



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101531

DfES Number: 524963

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/10/2003
Inspector Name	Carole Elizabeth Price

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Northleach Playgroup
Setting Address	School House, Mill End Northleach Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 3HJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Northleach Playgroup
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Northleach Playgroup
Address	School House, Mill End Northleach Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 3HJ

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

Northleach Playgroup is situated in the village of Northleach approximately 10 miles to the east of Cheltenham. The playgroup is located in the Old School House within the village school site and is managed by a voluntary committee. The group is registered for 13 children, aged two years nine months to under five years. Children attend from the surrounding mainly rural area. There are two playrooms, a cloakroom and a kitchen within the premises and they have access to the school playground for outdoor play. The group is open Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 12.00. They also operate an afternoon session, one day a week in the summer term depending upon demand. There are two staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced. The playleader holds the Diploma in Playgroup Practice. The group accepts funding for nursery education and currently has 12 three year olds, and 1 four year old child for whom they receive funding. They have no children with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. The group is a member of Gloucestershire Parent and Toddler Association, and receives support from them.

How good is the Day Care?

Northleach Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children. The staff team, are all appropriately qualified and work well together. A friendly, welcoming environment for children and parents is created by the warm welcome from staff and the displays of children's art work on the walls. Space within the imaginative play room is not well organised and limits children's play. The group's policies are all clear, comprehensive and regularly reviewed and there are clear notices in place for staff and rota parents. The complaints procedure does not include Ofsted contact details.

Staff are aware of safety issues and have taken steps to reduce risks such as ensuring the premises are secure by locking the doors during the session. Staff are active in promoting health and hygiene within the daily routine. The temperature of the playrooms is not monitored effectively to ensure it is appropriate for use by the children.

Adults show interest in what the children say and do, and they talk and interact with them appropriately. They provide a good range and variety of activities for children but the organisation of space and resources does not allow children to choose freely for themselves. Staff respect each child as an individual, acknowledge that they are all different and value the differences. Observations of individual children are not properly recorded making identification of special needs difficult to identify. There is a good behaviour management policy in place with appropriate strategies consistently applied by staff.

Parents are included in the group by the warm welcome from staff. They receive good information about the activities in which their child has been involved. There are no procedures in place to encourage parents to share information with staff about their child and the progress they are making.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Following the last inspection, Northleach playgroup had an action to seek parental permission for emergency medical treatment. This has now been added to the child record form and updated for each child. This ensures that in an emergency situation the group has sought all required permission for emergency treatment to individual children.

What is being done well?

- Adults show interest in what the children say and do, they talk and interact with them appropriately.
- A friendly, welcoming environment is created for children and parents, by the warm welcome from staff and the displays of children's art work on the walls.
- A good range and variety of resources are available for children.
- Staff respect each child as an individual, acknowledge that they are all different and value the differences.
- A good behaviour management policy is in place with appropriate strategies consistently applied by staff.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation of space and resources to improve use and accessibility to children;
- monitoring of temperature in the playrooms;
- safety of facilities in the cloakroom used by the children;
- observations of individual children to help the identification of special needs;
- procedures to encourage parents to share information with staff about their child;
- detail in the complaints procedure.

Outcome of the inspection
Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown		
Std	Action	Date
14	make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint.	10/10/2003

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
3	review organisation of resources and space to allow children more free access and allow them to select activities and resources for themselves.
4	ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature.
6	ensure hand washing facilities are safe and do not present a hazard to children.
10	review procedures for assessment of all children to enable identification of special needs, and provide appropriate activities to meet all children's needs.
12	consider ways of developing strategies to encourage parents to share information with staff about their child.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Northleach Playgroup provides a good quality curriculum overall and the children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are happy and confident within the setting. They take part in a wide range of activities, which helps to develop their interest and enthusiasm. Children are well supported to develop their personal independence. They have a good sense of place and time and are encouraged to talk about future and past events in their lives. Children have limited opportunity to select resources for themselves, and their ability to extend activities and be freely creative is not supported effectively.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a generally good knowledge of the early learning goals. They show great interest in what the children say and do. Staff develop the children's thinking and communication skills well. Good use is made of open-ended questions; which are appropriate to the stage of the individual child. Staff are enthusiastic during the session and encourage children to take part in new activities. The assessments on the children's progress are not used effectively to inform the planning and children's individual needs are not consistently supported.

Leadership and management is generally good. There are good working relationships between the staff and the committee. Communication is strong and they work well together as a team. Staff reviews are carried out and training needs assessed. There are no clear systems which support effective evaluation of the education provision. The committee and staff are keen to ensure the group provides the best care it can and are open to change to move things forward.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Clear information is given to parents about the provision, how they can be involved in their child's activities and the Foundation Stage of learning. Parents are not involved with the assessments and progress records of their children.

What is being done well?

- Children are encouraged to be confident, staff take time to speak to each child individually and build their self-esteem. They teach the children to respect others, by setting a good example.
- Staff ask good, open questions to make the children think for themselves. They extend children's vocabulary by introducing new words as they play.
- Children are encouraged to have a sense of place and time. Adults talk about the future and past and encourage children to recall past events in their lives. They go on local outings and staff introduce conversations about the village and local community, children's families, the world in which they live and the environment.

- Staff show great interest in what the children say and do. They are enthusiastic during the session and encourage children to try new things.
- There are good working relationships between the staff and the committee. Communication is strong and they work well together as a team.

What needs to be improved?

- further development of the planning and assessment cycle to ensure assessments are used to inform planning and meet the individual needs of all the children;
- organisation of resources to allow children to select and choose freely for themselves;
- opportunities for children to learn about health and their bodies;
- opportunities for children to practise mark making for their own purposes and to relate numbers to written numerals;
- the partnership with parents by encouraging them to share what they know about their child and be involved in assessments;
- procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education provision.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The last inspection identified two key issues. These were to develop the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world by including more opportunities for children to record their observations and use technology, and to extend children's use of writing to include familiar words. The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world is now very good with opportunities for children to record information and use technology freely on a daily basis. Children's writing has not been extended. They have no access to mark-making equipment to use for their own purposes and the more able children are not being supported effectively as they begin to write their names.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and confident within the group. Staff use opportunities to build on children's self-esteem. They offer praise and encouragement for achievements and thank children for helping with tasks. Adults encourage respect for others through example and clear expectations. Personal independence is encouraged. A good range of activities are provided for children however there is a lack of accessible resources to allow children to choose freely for themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Adults ask good open questions, appropriate to the age of the child, which encourages them to think. "What if?" "Why?" Children have time within the session to talk in large and small groups and staff listen to what they say. Staff use opportunities throughout the daily routine to link sounds and letters. Children have no access to mark-making equipment to use for their own purposes and the more able children are not being supported effectively as they begin to write their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are encouraged to count and calculate through the daily routines and as they play. They are not encouraged to link numbers of objects with written numerals. Numbers are not used as labels, for example the number of children allowed to play with the sand or play dough. Staff encourage children to look at and discuss patterns as they play for example in the sand and shaving foam, and they talk about the patterns created by the different objects or their fingers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are well supported to learn about a sense of place and time. They demonstrate an awareness of the routines and what happens next. They can recall past events and experiences with pleasure. Children go on local outings and relate conversations about the village and local community, their families, the world in which they live and the environment. There is a good selection of resources which reflect different cultures for example books, puzzles, dolls and small-world figures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good opportunities to develop large and small movements through the range of resources and activities such as tracing cards, threading, sewing cards and large construction toys. Outdoor equipment is used well. Children are able to demonstrate and further develop skills such as running, skipping, hopping, kicking and throwing balls. Staff do not provide opportunities for children to learn about health and how their body changes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have opportunities to explore and investigate different materials and media over time. They are encouraged to use their senses and explore their feelings through structured and spontaneous activities. There is a lack of regular, free access to creative resources and musical instruments to help develop children's own ideas. Children's use of role-play area and imaginative play is limited by the lack of space and resources.	
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 a planning and assessment cycle so that assessments inform future planning and ensure that activities are planned to support individual children's learning and build on their prior knowledge;
- review the organisation of resources to allow children to choose and select activities and equipment freely for themselves, including access to mark making for their own purposes and to ensure there are opportunities to relate numbers of objects to written numerals;
- further develop the partnership with parents by encouraging them to share what they know about their child and be involved in ongoing assessments of their child's progress;
- develop procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education provision.

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.