



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101573

DfES Number: 522074

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 12/05/2004
Inspector Name Angela Cole

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Northway Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Playgroup Building
Northway Infants School, Virginia Road, Tewkesbury
Glos
GL20 8PT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Northway Pre-School Playgroup 1003986

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Northway Pre-School Playgroup
Address Playgroup Building
Northway Infants School, Virginia Road, Tewkesbury
Glos
GL20 8PT

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

Northway Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1973 as a charity run by a voluntary committee. Northway is on the outskirts of Tewkesbury and has many local amenities. The group meets in its own large, open-plan building sited in the grounds of the infants school. The playgroup building has an entrance hall, two main play areas, toilets and kitchen. The group also has the use of the school hall, blue room, playground and outside areas. Most children live locally in this expanding suburb of Tewkesbury.

There are currently 45 children from two years to under five years on roll. This includes 13 funded three-year-olds and 32 funded four-year-olds. Two children have special needs. No children speak English as an additional language. The playgroup is open for eight sessions per week from 09.00 to 12.00 and 13.00 to 15.00. Some sessions are for older pre-school children only. Children aged from two-years-nine months to five years are accepted. Younger children may attend at the discretion of the management and staff. Most attend two or three sessions per week, with pre-schoolers staying for lunch later in the year.

Three full-time and one part-time staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications. Rota parents provide additional help. Support is received from infant school staff and the advisors from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Northway Pre-school Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The playleader is highly experienced and there are sound arrangements for vetting all those with sole care of children. The setting is very organised and the operational plan works smoothly to benefit the children. The staff's training needs are well supported, though induction of new staff is carried out informally. All documents and records required for the children's care are well maintained and kept confidential. They are accessible and yet stored securely. The clean, well maintained premises provide an excellent, welcoming environment for children. The group is fully

equipped with high quality furniture and ample toys that include many positive images of various cultures and people with different abilities.

The playgroup is safe for children and the premises are secure. Staff show excellent vigilance both indoors and outdoors to keep children safe within the setting and on outings. They have current child protection training. The setting is clean and children learn good hygiene practices including regular hand washing. All arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements. Staff always act in the children's best interests if they become ill. Drinks are available throughout the session and nutritious snacks are served with good awareness of any dietary needs.

Children's individual care, learning and play needs are particularly well considered. Staff care for each child through detailed planning of stimulating activities to help them progress in all areas of their development. Those with special needs are fully supported by good liaison with parents and outside agencies. There are excellent, consistent methods to manage children's behaviour that focus on encouragement and praise.

A strong relationship is formed with families. Parents are regularly consulted regarding their child's care. They are very well informed about the group and the children's play.

What has improved since the last inspection?

After the last inspection, the setting agreed to write statements for child protection and outings and to consider how to ensure the person in charge has, at least, a level three qualification. The children are now safer as detailed policies for child protection and procedures for outings are included in the policy document to be followed at the appropriate times. The playgroup has considered staff training and set out an action plan detailing how the group intends to ensure that the person in charge has at least a level 3 qualification within a given timescale. The experienced playleader is currently working towards such a qualification.

What is being done well?

- The attractive premises are spacious with well planned and highly resourced areas for different aspects of play. There are very good storage arrangements that are clearly labelled. Staff make good use of the existing outdoor facilities, including the sensory garden, and are looking to extend and use them simultaneously with those indoors.
- A very good balance of toys and equipment for each area of development is available each session. Children are highly stimulated and fully challenged by the toys, including well resourced areas such as safari play with wood slices, the 'office' and 'garden centre'. Much indoor storage is accessible to children so they can be independent in choosing and returning their play materials.
- The playgroup is safe for all children and staff follow all health and safety requirements. They know their responsibilities for fire safety in detail. The premises are secure, and access to the playgroup is highly monitored to keep

all children safe.

- Staff have clear expectations of appropriate behaviour and the children respond well to these. Strategies are shared in full with parents in the welcome booklet.
- Parents and children are enthusiastically welcomed by staff. They are closely consulted regarding the children's care and kept well informed about the playgroup and their child's development. Shared information is kept confidential at all times.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The children's care, learning and play are outstanding. Children are highly involved in a stimulating and balanced range of activities each session. They choose their activities for much of the time and enjoy their play. The adults are fully involved with the children, talking with them and skilfully extending their learning. The staff respond enthusiastically to what the children do and say. They regularly record their observations to help them effectively plan the future emphasis and activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the induction process for new staff.

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	Give further consideration to induction training that informs staff about the way the setting operates and how they fit in.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The nursery education provided is very good. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals (elgs) in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have an effective knowledge of the elgs and stepping stones. This is shown in highly detailed planning for groups and individuals based on effective assessment of children's progress. Excellent methods are used to teach both three and four-year-olds, including key groups. There is free access to the wide range of interesting equipment offered and a good balance between familiar and new activities. Adults interact very effectively with children as they learn through playing, they ask challenging questions and making good use of spontaneous learning opportunities. The support for children with special educational needs is caring and conscientious. The management of children and their behaviour is outstanding through well considered routines and continuous encouragement.

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership is excellent with much sharing of clear aims, nurturing of adults and sharing of responsibilities. Staff are continuously monitoring the group's strengths and weaknesses in order to improve the educational provision. The highest possible commitment is given by all who support the children. This is shown through in-depth planning and the breadth of vision regarding future development, including consideration of outdoor facilities.

The partnership with parents is very good. Families receive interesting information about the group and the educational programme, for example, in a detailed welcome booklet. Parents are very well informed of their child's progress and activities, and regularly share their knowledge about them. Families are most effectively drawn into the life of the playgroup and their child's learning. They are involved through capable management, valuable rota help, intense fundraising and by the enthusiastic welcome from staff.

What is being done well?

- Excellent care and consideration are shown in settling each child so they have confidence to make full use of the high quality facilities of the playgroup. Children are encouraged to make choices and become independent learners as they access the wide range of well resourced activities available.
- Children are fully supported to make very good progress in all six areas of learning. The balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities is highly appropriate so children enjoy their learning, are enthusiastic and persevere in their play.
- Planning for the progress and extension of children's learning is extremely well considered. For example, in younger groups children are introduced to

registration routines in the most appropriate ways for their concentration and understanding. These routines are then developed for older children so they are still interested and even further challenged. Children of all ages are fully challenged to extend their skills and learning, and their progress is recorded in detail.

- The high standard of teaching is most effectively upheld by playleader's infectious enthusiasm and the commitment of all the staff towards each child and working in strong partnership with the families.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of outdoor opportunities for children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Staff have made very good progress in implementing the action plan developed in response to points of consideration in the previous inspection. Staff have addressed the weakness in the quality of teaching concerning their knowledge of the elgs and assessment procedures. Staff have developed their understanding of the early learning goals (elgs) through training and use in planning and on records of children's achievements. They now link the assessment of children's progress to the elgs and appropriate stepping stones. The improvements made have had a positive impact on children's learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children settle well and are fully involved in their chosen play. They gain good self esteem, showing feelings such as getting excited when the electricity goes off. Children have excellent relationships with adults, fostered in part by the good use of humour. They play well together, take turns and remind others to share things. All children are well behaved and show concern for others. They confidently select their own activities and toys and are independent.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children gain very good listening and speaking skills through much conversation and negotiating with friends. Excellent use of language helps develop their own stories and ideas. They are keen to look at books and talk about the pictures. They enjoy rhymes and confidently use letter sounds learnt each week. Lots of words are displayed and children recognise their names and other words. They are keen to use 'writing' for specific purposes, for example to neatly name their own work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show outstanding use of numbers in play, such as giving 1p change for 10p. Each session, they count adults and quickly recognise the related numeral from a ceiling mobile. They are fully challenged to solve practical problems. They accurately compare numbers of objects and are able to grasp the idea of 'one more/less' through practical activities, including dice games and number songs. Children effectively learn shape, space and measures through topics and spontaneous play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have very good opportunities to investigate and talk about the world around them. For example, they help create the sensory garden, record weather, keep snails and celebrate many festivals. Children gain a very good sense of time, for from the known routines and repeated use of a height chart. They make their own designs from a wide range of resources, including recycled and construction materials. Excellent mouse control develops through daily use of interesting computer programs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move imaginatively to actions songs and music, sometimes using scarves. They confidently use the spacious premises and take care in confined spaces. They are challenged to balance on logs and the climbing frame net. Children show very good control of many wheeled toys, including wagons and shared ride-ons. They practise almost daily with small physical toys, such as balls. Very good skills are shown with a wide range of small tools, for painting and pouring.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Creativity using all the senses is highly valued in this group. There is very good exploration of a wide range of media and materials in two and three dimensions. For example, children mix their own paint colours, handle black peat and search for hidden treasure in sand. They make music enthusiastically through singing and sensitive playing of instruments. Very good use of imagination is shown in art, movement, storytelling and in outstanding, sustained role-play in their 'garden centre'.

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:
- continue to develop outdoor learning opportunities for children.

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.