



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 512675

DfES Number: 530002

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	09/03/2004
Inspector Name	Carol Eaman

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Playcentre Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address	Lidgett Park Methodist Church North Park Avenue Leeds West Yorkshire LS8 1HG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Jeanette Bartle
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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

The Pre-School Play Centre has been operating for 37 years. It is situated in the Lidgett Park Methodist Church Complex, where it has the use of two large rooms, one smaller room, kitchen and toilet facilities plus two separate outdoor play areas.

The Church buildings are set in the Roundhay area of Leeds approximately four miles from the City Centre. The group currently has 49 children on roll aged 2.6 years to 5 years. Government funding is received for 17 children, 4 of whom are 4 years old. There are 2 children with special educational needs.

The group operates from 09:00 until 12:00 hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive, during term time.

Children attending the group are mostly from the surrounding area and different cultural groups are represented. The group receives teacher support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and employs a qualified early years teacher to work with the government funded 3 and 4 year olds.

There are 12 staff and a ratio of 1 staff member to 5 children is maintained at all times. Of these staff, 5 hold an appropriate early years qualification and 2 are currently working towards the Diploma in Pre-School Practice. There are 2 other members of staff who are qualified teachers.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Playcentre Pre-School Playgroup provides a welcoming environment where children are making generally good progress overall towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff work well together and plan interesting activities in spacious, well resourced accommodation. They have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage but there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Most staff skilfully interact with the children and challenge their thinking, however others do not make the most of daily play situations and learning opportunities are lost. Staff are well deployed in the playgroup and they make regular assessments of children's progress through a key worker system. Excellent support is given to children with special educational needs and funded children benefit from sessions with a very experienced early years teacher. Staff give clear expectations for children's behaviour. Long and medium term plans are detailed but short term plans do not cater for the differing ages or abilities of children.

Leadership and management is generally good. The owner of the playgroup leads a large staff who work together in a positive manner and have well established working routines. Staff are encouraged to attend training courses for their professional development but the leader does not monitor the daily quality of teaching. The group is committed to improvement and has raised funding for an outdoor all weather play area. Advice and support is welcomed from a local authority advisory teacher and other Pre-School Learning Alliance workers.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are made very welcome and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. Information is shared with them through newsletters and notice boards and staff get to know the children and their families well. All parents have access to their child's assessment file and they are encouraged to make contributions.

What is being done well?

- Staff create a rich, well planned and stimulating environment where children learn through a wide range of practical activities.
- Children interact well together and are encouraged to be independent and take responsibility for their words and actions.
- Excellent support is given to children with special educational needs.
- Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and parents can be involved in their child's learning.
- Government funded children experience good quality learning sessions with a qualified early years teacher.

What needs to be improved?

- the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- the group's short-term plans in relation to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance on stepping stones.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good progress since the last inspection and has addresses all the issues raised.

Plans are now available for the long and medium term covering all early learning goals. Short term plans have been developed to document the learning objectives on a weekly basis. Good emphasis is now placed on early reading & writing skills through promotion of books, letter sounds and opportunities for mark making and writing.

A policy has been written with regard to the DFEE's Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and a member of staff (the SENCO) is responsible for this area. Staff also attend other training courses for their professional development.

Parents receive more information about educational activities through newsletters & notice boards displaying the groups weekly activities. Parents can read their child's assessment profile and contribute to it.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children in the playgroup are confident, happy and settled and relate well to each other and adults. They express their opinions and select resources independently as they persevere with tasks and play with a sense of purpose. Their behaviour is very good and they are encouraged to think how their actions affect others. Children's emotional needs are well supported by caring staff and their self-esteem is developed as their feelings and beliefs are valued.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening to stories which are well promoted in the playgroup and they look at information books on display. They speak clearly and learn to listen and negotiate with each other and adults. Picture cards are used effectively to help special needs pupils communicate. Each week the children learn new letter sounds and some four year olds write their names. Children learn that print conveys meaning as they read labels, however opportunities are lost to increase their vocabulary.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently during many daily routines and in their play. Small group work enables children to learn about shape, size and pattern and a four year old correctly identifies a trapezium. Children learn positional language as they sing placing their hands 'on' 'above' 'behind' etc. When lining up the children compare numbers of girls to boys and develop the concept of 'more'. Staff do not always extend activities to introduce adding or subtracting of numbers through daily play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn about the natural world as they care for their guinea pig and fish and see bulbs change to flowers. They design puppets, joining materials together and shine lights on them to make shadows. The computer is popular as children learn to control the 'mouse' and follow programmes. Cultural traditions of many children in the group are shared and children learn about other parts of the world. An interactive display on 'Night & Day' develops an understanding of the passage of time.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have good opportunities for physical activities indoors as they climb, ride bikes, slide balance and crawl through tunnels. They play carefully taking turns and develop a sense of space. The newly developed all weather surface now provides an outdoor area for children to construct, catch balls, or jump on a hopscotch. Small equipment and tools are used to develop children's hand-eye co-ordination as they make things. Children eat healthy food and learn the importance of exercise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children play and learn in an environment full of creative displays which support their learning. They enjoy using their imagination as they paint, use playdough or dress up acting out role-play situations. Children develop their sensory awareness as they taste fruit, smell flowers, feel shiny pebbles or stroke their soft guinea pig. Blowing bubbles outdoors makes them very excited. Music and movement sessions and singing times are enjoyed together and some children sing to the whole group.

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

- Ensure that the quality of teaching challenges the children by making the most of daily opportunities to develop their learning.
- Link short-term plans to the QCA stepping stones to allow for the differing ages and abilities of the children.

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.