



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 107060

DfES Number: 584130

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 11/10/2004
Inspector Name Sue Davey

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Matthews Playgroup
Setting Address St Matthews Church
Clare Road
Kingsdown
Bristol
BS6 5TB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Matthews Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Matthews Playgroup
Address St Matthews Church
Clare Road
Kingsdown
Bristol
BS6 5TB

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

St Matthews Playgroup opened in 1990. It operates from the church hall of St Matthews Church in Kingsdown and serves the local area. It is a voluntary organisation, managed by a committee, which includes the playgroup leaders and members of the Parochial Church Council.

There are currently 21 children aged from three to five years on the roll. This includes 18 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four days a week during school terms. Sessions are from 09.15 to 11.45 Monday, Wednesday and Friday and from 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday and Wednesday.

Five staff work with the children. One is a trained teacher and one other has an early years qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

St Matthews Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The experienced and dedicated staff team work closely together and are very well organised. The accommodation provides good space indoors and outside for a wide range of activities to take place. However, there is scope to improve storage arrangements. Children have access to stimulating toys and materials. The operational plan provides a sound framework for the day to day running of the group and all necessary documentation is in place.

Staff make sure that children are safe at all times. The comprehensive risk assessment identifies any action needed to maintain safety for children, either on or off the premises. Good procedures are in place to record any accidents, administer first aid or medication. Staff encourage children to develop good personal hygiene and all snacks are healthy and nutritious. Careful consideration is given to children

with specific needs. Information is obtained from parents to make sure that children are cared for according to their wishes. All staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection.

Children engage in various activities across all areas of learning. Staff plan and provide interesting play experiences based on their observations of children's progress. Afternoon sessions provide a gentle introduction for younger children and the settling-in process is very good. Children explore and investigate in small groups. They make independent choices and get very involved in their play. There is a great emphasis on all children feeling valued and their individual needs met. Behaviour management is an outstanding feature of this setting.

The playgroup's partnership with parents is excellent. Parents receive good information about the setting and most policies are available for viewing. They are encouraged to discuss their child's progress. Parents help with sessions on a rota basis. They attend outings, training and social events throughout the year.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection a number of issues were raised and these have now all been addressed.

The group was asked to produce a risk assessment to identify and minimise risks. This has been done and is constantly updated. Staff carry out a risk assessment before taking the children on an outing.

Concern was raised about security of the garden and hall. The garden fence has been mended and entry to the building is via a doorbell system. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised.

The group were asked to maintain various records. They now keep a record of all visitors to the premises; obtain written permission from parents for the administration of medication and keep a record of any medicines given;

What is being done well?

- The settling-in process for new children takes good account of their individual needs. Parents are welcome to stay as long as they like.
- Staff's interaction with children is very good and children clearly enjoy their company.
- The range of outings throughout the year helps children to find out about their local area.
- Staff's knowledge of individual children's needs is very good. Extra support on a one to one basis is provided if necessary.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The staff work together to provide a consistently supportive and positive approach toward behaviour management. They use conflict resolution techniques which

encourage children to amicably solve problems encountered through play in a way that is respectful of each other's feelings. The approach is explained to parents and support is provided if requested, to help them implement it at home. In addition an eight week parenting course, which includes behaviour management strategies, is run every year for interested parents. This day-time course, with a crèche provided, is very well attended.

What needs to be improved?

- storage facilities to maintain resources in good order and encourage more extensive use of the garden
- the information given to parents prior to placement, about child protection.

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
4	Review storage arrangements to make sure that resources are maintained in good order and a wider range activities are provided outside.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St. Matthews Playgroup provides high quality nursery education overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are committed to providing children with interesting and meaningful activities which help them develop in all areas of learning. They are experienced and enthusiastic and have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They plan suitable play experiences based on their observations of the children. Staff record anecdotes of what children do to build a profile of their achievements before transferring to mainstream school. One to one support is given to those children who need it. For example, to develop their vocabulary or turn taking skills.

Leadership and management of the playgroup is very good. Play leaders are well supported by the management committee and regular meetings are held throughout the term. The play leader who is responsible for curriculum planning is a good role-model to other staff. She also runs informal training on a range of topics. Team meetings are held weekly to evaluate previous activities and plan for the following week based on children's needs. Staff attend further training workshops on a regular basis. They are committed to continuous improvement.

The playgroup's partnership with parents is very good. Staff build good relationships with parents and take time to talk to them. Staff involve parents in their child's learning by encouraging them to share skills and talents where appropriate. Parents help during the sessions on a rota basis and quickly see what their children are gaining from specific activities. They accompany children on any organised outings. The playgroup operates a book lending scheme and parents are invited to various social and information evenings throughout the year. A parenting course is put on in the spring term of each year. The group collectively supports a child in India through donations made by parents.

What is being done well?

- Staff's attitude toward the management of children's behaviour. Their consistent approach and willingness to work with parents helps children to learn skills which enable them to solve problems and disputes.
- The excellent range of books created with the children about their everyday experiences at playgroup. These books contain photographs, artwork and anecdotes from the children. Parents are encouraged to borrow the books to share with children at home.
- The planning of activities is very good. It reflects children's interests and takes account of their individual needs.

- Partnership with parents is very good and staff creatively encourage them to be involved in their child's education.
- The emphasis given to developing children's curiosity and investigation skills is excellent. An activity is set up everyday for children to explore and examine, either independently or with adult support.

What needs to be improved?

- children's understanding of information communication technology

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection when the playgroup was asked to:

- (1) develop planning and assessment to link more closely with the six areas of learning
- (2) ensure staffing ratios provided sufficient support for children
- (3) enhance the visual learning environment.

Since then all planning and assessment is organised around the different areas of learning and staff can easily identify what children need to learn next. There are always enough staff to support the children, as the group operates a ratio above the minimum standard. In addition there are two parent helpers at each session. The environment is shared by many other community groups but the playgroup has obtained a number of mobile screens to display the children's work and items of interest.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are enthusiastic and interested to learn new things. They are confident and have high self-esteem, showing pride in their own achievements. Children enjoy positive relationships with staff and each other. Some children refer to others as their friends. They are learning to share and take turns. They use negotiation as a means to resolve problems encountered through play. Most children can take care of their own needs and they select toys independently. They accept other's differences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and eager to speak and they learn new words by working with new materials. They describe past experiences and so contribute to books about playgroup events. They listen attentively and recognise the initial sound of familiar words. Most children can read their own name and enjoy books. They regularly practise early writing skills by completing a 'shopping list' or 'appointment book' in role-play. Some children form recognisable letter shapes associated with their name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children practise counting using one number name per item, and recognise some numerals. They learn about number in meaningful situations and pretend to pay for things in role-play. Children are learning to add on one more and they calculate through simple number songs. They experience position and placement through practical tasks. They understand measurement, pattern making and shape by playing with specific materials. Sand and water play teaches them about weight and capacity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children investigate a range of materials and experiment with various substances. Such as mixing cooking oil, salt and rice with water to see what happens. They explore outside, looking for mini-beasts or planting and tending vegetables and flowers. Children design and build with a range of resources. They show an understanding of time when recalling past events, "Yesterday we didn't have the bikes out". Children learn about their local area and other countries. Access to technology is limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are physically active and demonstrate a wide range of movements. They run, climb, crawl, balance and pedal. They dance and move on instruction and have good spatial awareness. Children push and pull large equipment and build with large blocks. They work with malleable materials to develop hand and finger muscles. They manipulate materials requiring good hand eye coordination such as, small world figures and pencil control. They show gentleness when handling small creatures or insects.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore various substances. They create 'magic potions'; try new paint techniques such as printing and marbling. They paint freely and create collage pictures with a variety of materials. They explore three-dimensional form with play dough and recycled boxes. Children enjoy singing familiar songs. They dance to various styles of music from around the world and they tap a steady beat with instruments. Children dress up and engage in imaginative role-play drawing on their own experiences.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- children's access to information communication technology.

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.