

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.)

Since 1st April 2004 Ofsted have not received any complaints about this playschool.

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

Std	Recommendation
2	Review the grouping of children when two to under five-year-olds are present in the same session.
9	Improve the positive images of how other people live and their celebrations, disability and gender role in the play materials and topics for the children.
10	Improve the special educational needs policy to include a clearer reference to the Code of Practice and improve staff knowledge and understanding.
14	Review the storage of staff documents to be able to identify clearances, qualifications and training attended and to record induction, performance reviews and employment details.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Weymouth St Playschool provision is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff understand that children learn through play. Staff use their knowledge of individual children to support or extend the learning for each child. Staff ask open questions to help children think or remember. They are involved in play and listen well to the children. Good behaviour is encouraged by praise and ensuring children know what is expected of them. The planning of the sessions is not co-ordinated and does not link all activities together to allow children to learn from previous experience. Staff provide limited free creative craft activities and few everyday opportunities for the children to link sounds to letters and recognise familiar words.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee and playleader work closely together, with responsibility for nursery education delegated to the playleader. She is rightly proud of the children's good behaviour. The committee recognise the limitations of the outside play space. Topics are evaluated weekly, but there is no formal monitoring of the overall curriculum. Staff attend meetings and training to improve the care and education for all children. However, appraisals of staff are not used to identify where staff can improve their performance.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents have brief information which lists the early learning goals. Parents know about the Foundation Stage from termly meetings with key workers to discuss children's development records. They share information on introductory visits and then daily with the staff. Some parents come in to help and note activities to use with children at home. Newsletters and displays do not show parents how they can further develop their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children count confidently and use numbers in their play. They understand about one more and one less.
- Children explore the properties of materials around them, floating and sinking, magnets and wet and dry sand.
- Parents know that children learn through play and hear about the early learning goals through informative meetings with key workers.
- Staff meet weekly to review activities, plan the following week and share issues and training opportunities.
- Children take part in physical play on large equipment during each session.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning of the curriculum to co-ordinate the input from all staff under the topic and the link across activities so children learn from previous experiences
- the children's everyday opportunities to link sounds to letters and to use their names and labels around the room
- the opportunities for children to be freely creative with a range of materials
- the information for parents to help them understand how they can develop their children's learning at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is generally good. The last inspection took place in January 2001 from which two key issues arose.

1. the existing special educational needs policy to ensure close reference to the Code of Practice, together with the staff knowledge of the Code.

The policy does not use the wording of the Code of Practice but includes observation of children, and developing play plans in consultation with parents and other professionals. Staff understanding of the Code remains limited. A recommendation about this has been included in the Children Act report.

2. information for parents providing details of the six areas of learning being covered in current topics.

The playschool now displays the topic web sheet for parents to see, linking the topic to the six early learning goals. There is also a display in the play room of the early learning goals in general and some photos to illustrate children's learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident; eager to learn in a happy, busy atmosphere. They ask for help and are confident to express their views. They play well together, take turns and develop friendships. They behave well. They understand why someone may be happy, sad, or scared. Children choose their activities during the session and access the toilet independently, but do not often pour their drinks, select additional resources or have frequent opportunities to use craft materials freely.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk well to each other and the adults. They use language to describe what they are doing and to organise their play. Some children link sounds to letters very successfully in their name. Children enjoy stories by themselves, in small groups and whole group time. Children practise pencil control and some write their names well. Children do not have everyday opportunities to link sounds to letters and do not use labels or their names for practical purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children count confidently and successfully, some well beyond ten. They learn to link counting to numerals and numbers of objects in their play. They learn about one more and one less in singing rhymes and recreate this in their free play. They use shape to make pictures, weigh and measure ingredients in cooking and fill in charts to compare heights. Children complete simple jigsaws matching shape and colour.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore sinking and floating and what happens to colours in a spinning top. They build cars with Lego, towers with octagons and musical instruments with card and dried peas. Children learn about changes in nature over the seasons and remember events and celebrations in their own lives. They enjoy visits from people who help us; police, a guide dog, and use a map to identify where they live. They have limited opportunities to learn about other countries and their celebrations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children slide, climb, jump and balance with growing skill. In fine weather they pedal bikes and cars outside. They move around the play room well, negotiating the activities and other children. They use small and large equipment skilfully, from nuts and bolts and paint brushes to storage boxes at tidy up time. Although children learn about healthy living through visitors such as a dentist, they do not practise this everyday at snack time. Children have limited everyday opportunities to run.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children explore many techniques for painting, using marbles, folded paper, string and hands in planned activities. They use musical instruments and compare sounds. Children enjoy singing. They use their imagination in role play and small world toys such as the farm. They express themselves with body language, word and facial expressions. Although children have many opportunities for free painting, they have limited opportunities to use other art and craft materials in a freely creative way.	

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

- improve the planning of the curriculum to co-ordinate input from all staff under the topic, linking activities so children learn from previous experience
- ensure children have everyday opportunities to link sounds to letters and to use their names and labels around the room for a purpose
- improve opportunities for children to be freely creative using art and craft materials
- develop information for parents to help them understand how they can further develop their children's learning at home.

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.