



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 129361

DfES Number: 530664

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	19/01/2005
Inspector Name	Jane Mount

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Leverstock Green Playgroup
Setting Address	Village Hall Leverstock Green Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 8QG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Leverstock Green Playgroup 1102037
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Leverstock Green Playgroup
Address	Village Hall Leverstock Green Road Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 8QG

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

Leverstock Green Playgroup opened in 1974 and operates from the Village Hall, Leverstock Green. They have the use of a large hall, toilets, kitchen facilities and a fully enclosed outside area. The playgroup serves the local and wider area.

There are currently 40 children from 2 years 6 months to 4 years on roll. This includes 24 funded 3 year olds and 0 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs or who have English as an additional language.

The group opens Tuesday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:00 noon.

3 part time and 4 full time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Leverstock Green Playgroup provides good care for children.

A welcoming, secure environment is provided that allows young children to develop and learn through play. The children's play is supported well by staff. Planned activities are organised to promote children's learning and provide a stimulating atmosphere. Resources are easily accessible and in good condition. Toys, equipment and materials are appropriate to the children's developmental stages and reflect positive images of culture, religion, gender and disability.

High priority is given to keeping the children safe with effective systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Good hygiene is promoted through a clear health and safety policy which staff implement well. The dietary needs of the children are met well with the children taking an active role in snack time.

Records, policies and procedures are generally well organised and clear procedures

are in place to ensure all staff have a consistent approach to their work with regular staff meetings. Staff development is also prioritised.

There is an effective keyworker system which enables staff to establish strong relationships with children and their parents. Information is shared regularly and parents are kept well informed of their child's progress. The individual needs of the children are met through a familiar routine and structure. Each child is treated as an individual and staff communicate well with the children. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged and any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with in a consistent manner. Staff are good role models.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to extend information given to new parents and to devise a procedure for parent complaints. A new brochure has been produced and is sent to parents prior to their child starting at playgroup and a written complaints procedure is now in place and available to all parents.

The provider also agreed to ensure the playgroup was inaccessible to unwanted visitors and to ensure procedures for children washing their hands was in line with Environmental Health recommendations. Effective procedures are now in place for visitors wishing to enter the playgroup and the provider has sought advice from Environmental Health regarding hand washing procedures and the children now use soap when washing their hands.

What is being done well?

- Staff promote the children's awareness of safety both in and outside the playgroup through discussion and practical activities. Children are supervised well at all times and staff are familiar with safety policies and procedures, for example, signs have been devised to show children when the climbing frame is in use. All children are aware of the meaning of the signs and share the information with new children.
- Staff are well informed and carry out hygiene practices effectively. There are clear procedures in place which all staff follow and children are also encouraged to follow through example, such as, hand washing and cleaning the tables before and after snack time.
- Staff have built up strong relationships with the children. They are interested in what the children do and say. They talk and listen to them asking them questions to make them think, for example, at snack time, staff sit with the children encouraging and extending children's conversation skills.
- Staff promote a friendly, warm and inviting atmosphere through meeting and greeting children and parents on arrival and departure. Staff work in close partnership with parents and information is shared regularly. An effective keyworker system is in place.
- Staff are very good role models. Children know what is expected of them with regard to turn taking and sharing. They are supported by staff who praise,

encourage and value their good behaviour.

What needs to be improved?

- recording procedures for fire drills.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since 1 April 2004, Ofsted has not received any complaints about this provider.

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
6	Ensure a written record is maintained of fire drills including an evaluation of each emergency practise.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Leverstock Green Playgroup is of high quality overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They achieve high standards of interaction with the children. Staff encourage the children's development and personal independence and teach the children to use their imagination by expanding their learning within a wide range of resources and worthwhile activities. This in turn contributes to the children making good progress in all areas of learning. Children behave well and staff consistently use praise and encouragement.

Planning and assessment within the nursery is very good. Observation and assessment is effectively used to track children's progress in relation to the stepping stones and this information informs future planning. Effective strategies are in place to assist children with special educational needs. However, there are few strategies to support children with English as an additional language.

Leadership and management are very good. The playgroup benefits from a dedicated and committed staff team who work closely together ensuring the needs of the children are met. They have their own effective monitoring and evaluation process which enhances the overall quality of care and education that is provided to the children. Staff are committed to training and professional development.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are given good information about their children's progress and the Foundation Stage, which is reflected in the comments on the parent questionnaires. They are kept well informed about forthcoming events through notices and newsletters. Topic information sheets allow parents to be involved and support their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- The use of staff, resources and space is effective. High quality equipment and toys are in place to promote and challenge the children in all areas of learning. The use of the role play area is good. The children enjoyed wrapping large parcels in the post office, using scissors and tape. They took great delight in writing their postcards, sticking on stamps and taking them to the village post-box to post.
- Children are confident speakers. They use language to express themselves and interact with other children and adults. Staff encourage the children's language skills by asking open ended questions and giving children time to discuss, particularly at snack time and also at circle time when children bring in items of interest from home and are encouraged to discuss them with their

peers.

- Children's curiosity and imagination are skilfully developed as they explore an interesting range of activities available to them, such as role play and creative play. They work and play independently and are well supported by staff. e.g. the children were completely engrossed in the mice in the box glove puppet. Children were able to stroke and talk to the mice and then all joined in with counting songs involving mice etc.
- Staff ensure children have the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the world through discussion, free accessibility to resources and to regularly explore the local environment and community. Children often go on outings to the local shops in small groups. e.g. to visit the greengrocers to buy apples for snack time.

What needs to be improved?

- clearer procedures for supporting children with English as an additional language.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Mathematical development has improved through the provision of more activities and displays which enable children to recognise and write numbers and staff regularly reinforce this. Children's literacy skills have been developed through providing more opportunities for children to write informally throughout their play. Resources to reflect technology have now been increased so children can regularly experience programmable toys in their play through the provision of a computer, a tape player and story tapes and some wind up and remote control toys.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and settled in their environment and participate enthusiastically in activities. They form good relationships with adults and peers and are confident to initiate conversation and speak out in a familiar group. Children display a high level of involvement during free play and planned sessions. They show increasing independence in selecting resources and carrying out activities. Children are very aware of the boundaries and show respect and concern for others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children listen attentively and respond with enjoyment to stories, songs and rhymes. They are keen to communicate and can recall events, answer questions and make requests. Children have regular opportunities to write, using a variety of materials and equipment. e.g. when engaged in role play in the post office. Reading materials are easily accessible and children independently choose to look at books. Children are encouraged to link sounds to letters and recognise their names at snack time.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children regularly use numbers and counting during practical activities e.g. counting how many children are at registration. They are beginning to recognise and identify numbers and understand bigger and smaller. Children are able to describe shapes and size and they use positioning words such as behind, in front, beside and next to in their every day play. e.g. when they construct with bricks and negotiate their bikes outside.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children select independently from a wide range of resources and tools and use a variety of techniques to shape, assemble and join materials. Children respond to questions from adults to extend their exploratory and observation skills. They use a varied range of technological resources in their play. e.g. a computer, story tapes, calculators etc. Children are confident with equipment and able to explain to others what they are doing. The local area is well utilised by the playgroup.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Many opportunities exist for children to use a range of equipment inside and outdoors to develop large motor and fine manipulative skills. Children are able to move confidently and with control. They move around furniture, play areas and use equipment showing an awareness of space and of other people. Children use tools and materials such as scissors, writing equipment, malleable materials with increasing control and accuracy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have good opportunities to explore colour, shape, texture and form using paints, clay, dough and sand. Children use their imagination in role play, small world and art and craft activities. They engage with each other and adults to communicate their ideas and they use props to extend their play. Children sing simple songs from memory and are given opportunities to explore sounds during practical activities.	
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:
- develop more strategies to support children with English as an additional language.

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.