



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 147584

DfES Number: 531990

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/10/2003
Inspector Name Kay Williams

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Mill Hill East Playgroup
Setting Address Mill Hill East Church
Salcombe Gardens
Mill Hill
London
NW7 2NT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of MILL HILL EAST PLAYGROUP 1035327

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name MILL HILL EAST PLAYGROUP
Address MILL HILL EAST CHURCH
SALCOMBE GDNS
LONDON
NW7 2NT

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

Mill Hill East Playgroup opened in 1965. It operate from one purposely converted room of the ground floor of Mill Hill East church hall. It is situated in a residential area close to local shops and parks.

The setting serves families from the local community.

There are currently 19 children from 2-5 years on roll. This includes 3 funded 3 year olds, there are currently no funded 4 year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of non funded children who speak English as an additional language. No children currently attending have special educational needs, although the group has supported children in the past.

The playgroup opens each week day during term time only. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:00.

Three full time and two part time member of staff work with the children. Half of the staff have early years qualifications equivalent to level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and The Pre School Learning Alliance advisor.

How good is the Day Care?

Mill Hill East Playgroup provides good quality day care for children.

The Playgroup is well managed and the motivated staff team provide a warm and welcoming environment for the children. The premises is set out with children in mind and the range of equipment offered is both age appropriate, safe and well maintained. Documents and record keeping is of a very high standard.

Areas for promoting children's health are good, they enjoy a balanced healthy mid morning snack and their personal health needs are appropriately met. Children are positively recognised as individuals and cultural diversity is valued. Children who are

learning English as an additional language are especially well supported.

Children are very well behaved. Staff provide positive role models and the well written behaviour management policy is consistently implemented by all adults. Relationships between the staff and children are a strong feature of the setting and as a result the children are confident learners. Children are grouped effectively and enjoying whole group and small group activities as well as one to one attention. Adults plan a wide range of activities which are stimulating, interesting and promote children's learning very well.

Parent's express high level of satisfaction with the standard of care and education offered at the Playgroup. Written reports and verbal feedback keeps them up to date with their children's progress and they are actively encouraged to help out in the group whenever they can.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the setting agreed to devise staff training profiles. These are now in place and effectively track staff training requirements.

What is being done well?

- the staff team work well together, they are committed enthusiastic and clearly enjoy their role. They have good links with the local authority Early Years Development Child Care Partnership and regularly attend meetings and training sessions.
- The wide range of well planned activities which positively promotes children's independence.
- The children are confident learners who clearly enjoy their time at the Playgroup. They are developing well in all areas of the curriculum.
- Partnerships with parent's is a particular strength. Parent's express high levels of satisfaction regarding the service they receive. Written information is readily available and many parent's take up the offer of helping out during one or more of the sessions.
- The behaviour management policy is well written and consistently implemented by all staff. As a result children behaviour is excellent.
- Snack time is set out in a way which offers children a healthy range of fruit and drink, independent choice about when to have their food and a relaxed atmosphere where they can socialise and talk to adults and their peers.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The effective key worker system provides children with a secure base, especially when new children settle into the group. The key worker spends good amounts of time getting to know the child and allowing them to develop a strong relationship with a significant adult in order that they feel confident to join in with the activities and subsequently part happily from parent's. (standard 3)

What needs to be improved?

- monitoring of staff training needs to ensure that standards of curriculum delivery remain high.

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 to develop and enhance staff training opportunities.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Mill Hill East Playgroup provides very good quality nursery education and children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, physical, and creative development. Their progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good with some very good aspects.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff encourage children's independence and children's behaviour is excellent. Staff are calm, gently spoken and the children are happy and co operative. Staff knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum enables them to plan an interesting and appropriate range of activities, which extends children's learning very well.

Leadership and management is very good. Success of the setting is due to the well structured management system and an effective staff team who work well together. Staff share a good understanding of early years practice and are committed to developing the quality of the provision through ongoing evaluation and training.

Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents are well informed of the curriculum and they are regularly updated on their children's progress. They openly express satisfaction with the service they receive and many take advantage of the opportunity to help out in the setting.

What is being done well?

- Strong leadership creates a shared ethos of very good early years principals. Staff are enthusiastic about their work and team work is effective. They endeavour to further their skills and knowledge through additional training and evaluation of their provision.
- Assessment of children's achievements is closely linked with curriculum planning. Staff therefore have sound knowledge of children's abilities and as a direct result they are able to plan activities which are suitably challenging for children and encourage them to move forward with their learning.
- Staff provide a wide range of activities coupled with good periods of uninterrupted free play which allows the children to engage in meaningful play and develop their learning fully.
- Personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children are confident, independent and interested in their work. Relationships are good, behaviour is excellent.
- There are excellent opportunities for children to develop writing skills. Children practice writing for a variety of purposes, including shopping lists

and notepads. They are developing increasing skills for independent writing.

- Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents are offered good information about the setting's ethos and aims and objectives. They are kept well informed regarding their child's progress and are able to extend their learning at home. The rota for parents to help out in the setting is well used.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to explore and observe features of living things and natural objects.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the three key issues for action identified at the previous inspection. As a result, significant improvements have been made to the quality of the education programme. Planning now refers to all six areas of learning and additional opportunities for older and more able children are incorporated. Children are now learning to write for a variety of purposes and staff encourage them to develop an awareness of the letters of the alphabet. Every day activities promote children's experience of practical problem solving and calculation.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The quality of children's learning in the area of personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children are confident, enthusiastic learners who are able to select their own resources independently. Behaviour is excellent, they are co-operative and have developed strong relationships with adults and their peers. They are able to concentrate well during individual and group activities. They share and take turns fairly, especially at the computer table.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's language literacy and communication development is very good. Children are confident communicators who are also able to listen well. They are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes, especially during spontaneous role play activities. They are developing their emerging writing skills well and older children are able to read their own names. Adult written text provides a good role model and they teach children the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The programme for mathematics is very good. Many children can count reliably to ten and occasionally beyond, some children have developed an understanding of simple addition. Children are able to identify and sort objects by shapes and size, and use a range of mathematical language with increasing understanding. Staff make excellent use of every day activities, such as snack time, to reinforce children's mathematical learning in a practical way.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good with very good aspects. Opportunities for children to use technology are well supported and they are able to build and construct with increasing skill. A good range of activities are planned throughout the year which allow children to learn about cultures other than their own and they have a good sense of community. There are insufficient opportunities for children to explore and observe living and natural things.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are making very good progress within the programme for physical development. Opportunities for them to develop fine motor skills are very good, they can use scissors and other small tools with increasing control. They are confident movers who demonstrate a good awareness of space. Regular opportunities are planned for children to use large equipment such as climbing frames and bikes. Good use is made of the outdoor play area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress within the learning area of creative development. They express their ideas freely through a good range of activities; including moving to music, art and interactive stories. The current theme provides excellent opportunities for children to explore their senses and respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, touch, taste and smell. A well resourced home corner allows children to develop their learning through meaningful role play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- Plan more opportunities for children to explore and observe features of natural and living things.

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.