



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127031

DfES Number: 514669

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/07/2004
Inspector Name Christine Robinson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup
Setting Address The Village Hall
Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea
Maidstone
Kent
ME17 4HN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup 1037839

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup
Address Church Street
Boughton Monchelsea
Maidstone
Kent
ME17 4HN

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

Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup opened in 1968 and is a registered charity, managed by a committee of parents.

It operates from the main room in the village hall in Boughton Monchelsea, a village near Maidstone. It serves the local community and surrounding rural area. The hall has its own kitchen and cloakroom facilities and has the occasional use of a smaller room. Children have access to the hall playing field.

There are currently 67 children from 2-4 years on roll. This includes 32 funded 3 year olds and 22 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs; currently all children speak English.

The group opens five days a week during school term-time. Sessions are from 09:15-11:45 and on Monday, Thursday and Friday afternoons from 12:30-15:00.

Apart from the committee and administrator, there are nine staff who work with the children and four new staff are expected to start work in September. Of the nine, three are qualified to NVQ 3 and one is training.

The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is aware that support is available from an early years advisory teacher.

How good is the Day Care?

Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup offers good quality care for children.

The staff work well as a team and children feel secure with familiar routines. Children have sufficient space to play with a wide variety of toys in good condition but the group has not fully considered how it will organise children when there are more than 26 children present. The environment is bright and clean but the village hall committee does not allow children's work to be permanently displayed. Although only three staff are qualified, one member of staff is training and it is hoped that the four new members of staff will start training shortly. The playgroup administrator

ensures all paper-work is well-organised and up-to-date but the operational plan is not yet fully complete.

There is a good awareness of health, safety and hygiene issues and staff are also very aware of meeting any special dietary needs. There is a satisfactory knowledge of child protection matters. Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunity issues and this enables them to meet children's individual needs effectively.

Staff provide a good range of activities which promotes all areas of children's development. Their interaction with children is very positive and there is a strong emphasis on a play-based curriculum. Staff set clear boundaries for behaviour and as a result, children feel secure and behave well.

Parents take an active role in managing the group. All parents are able to find out about their individual children's achievements through regular contact with staff. There are good informal settling-in procedures, such as coffee mornings, which enable both parents and children to feel welcome.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection in October 2002, nine actions were imposed.

Ofsted has now been informed of the name of the nominated person. All policies and procedures, including a fire procedure, have been written or revised, although the uncollected child policy lacks the required detail. The hours of attendance, that do not concur with the normal session patterns, are now recorded in the register.

Children are prevented from access to the kitchen by a gate and staff are aware of the need to offer children drinks at times other than snack-time, although this is not actively promoted. Entries in the accident and medicine book are now permanent and contain sufficient detail.

What is being done well?

- Staff are friendly and committed to working in partnership with parents. Parents are kept well-informed and are able to express their views through the management committee. The committee are very aware of their roles and responsibilities and have started to become active in helping the group to ensure that it meets each of the National Standards fully.
- Staff have a quiet and gentle manner with children and there is a peaceful atmosphere. The required numbers of staff to ensure that the adult-to-child ratios are met, exceeds the required minimum standards. Therefore, children learn as a consequence of staff being able to pay excellent attention to meeting their individual needs.
- Staff are very aware of any additional help children might need to be fully included in the playgroup curriculum. There is good liaison with appropriate professionals and early years agencies and individual play-plans are set up and regularly reviewed and informed by observations.

What needs to be improved?

- the content of the operational plan
- the arrangements to ensure that there are sufficient qualified staff on duty at all times.

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 |
|-----|--|
| 2 | Ensure that the operational plan includes elements such as the training programme, the deployment of staff and the procedures for when more than 26 children attend the setting. |
| 2 | Compile an action-plan that sets out the strategies to ensure there are sufficient qualified staff on duty at all times, including any contingency plans. |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup provides children with worthwhile learning opportunities within a community setting. The provision is acceptable and of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals, and in the areas of social, language and creative development, they are making very good progress.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Overall, staff have a satisfactory understanding of the early learning goals and all staff contribute to the planning process but most plans relate to craft-work. Although generally a full range of activities are provided, the lack of detailed planning, for physical play and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, mean that children do not benefit from these activities as much as they might.

Children's key workers regularly assess children's progress but the system is not used consistently by all staff. Most assessments are not dated or used directly to inform planning. However, staff know children well and provide suitable activities to meet their stage of development. Staff place an appropriate emphasis on engaging children in conversation to improve their social and language skills.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee's strong leadership ensures that all the group's operations are conducted on a professional basis. There are regular staff meetings and staff report on a good liaison programme with local schools. At the moment, there is no clear guidance for staff on the assessment system which means no-one holds an overview of its effectiveness.

Partnership with parents is very good. Informal interaction with parents provides staff with information that helps them further children's learning and parents become involved by providing items for the 'sounds' table. Parents can see children's progress records at any time and when their children leave, staff provide parents with a record of transfer during an individual interview.

What is being done well?

- The book corner has been changed and now provides a cosy and welcoming area complete with cushions. The screening used enables children to browse through books uninterrupted by more boisterous play. Staff are aware of the importance of stimulating children's interest in books and spend time reading to children in the book corner.
- The calm and warm atmosphere and friendly staff help children to develop good social skills. Children are learning to choose resources, share, be independent and to take care of their personal needs.
- Staff know all children well and their patient interaction has a positive impact

on children's attitudes and behaviour. Children are encouraged to value themselves and each other and the staff act as good role-models by offering frequent praise and encouragement.

What needs to be improved?

- the breadth of the planning across all six areas of learning
- the effectiveness of the system used to assess children's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last education report in 2001, two points for consideration were raised. Progress on both these points has been very good.

The first point related to the provision of more opportunities for children to recognise their name. Children identify their name from a 'name-tree' in the entrance hall and then 'post' it in a toy letter box. They recognise their name on their pegs, on the snack table and are asked to find their own named file on the writing table.

The second point concerned the children's independent use of books. This point has been well met and this is evidenced in the 'What is being done well' section of the report.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested in the activities provided and show confidence and good concentration in both structured and free-play sessions. The group follows familiar routines and children develop independence as they help tidy up, give out cups, pour their own drinks and get changed for P.E.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children interact and talk to each other and other adults with animation and interest. Children receive good opportunities for mark-making and the more able children can write recognisable letters and words. Children are beginning to link sounds and letters and many can recognise their own names. With staff encouragement, children delight in trying out new words; on the day of the inspection, a child described hand painting as 'slippery, slimey and squidgy'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn about number, shape and size through a number of everyday activities, such as games like dominoes, puzzles and craft-work. Many children know the sequence from 1-10 through opportunities to play with large felt numbers, work-sheets and counting rhymes like '5 Little Monkeys'. The opportunities to learn about volume and capacity through sand and water play are limited through lack of use as it is not allowed inside the hall.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children gain an understanding of science through using resources like magnifying glasses and magnets. They have opportunities to design and build and learn about the wider world through topic-work. An interesting range of visitors, including police officers, give children a taste of the outside community. Children do not have the use of a computer, although there are some programmeable toys and there are limited opportunities to investigate objects and identify features of living things.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and enjoy exercising their bodies when they practise for sports day and engage in P.E. sessions. Older children have access to physical play in the adjacent adventure playground and are able to use the school grounds and swimming pool with parental supervision. Children show careful control when they use brushes, pens and scissors. The lack of detailed planning for gross motor development means some children do not develop as fully as they might.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
|------------|-----------|

Children enjoy playing ring games and are familiar with a range of rhymes and songs. They are able to express their feelings through a range of interesting role-play situations such as a builder's work-shop and through uninterrupted periods of free-play. Children learn about colour and texture when they enjoy the feel of hand-painting or use fabric paint to design flags for sports day.

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

- extend planning across all six areas of learning including:
 - (i) physical play
 - (ii) the opportunities to investigate objects and materials and identify features of living things
- monitor the effectiveness of the assessment system by ensuring that:
 - (i) records of formative assessment are dated and used to inform future planning
 - (ii) staff receive sufficient and consistent guidance.

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.