



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 256756

DfES Number: 580251

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	04/11/2003
Inspector Name	Carly Louise Thrower

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Castor and Ailsworth Playgroup
Setting Address	The Village Hall Peterborough Road, Castor Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE5 7AX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Registered Charity Playgroup 1023316
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Registered Charity Playgroup
Address	Caster & Ailsworth Playgroup The Village Hall, Peterborough Road Caster PE57AX

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

Castor and Ailsworth Playgroup opened in 1980. It operates from Castor village hall in the village of Castor on the outskirts of Peterborough. The playgroup serves the local community and some of the surrounding villages.

There are currently 22 children on roll. This includes 7 funded 3 year olds and no funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Currently, the setting does not have any children attending who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:15 to 11:45am each weekday morning.

Five full-time/part-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Two staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The setting receives support from an Early Years Pedagogical worker and childcare advisor. It is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Castor and Ailsworth play group is providing good care for children. Good use is made of staff and other resources so that children feel secure and confident in their environment. Staff ensure children's learning is extended through carefully thought out and meaningful activities. Children are making progress in all areas of their development. All documentation is well maintained and stored confidentially. Staff development through training is ongoing. Currently, the group does not have a staff appraisal system.

Children demonstrate a warm relationship with staff and enjoy their play. Staff promote personal health and hygiene and act in children's best interest when they are ill. Behaviour is good. Staff deliver effective behaviour management techniques

appropriate for the children's individual level of understanding. Children are given a variety of nutritious and healthy snacks which they enjoy helping to prepare. Children are given individual attention and their needs are met.

Staff provide a stimulating environment inside and outside the setting. A good range of stimulating toys and play equipment, including toys which reflect equal opportunity principles maintain children's interest and support their learning. Children are given the opportunity to self select and play independently.

Positive relationships exist between staff and all parents. Parents are kept well informed of their child's day and developmental progress and express their satisfaction at the care being offered.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The action at the previous inspection was to ensure that all staff had undertaken Ofsted vetting procedures.

All staff have now completed Ofsted vetting procedures and are therefore are now deemed suitable to work with children.

What is being done well?

- Staff are motivated to attend regular training courses to enable them to to maintain the quality of the provision they make for the children.
- Children have access to a range of interesting and stimulating toys and resources which enable them to make progress in all areas of development. Learning is constantly extended through planned and meaningful activities.
- The play group provides a broad range of toys and play equipment. Most of these are stored at child's level, clearly labelled with a picture, enabling them to self select and play independently.
- Staff display positive relationships with parents. Parents are well informed about the provision and their child's progress. Parents express their satisfaction about the care being offered.

What needs to be improved?

- continuation of staff training and setting up of staff appraisals.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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
1	continue staff development through regular training and an appraisal system.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Castor & Ailsworth Playgroup is good. It enables children to make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn. They plan and provide a good range of practical activities and give children the opportunity to observe, question and think for themselves. Staff have a secure knowledge of most early learning goals in the six areas of learning, shown through the planned activities and questioning of children. Staff value children's ideas and experiences. However, planning needs to show a clear deployment of staff. Staff observe and make detailed records of children's learning in each of the six areas to enable them to move children on to the next steps.

The leadership and management of the play group is generally good. All staff work well together as a team and are clear in their roles and responsibilities and of the learning intention for the children. Regular staff meetings allow staff to be fully involved in planning for the setting. Staff are encouraged to put forward their contributions and their input is valued by the leader. However, there is no formal staff appraisal system in place for staff to discuss their own professional development.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage and the pre-schools activities and routines through clear policies, a parents handbook and newsletters. A parents information board displays weekly short term plans. Parents are kept regularly updated of their child's progress through meetings once a term with their child's key worker and viewing their child's record of achievements. They are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's pre-school life.

What is being done well?

- Children's opportunities to explore and investigate new objects and materials in their environment through discussion and their senses.
- Children respond positively to all staff and their behaviour is good. Children work co-operatively together, learning to share and take turns. They are beginning to take care of their personal needs such as washing hands before snack.
- Staff's understanding of how children learn and the good range of practical activities provided.
- Information given to parents about the Foundation Stage and the pre-schools activities and routines through clear policies, a parents handbook and half

termly newsletters. A parents information board displays weekly short term plans.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and naming letters of the alphabet in everyday practical activities.
- planning for large physical development
- opportunities for children to engage in simple calculation
- opportunities for children to experience music through singing songs, rhymes etc, especially in a large group situation.
- planning to show a clear deployment of staff

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is generally good. The key issues were to continue with staff training in the Early Learning Goals, develop planning to show a balanced programme of activities, provide opportunities for four year olds to practice emergent writing skills, develop children's skills in simple calculation and provide more opportunities and resources for children to learn about people from different cultures and their beliefs.

Staff have now undergone training in many areas of the curriculum and in planning, as a result planning now shows a balanced programme of activities which allow children to make progress in the 6 areas of development.

Staff have now received in house training on 'mark making' and now give children many opportunities to practice their emergent writing skills in role play and designated 'mark making' areas.

Visitors from the local community and the purchasing of new resources such as books, help children learn about people from different cultures and beliefs. Children celebrate festivals through planned activities.

However, children are still not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in simple calculation through planned activities and as a result are not making good progress in this area.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and have high self esteem. They are developing their independent skills and are able to persist with activities for extended periods of time such as making and attaching number cards to bicycles and parking spaces outside. Children respond positively to all staff and their behaviour is good. Children work co-operatively together, learning to share and take turns. They are beginning to take care of their personal needs such as washing their hands before snack.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's language skills are good and they are able to express their feelings and imagined experiences through role play to each other and the staff. Children enjoy mark making with a variety of implements in a range of activities such as a menu in the restaurant and letter writing in the post office. However, there are limited opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and to name letters of the alphabet in every day practical activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use number in everyday situations and can count reliably up to 10. They are beginning to recognise numerals from 1 - 9 such as numbered car parking spaces. Children show that they have a good understanding of mathematical language such as big and small and can compare shapes, colour and sizes. However, there are limited opportunities for children to be introduced to simple addition and subtraction through everyday practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are enthusiastic when exploring and investigating new objects and materials in their environment, using discussion and their senses they are able to talk about changes that are happening and predict events which may occur. Children are able to talk about their families and environment. Visitors from the community such as the local policeman, help to develop children's appreciation of the local area. Through festivals children learn about other cultures and beliefs as well as their own.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing good fine manipulative skills through the use of tools such as cutters, rolling pins, pencils and scissors. They are able to move with increasing control and co-ordination, however, large physical play such as balancing and climbing is not often planned for. Children are beginning to show an interest in their own health and bodily awareness such as needing to rest after running around.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children explore shape, colour and texture through a variety of activities and are able to paint and draw freely. They engage in imaginative role play with enthusiasm, in situations such as the restaurant and post office and create props to support their play such as 'playdough chips'. However, there are limited opportunities for children to explore music through singing on a regular basis, especially in a large group situation.	

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

- Develop planning to include clear deployment of staff and regular inclusion of planned activities for large physical play.
- Improve the provision for communication, language and literacy to include regular opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and naming letters of the alphabet.
- Improve the provision for mathematical development to include regular opportunities for children to engage in simple calculation.

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.