



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101750

DfES Number: 520297

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/11/2004
Inspector Name Linda Janet Witts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Uplands Playgroup
Setting Address Thompson Road
Uplands
Stroud
Gloucester
GL5 1TE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Uplands Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Uplands Playgroup
Address Thompson Road
Uplands
Stroud
Gloucester
GL5 1TE

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

Uplands playgroup is run by a voluntary management committee and opened in 1995. It is situated in the Uplands area of Stroud and serves the local community.

The playgroup offers sessional day care for up to 20 children aged between two years nine months and five years old. There are currently 19 children on roll of whom 11 are funded three-year-olds. The group supports children with special needs. It is open Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 12.00 hours, term-time only.

The playgroup premise is situated within the grounds of Uplands Primary School. It is self-contained with a play room, toilets and kitchenette. The group has the use of an enclosed outside area, shared with the reception class and can also use the school's playground and garden areas. The school hall is also available for use regularly.

Two members of staff are employed. The leader is a qualified teacher and the deputy is currently working towards a level three qualification in child care and education. Staff are supported by parent helpers.

How good is the Day Care?

Uplands Playgroup provides good quality care for children. Staff are enthusiastic, experienced individuals who work well together. The committee are supportive of the staff, ensuring good access to training. The group is well organised; high adult:child ratios are maintained and good use made of time. Staff and supporting duty parents have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The premise is clean, well maintained and attractively decorated. Clever use of space and resources has created a stimulating play environment, making good use of indoor and outside areas. The group has a very good range of high quality equipment and resources. Group policies are currently under review, a couple lack information but most are now comprehensively written and reflect group practice. Parents have not been asked to give permission for staff to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. Records are well maintained.

Supervision of children is very good. Staff demonstrate safety awareness and have taken action to minimise risks within the play environment. Good health and hygiene is actively promoted. Children enjoy the snacks provided.

A broad range of activities is offered during each session. Staff have an excellent knowledge of children's individual needs and offer appropriate support of children's play. Children with special educational needs are supported appropriately. Children are happy and engage enthusiastically in both freely chosen and adult-led activities. Children relate well to one another and to staff. They are well-behaved and staff foster self-esteem. Equal opportunities are actively promoted.

Parents describe staff as friendly and report that they are happy with all aspects of the care offered. They receive good information about the provision and regular feedback about children's progress. Parents are encouraged to play an active role with the group through rota duties, as members of the committee and joining in fundraising events.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group was asked to ensure that the playgroup premise was maintained at a suitable temperature and that group policies be revised to include equal opportunities and special needs policies, which reflect current legislation; to develop a complaints procedure and a method of recording any complaints; to produce a child protection policy, making all policies available to parents. They were also asked to gain parental permission to administer medication and record details of medication administered, staff attendance and any incidents.

In response to this the temperature of the premise is now monitored and group policies were amended promptly, consents to administer medication are now sought as appropriate and records are now appropriately maintained. The child protection policy does still lack detail.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy at the playgroup. They engage in a broad range of activities, showing excitement in their experiences. They enjoy exploring and investigating; using their imagination, having control over their play. Children join in large group activities, such as cookery and ring games enthusiastically.
- Staff are caring and responsive to children's individual needs. They support play knowing when to play an active role and when to stand back and let children play freely. They pose questions to promote children's thinking, offer new vocabulary, talk with and listen to the children.
- The atmosphere within the playgroup is welcoming. It is clear that the group's ethos is that play and learning should be fun. The setting is attractive and space is utilised well. It is well equipped and children are able to move freely around, accessing chosen resources, with the ability to initiate their own play.

- Children are well behaved and staff are good role models. The atmosphere within the group is calm and positive. Good behaviour is encouraged, with praise and encouragement offered spontaneously, fostering children's self-esteem.
- Parents, grandparents, carers are encouraged to play an active role within the group. They regularly help out at sessions and staff value their support. Two-way communication is actively promoted; staff provide good information about activities and children's progress and encourage parents to take an interest in their children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- group's policies and procedures, to reflect the action that would be taken in the event of a child being lost or if there was an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- procedures to request written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice.

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 has not received any complaints about this provider.

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
7	request parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice
14	extend group policies to include a written statement of procedure to be

	followed in the event of a child being lost and action to be taken in the event of an allegation of child abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Uplands Playgroup provides good quality education. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's progress in personal, social, emotional and creative development, communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world is very good.

Teaching is generally good. Staff are enthusiastic in their roles and have a good understanding of the foundation stage, early learning goals and associated developmental stepping-stones. They plan a good range of free choice and adult-led activities to promote children's all-round development, supporting children with special educational needs as appropriate. Good use is made of time and resources. Outdoor areas are utilised well, in all weather. Staff are observant and have a good knowledge of individual children. They do not always use this knowledge to inform planning, ensuring that children are sufficiently challenged in activities promoting mathematical and physical development. Written assessments are not always supported by evidence. Staff encourage good behaviour and foster children's self-esteem; this has resulted happy environment conducive to children's play and learning.

Leadership and management are generally good. The committee and staff are united in their desire to provide high quality education and are committed to improvement. Staff have good access to training and are supported well. Committee members regularly visit the group, monitoring the provision, although this is not entirely effective at present. Staff organise the group well; fostering team spirit and they compliment one another with their individual skills. The group has an excellent relationship with the school, working together to create a smooth transition to school for children.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good information about the planned curriculum and regularly help at sessions, which extends their understanding of how their children are learning.

What is being done well?

- Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They are confident, well behaved and independent. During free choice activities they select activities and resources for themselves and take control of their play. Children join in adult-led and group activities enthusiastically. They relate well to staff and have developed strong friendships in their peer group, linking up with others as they wish.
- Staff are enthusiastic and experienced in their roles. They are skilled in behaviour management; they value children as individuals, praising good

behaviour, fostering self-esteem; they are themselves good role models, who help children to understand the behavioural expectations within the setting.

- Children have daily opportunities to play outside, whatever the weather. They are able to enjoy a variety of physical play activities, creative and imaginative play and opportunities to explore and investigate. The outside space is utilised well providing an attractive secure area. There is a hard surfaced roadway, decked area and play house, sand pit and raised flower beds, planted with scented herbs and flowers, trees which can be used as dens and for climbing and logs and stones placed as a habitat for mini-beasts.

What needs to be improved?

- use of assessments, to ensure that information gathered is used effectively when planning ensuring that activities provide sufficient challenge for more able children, with particular attention to mathematical and physical development
- collection of evidence to support summative assessments of children's progress, to show clearly children's progress over time.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is generally good. Staff have implemented an action plan to address the key issues raised.

Children are now able to access creative materials freely and at the start of large group activities staff give a clear explanation about the activity, helping children to understand what is expected of them.

To provide parents and carers with greater information about the early learning goals staff now give written information about the foundation stage and have started a scrap book of photographs and work linked to the different areas of learning for parents to view. Parents are encouraged to complete a home to playgroup profile when their children start at playgroup. Regular playgroup duties enable parents to gain greater understanding about the curriculum.

Staff make observations of children's progress and complete summative assessments. These observations are not always effectively used to inform future planning, ensuring individual children are sufficiently challenged and this remains an area for improvement.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show interest in learning. They select activities for themselves and show persistence at them. Children are independent and well behaved. They sit quietly during group activities, wait patiently, take-turns and share. They play co-operatively and are considerate of others' needs. They understand the behavioural expectations within the setting. Children are encouraged to talk about their home and community life and show a strong sense of self within the group.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak confidently, initiating conversation. They ask questions, talk about what they are doing and use language to express their needs, recall past experiences and to connect ideas. Children listen attentively to stories and rhymes, joining in. They enjoy looking at books, handling them carefully. Some children recognise their own name and are able to link sounds to some of the letters. Children ascribe meaning to marks and some attempt to write their name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children willingly attempt to count and join in number rhymes enthusiastically. Some are able to count irregular arrangements of objects to 10 and can say confidently the number that is one more than a given number. Children do not regularly problem-solve and calculate using practical activities. Children are able to match and compare by shape, make patterns, select resources by shape and size for the task in hand and use mathematical language such as 'circle', 'big', 'small' within their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show curiosity. They explore the outside area, taking an interest in the natural environment. They search for mini beasts and discover scented flowers and herbs. They also regularly visit the school pond to see the pond life. Children show interest in the lives and work of others. They construct with a range of materials and are keen to find out how things work. They can operate simple equipment. Children are introduced to cultures and do activities linked to festivals such as Diwali.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move in a range of ways. They negotiate space, change direction, avoid obstacles as they walk, run or propel wheeled toys, showing skill racing down inclines. Children are learning new skills such as stilt walking. Climbing apparatus is not regularly available for all children to use. Children use small resources with confidence and control. They manipulate play dough, clay and sweet mixture moulding to desired shapes. Children are aware of the importance of good hygiene practices.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children show excitement in creative experiences. They have opportunities to try different painting techniques and combine media. They use their senses and describe feelings. Children engage in role-play based on their own first-hand experiences and play alongside others engaged in the same theme, using resources as props. They enjoy singing and can sing simple songs from memory. Children have regular access to musical instruments and opportunities to hear and dance to different types of music.

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 the use of assessments, to ensure that information gathered is used effectively when planning, ensuring that activities provide sufficient challenge for more able children, with particular attention to mathematical and physical development
- support summative assessments of children's progress with evidence, such as observations, photographs, annotated work, to show children's progress across all areas of learning, over time.

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.