



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 301987

DfES Number: 520625

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/11/2004
Inspector Name Stephanie Joy Bennett

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St John's RC Playgroup
Setting Address Beacon Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD6 3DQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St John's RC Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St John's RC Playgroup
Address Beacon Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD6 3DQ

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

St John's RC Playgroup has been registered since 1993 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates in a portable building, situated in the grounds of St John's RC Primary School. The building consists of one main room with access to kitchen and toilet facilities off the playroom. Children directly access a fully enclosed outdoor play area within the main playground surrounding the building. The playgroup serves the local area.

A maximum of 20 children aged between three and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 19 children on roll, of whom all receive funding for nursery education. The group currently support children with special needs, and non attend at present who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup is open five mornings per week, offering sessional care from 9:00 to 11:30 hours and two afternoons, Thursday and Friday, 13:00 to 15:30 hours during term time as numbers require.

The playgroup employs 9 members of staff on a part-time basis. Seven of the staff, including the leader hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St John's R.C. Playgroup provides good quality nursery education overall, which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for maths development is particularly good, and children make very good progress in this area.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff manage the children's behaviour very well and have good relationships with them. They plan a variety of activities which show what children will learn from them. Methods of teaching are appropriate. Staff excel at encouraging children to develop their personal independence skills, but less is done to enable them to select resources and work independently, and begin to make attempts to write for a purpose.

Staff interact very well with children. They are able to extend children's language and mathematical skills by asking challenging questions and involving them in daily routines.

Racial harmony and an awareness of the children's environment is well promoted through planned cultural events and the resources used. Children with special needs are given appropriate support, and are included in all aspects of group work and individual teaching. However, planning for individual needs is less effective, as staff do not use assessment records to inform future planning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The leader has established a well organised and highly motivated team. Staff attend regular training, and some support is given to the development of the quality of education offered to children. However there are no formal methods in place for the group to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are given clear information on of the provision. Good written and verbal communication makes them fully aware of planned activities, and they are actively encouraged to contribute to their child's learning in many ways, but presently, assessment records do not clearly inform them of their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- Staff use excellent strategies to promote good behaviour. They give children clear and consistent boundaries, which are positively reinforced. As a result, children naturally understand about how their behaviour affects others, they share, take turns, and work very well together in groups. Staff give continuous praise and encouragement, so children feel valued and accepted.
- The children's personal independence skills are well developed due to staff's continuous encouragement and support in practical daily routines. They are

able to take turns at choosing a job for snack time, and all children pour their own drinks from small, easy to handle jugs. They are competent at hand washing, and older children are becoming skilled at putting on coats and shoes.

- Staff are skilled in using opportunities to further develop children's learning through interaction circle time which is used well to reinforce what children have learnt and allow them to share their own experiences. Staff understand when to intervene in spontaneous activities, to encourage children to extend their learning, such as in the construction area, where they are supported in building and solving problems.
- Racial harmony is well promoted within the setting through the good use of resources and planned cultural events such as Divali.
- The teaching of maths is strong. Staff use all opportunities to extend learning through both planned and everyday practical activities. Children are confident at counting, and are beginning to use good early calculation skills and methods to solve practical problems.

What needs to be improved?

- methods of recording children's progress along the stepping stones, so that they may be shared clearly with parents, and be used to evaluate and inform future planning
- opportunities for children to select resources independently, which enable them to develop their own ideas, shape, join and assemble
- the provision of more opportunities to enable children to make marks, and begin to attempt to write for a purpose.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have accessed further training on the foundation stage, to enable them to plan more effectively. Planning now clearly shows the early learning goals, and areas of learning, that staff expect the children to work towards.

The group were also asked to involve parents in the sharing of their child's assessment records. Development records are now shared with parents, but these still do not clearly show how children progress along the stepping stones in each area of learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

All children are highly motivated and interested to learn. They display high levels of involvement in activities, and concentrate well in both groups and activities of their choice. Staff's excellent management of behaviour mean that children behave very well, and have a clear understanding of the behaviour codes. Excellent staff support means that children manage personal independence skills well, but opportunities to select some resources are limited.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident at initiating their own conversations with adults and each other. They are able to use language to describe events, and enjoy completing familiar phrases and refrains in stories and songs. Staff provide many ways for children to develop early reading skills, and opportunities to write names, through the wealth of print available. However, there are less opportunities for children to make early attempts to make marks and write for a purpose.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

All children are actively encouraged to count, talk about shape, colour, through both planned activities and everyday routines, such as counting cups in snack time. They solve problems of shape and size as they construct with large blocks, and staff encourage them to further extend their calculating skills through good interaction. Planned activities such as growth have encouraged children to develop concepts of size and measure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff use both planned and spontaneous activities to encourage children to explore their world, and the environment, for example, a tray of snow was recently brought into the room for children to explore, and notice changes that occur. Older children are very confident at using information technology equipment independently to support their learning, but there are less opportunities provided to enable them to shape, join and assemble a variety of materials.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Opportunities are given both indoors and out for children to climb, balance and move in a variety of ways. They use large and small equipment well, often working together to push and pull bikes and large objects. They have less opportunities to handle small tools and materials safely, within the creative and malleable areas. Children are developing good health and bodily awareness due to staff's daily interaction and planned activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use their imaginations well. Staff provide a range of resources to enable them to relive both imagined and real experiences. They enjoy singing, and know a good repertoire of songs. Opportunities are offered for children to play instruments and move their bodies in time to rhythm. They are developing a sound knowledge of shape and colour, but are less able to experiment with different textures and materials independently.

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

- further develop methods of assessing children's progress along the stepping stones, so they are recorded clearly, can be shared effectively with parents, and staff can use records to inform future planning for individual needs.
- improve teaching methods so that staff allow children to be more independent in selecting resources, so they can develop their own ideas, and join, shape and assemble a variety of materials.
- further develop children's opportunities to make marks and write for a purpose.
- develop formal methods for staff to monitor and evaluate the provisions' strengths and weaknesses.

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.