



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 508215

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/06/2003
Inspector Name Valerie Craven

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Parkstone Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Riverside Community Centre, Parkstone Road
Hull
North Humberside
HU6 7DE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Parkstone Pre-School Management
Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Parkstone Pre-School Management Committee
Address Riverside Community Centre, Parkstone Road
Hull
North Humberside
HU6 7DE

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

Parkstone Playgroup opened about twenty-one years ago and provides sessional care for the locality and surrounding areas. This well established playgroup is located on the outskirts of Kingston-Upon-Hull in East Yorkshire. It is managed by a committee of parents, and on a day-to-day basis by the playgroup team leader. Care takes place in the Riverside Community Centre building, mainly in the large hall. Children have supervised access to an adjoining smaller room, outdoor secure play area, and also the centre's toilet facilities.

The playgroup has 43 children on roll, and is currently registered to care for a maximum of 26 children between the ages of two and a half up to five years old. This includes 11 three-year-olds in receipt of funding, and 32 four-year-olds in receipt of funding. One of the funded children has been identified as having special educational needs. None of the funded children are learning English as an additional language. The playgroup is open for five sessions each week during local school term times. There are four morning sessions a week, taking place every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Morning sessions start at 9.15 am and finish at 12.00 noon. There is one afternoon session a week, taking place on Tuesday. The afternoon session starts at 12.45 pm and finishes at 3.15 pm.

There are a total of ten permanent part-time members of staff who work with the playgroup children. This includes staff who have a wide range of childcare experiences, some who hold recognised qualifications, a few that are unqualified, whilst others are working towards these. Staff receive support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, including advisory teacher support, and opportunities to attend locally organised training courses. The playgroup staff are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Parkstone Playgroup is a well established setting that serves the locality and surrounding areas well. It provides a welcoming environment for children to settle and learn.

Children who are three-years-old and four-years-old are making generally good progress overall towards the achievement of the early learning goals. They are making very good progress in the area of physical development. Generally good progress is made in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. Limited progress is made in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world.

Quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are experienced at supporting children with identified special educational needs. This includes working closely with children's parents and other professionals involved. There is, however, scope to continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, extend the plans for the overall educational provision, and to find an improved way of organising learning resources.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a clear commitment by the committee, playgroup team leader and staff, to improve the care and education for all children. This includes the development and implementation of a comprehensive set of new policies and procedures to guide staff's practices. There is, however, scope to continue to regularly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. They are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, such as when children choose a book to take home to further practice their early reading skills with the help of their parents. Parents are provided with quality information about the playgroup and its provision, are encouraged to share what they know about their child, and are informed of their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- Staff's support of children with identified special educational needs. This includes working closely with children's parents and other professionals involved.
- The clear commitment by the committee, playgroup team leader and staff, to improve the care and education for all children. This includes the development and implementation of a comprehensive set of new policies and procedures to guide staff's practices.

- Children's relationships with each other and the staff, often shown when working as part of a small group, such as during 'group craft activities', when children take turns and share the resources and equipment fairly.
- Children's ability to link sounds and letters, clearly supported by a focus on an 'alphabet letter of the week', such as 'r'.
- Children's ability to recognise and recreate mathematical patterns, usually through the use of resources, such as different sized and coloured plastic models of teddy bears, placing these in the correct sequence on a set of related activity cards.
- Parent's active involvement in their child's learning, such as when children choose a book to take home to further practice their early reading skills with the help of their parents.

What needs to be improved?

- Encouragement of children's personal independence skills, and their ability to select resources for themselves and work independently.
- Range of opportunities for children to read and recognise their own names and familiar words.
- Development of children's understanding of addition when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old.
- Variety of technology items used to help support children's learning, and opportunities to celebrate festivals around the world.
- Planned activities that encourage children to respond in a variety of ways to what they touch and feel.
- Staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, extension of the plans for the overall educational provision, and to find an improved way of organising learning resources.
- Frequency of the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The Parkstone Playgroup staff have made generally good progress since the last inspection, and this has had a positive impact on children's learning. There are four main improvements linked to the previous key issues:

Staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones leading to the achievement of the early learning goals has improved, enabling children's learning to be developed more in line with their ages and capabilities. This key issue, however, continues to remain in this report. The use of further effective questioning that challenges children to think and explain their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Extended opportunities for children to increase their knowledge of the link between sounds and

letters. The development of more opportunities for children to say and use numbers, and their mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children have formed good relationships with each other and the staff, shown when working as part of a small group, such as during 'group craft activities', when children take turns and share the resources and equipment fairly. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to develop their personal independence skills, and their ability to select resources for themselves and work independently.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy. Children are developing their ability to link sounds and letters, clearly supported by a focus on an 'alphabet letter of the week', such as 'r'. They are encouraged to talk and listen during 'circle time', and are extending their vocabulary when learning new words linked to a current theme focus. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to read and recognise their own names and familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in mathematical development. Children are able to recognise and recreate mathematical patterns, usually through the use of resources, such as different sized and coloured plastic models of teddy bears. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to develop an understanding of addition when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children make limited progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are encouraged to develop their joining and building skills, often in the 'construction area', and when making models using everyday materials. They can observe the patterns and changes in the weather, recording these on a daily weather chart. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to use technology items to help support their learning, and to celebrate festivals around the world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in physical development. Children are developing their small muscles through handling a wide range of tools, including art and craft tools, and also objects, construction and malleable materials. They are skilful at using scissors when cutting out pictures, and at using glue sticks to secure these pictures onto a piece of paper: and are able to move about confidently when working on climbing and balancing equipment, sometimes as part of an 'obstacle course'.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in creative development. Children are frequently encouraged to use their imagination through role-play activities, such as spending some time in the playgroup's 'travel agents', by operating finger puppets as part of a puppet theatre activity, or by wearing one of the many colourful costumes, including one of a 'cat' and a 'pumpkin'. There are, however, limited opportunities for children to respond in a variety of ways to what they touch and feel.

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

- Staff should address the following key issues in their action plan:
- Further encourage the development of children's personal independence skills, and their ability to select resources for themselves and work independently; extend the range of opportunities for children to read and recognise their own names and familiar words; develop children's understanding of addition, when two groups of objects are combined, particularly through practical activities, and especially for those children who are four-years-old; extend the variety of technology items used to help support children's learning, and opportunities for children to celebrate festivals around the world; and plan additional activities that would encourage children to respond in a variety of ways to what they touch and feel.
- Continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, to extend the plans for the overall educational provision, and to find an improved way of organising learning resources.
- Continue to regularly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the overall provision of the playgroup.

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.