



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 309271

DfES Number: 512123

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/07/2004  
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name Christ Church School Playgroup  
Setting Address Playgroup Building  
Christ Church School  
Derwent Road  
Lancaster  
LA1 3ES

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Christ Church School Playgroup 1013686

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Christ Church School Playgroup  
Address Christ Church C of E School  
Derwent Road  
Lancaster  
Lancashire  
LA1 3ES

## 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

Christ Church Playgroup opened in 1966. It operates from 2 playrooms in a self contained building situated on the grounds of Christ Church school in Lancaster. It serves the local area.

There are currently 24 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 12 funded 3 and 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times, closing on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Sessions are from 9:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00.

5 regular members of staff work with the children 1 of whom is currently on maternity leave. 4 staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Christ Church School playgroup provides a service to the local community and children are making generally good progress in personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development. However, children's learning in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world has significant weaknesses and mathematical development is poor.

The staff are caring and patient, but there are significant weaknesses in the teaching. Staff are unsure how to plan a programme of activities that promotes children's learning across all six areas. Staff provide activities which enable children to follow their interests, but do not make the most of the activities by interacting in a way that helps children work towards the early learning goals. Assessments of children's progress are not used effectively to identify what children need to learn next. However, staff support children with special educational needs very well indeed.

There are significant weaknesses in how the playgroup is led and managed. Staff carry out self-appraisals, but too little emphasis is given to staff development to improve teaching.

Parents and carers are welcomed into the playgroup and staff are friendly and approachable. Parents and staff occasionally discuss what children have done in the session, but parents are not involved enough in children's learning at the playgroup. Procedures are not in place to encourage parents to share their observations of children's learning or to be informed of the progress they are making. There is limited information about the educational provision of the playgroup

### What is being done well?

- Children's personal independence is a strength.
- Support for children with special educational needs is very good. Staff work well with support workers.
- Staff manage children's behaviour well.

### What needs to be improved?

- staff development to ensure that staff have the skills and confidence to teach across all six areas of learning, but particularly literacy and mathematics
- planning to ensure that activities provided have goals for children's learning in mind and that staff teach in a way that promotes and extends children's learning

- mathematical development needs to be given far greater emphasis. Staff need to ensure that children's mathematical development is promoted throughout activities and as part of the daily routine
- communication, language and literacy. Children need to be taught the importance of print and given more opportunities to practise writing in interesting ways
- the partnership with parents and carers

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

Children have more opportunities to look at and learn about living things.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

There is a strong approach to promoting children's independence, for example, they find an apron and put it on before painting. There are good opportunities for children to choose between activities. They are learning about other cultures as well as their own. They are well behaved and are learning to share and take turns. There are too few opportunities for children to become truly motivated to learn and some children lack confidence.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are learning to listen to and enjoy stories. The book corner is popular. They are learning to retell stories. However, staff do not introduce enough new words to effectively extend children's vocabulary. Staff miss opportunities to develop children's confidence in speaking. Children do not practise writing their names enough and are not learning to recognise letters or to associate sounds with them. Too little importance is placed on the use of print in the playgroup environment.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Far too little emphasis is given to promoting mathematics. There are too few opportunities for children to count and learn to recognise numbers. Some mathematical work is done to promote mathematical concepts, such as, comparing children's heights, but too little emphasis is given to this area of work. Staff miss opportunities to promote children's mathematical understanding and skills both at activities and throughout the day.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have good opportunities to learn about other cultures, for example, Diwali. Children have more opportunities to look at living things. They are learning about people who help us in the community. Too little emphasis is placed on children using technology. They have access to a computer, but this is not used very often. There are too few opportunities for children to learn how things work and question why things happen. Too little emphasis is placed on children sharing their news.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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The children are developing a good awareness of the space required for their movements. They move imaginatively whilst doing action songs and are developing good co-ordination and balance. They have good opportunities to learn about keeping healthy and personal hygiene through topic work. Children use construction sets well. Children use large apparatus and wheeled toys well as part of their outdoor play. There are too few opportunities for children to use small tools, such as writing implements

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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The children use their imagination particularly well in dance and movement. They enjoy playing a good range of musical instruments. They also enjoy retelling stories. Some good work is carried out with children using their senses, for example, making smoothies and playing with 'lavendar playdough'. They have free access to a painting easel. There are, however, too few opportunities for children to experiment with materials for example, when making models using reclaimable materials.

**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**

- improve staff knowledge of how to plan and provide activities which promote and extend children's learning across all six areas and ensure that once this knowledge is acquired, it is put into practice
- give greater emphasis to the programme for mathematics and make sure that all early learning goals in this area are fully promoted
- improve opportunities for children to learn about the importance of print and to explore writing themselves. Provide more opportunities for children to share their ideas and news and improve staff interaction with children to extend their vocabulary
- improve the partnership with parents and carers by providing more information about the educational provision of the playgroup, encouraging parents to contribute to the assessment of their children's learning and to help identify future goals for children to work towards.

*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.*