



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220218

DfES Number: 583242

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 03/02/2003
Inspector Name Janina Helen Clarke-Potter

SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name Muddy Boots Playgroup
Setting Address Walgrave School
Walgrave
Northamptonshire
NN6 9HP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Vera Smith

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name
Address

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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
Muddy Boots Playgroup operates from a small self-contained building in the grounds of Walgrave primary school. The playgroup serves the local community which is predominantly English speaking. The playgroup is registered to provide 13 places for children between two years and five years. There are currently 30 children on roll, this includes six funded four year olds and eight funded three year olds at present. The playgroup receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Partnership and is affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. There are no children currently attending who have special educational needs or whose first language is not English. The playgroup opens five mornings and two afternoons a week during school term time. Morning sessions take place from 09:00 to 11:45am on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; 9:00am to 12:30 on Tuesday and from 12:30 to 15:00pm on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. There is one full-time member of staff who attends every session and two part-time staff who work with the children. One member of staff is working towards an NVQ in Childcare and Education at level III, and two are working towards level II. No other childcare services are provided on the premises.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Muddy Boots Playgroup offers a stimulating learning environment where overall children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. As a result of the high ratio of adults to children and the positive relationships that adults have developed with the children they make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children make generally good progress in communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative and physical development. The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff provide a wide range of interesting activities for the children and join in to support children in their learning. Staff generally have a good understanding of the early learning goals but there are weaknesses in the written plans for some areas of the curriculum.. Adults observe and record children's progress, but do not yet use these observations to build on individual children's learning. They do not always provide sufficient challenge to extend more able children's progress towards the early learning goals. The playgroup is well managed. The committee and staff work well together to provide an effective partnership which underpins the progress children make towards the early learning goals. There are effective strategies in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education which has resulted in very good progress in implementing the action plan from the last inspection. The partnership with parents is generally good. Good relationships have been established with parents. Parents are fully involved in running the playgroup by being involved on the committee and by fund raising. The playgroup has developed a home link scheme which actively encourages parents to become involved with their children's learning.

What is being done well?

children are making very good relationships with other children, learning to share and understand simple rules such as sitting down with a drink at snack time. children are learning to value their own culture and beliefs, by celebrating Christmas and birthdays; they are also learning to respect other cultures by learning about their traditions through interesting topic based activities such as Chinese New Year. the staff have established good relationships with parents. Parents are fully involved in the running of the group. They are well informed about the playgroup and encouraged to become involved with their children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

opportunities for children to attempt writing for different purposes e.g. to write their names on their paintings, to build on existing skills. opportunities for children to build on and extend their understanding of number; for example by asking them to work out more difficult sums, or see numbers written down. written plans to ensure they include all areas of learning linked to the early learning goals (particularly the use of

information and communication technology and designing and constructing using a wide range of objects, tools and materials). written plans to identify what children are expected to learn. the use of observation and assessment records to plan for children's future learning and development. More frequent challenges to extend more able children's progress towards the early learning goals, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development .

What has improved since the last inspection?

Progress in responding to previous key issues has been very good. Staff have made good progress in understanding the early learning goals, and have attended training in the foundation stage. They have developed long, medium and short term planning procedures which generally cover all six areas of learning, although there are minor weaknesses in planning some areas such as developing ICT skills and designing and making skills. They also need to further develop their short term plans to make it clear what they expect children to learn. Good progress has been made in developing a system for observing and recording what children do. Further development is needed to use this assessment to plan for children's future learning. Progress has been very good in developing strategies for all staff to consistently deal with challenging behaviour and be fully involved in children's learning. They have devised a new behaviour management policy, with which all staff are familiar. They move around the room more during free play sessions and work with small groups of children. Staff were seen to act as good role models in the way they speak to each other and the children and are consistent in applying rules. Very good progress has been made in providing parents with more opportunities to be informed of their child's progress and to be able to share observations of their child's learning. The playgroup held a parent evening/afternoon last July which was well received. All parents have received a copy of the leaflet about the foundation stage. All parents have had a letter informing them that they may look at their child's records of achievements at any time, and these are sent home for parents to look at once or twice a year. They also have developed a home link book where parents can help their child with simple work sheets to record the child's favourite food or practise a hand/eye co-ordination activity.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children make good relationships with other children, learn to share and understand simple rules such as sitting down with a drink at snack time. Children learn to value their own culture and beliefs, and learn about other cultures and their traditions. Children start to develop some independence skills such as washing their hands and helping to tidy toys away, but do not extend these to doing up their own coats for example.	

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children enjoy a wide range of books, handle books carefully and know that print carries meaning. They are learning to speak clearly and with confidence at circle time, and to listen attentively to what adults and other children are saying. Children are learning that there are different ways of communicating, for example by the use of simple sign language for "biscuit" and "raisin" at snack time. Children do not regularly attempt writing for different purposes.	

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children frequently use numbers in everyday situations and show that they understand simple sums. They learn to use the correct mathematical language such as half, quarter, bigger and biggest. Children do not often see numbers written down or work out more difficult sums in order to support their learning in this area.	

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children learn about their own culture and beliefs when taking part in celebrating birthdays and Christmas, and also learn to understand other cultures and beliefs; for instance when listening to the story of the Chinese dragon and performing the dragon dance. Children make good use of the computer, but plans do not show that children are developing their ICT skills. Children do not regularly design and construct using a wide range of objects, tools and materials.	

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children make good use of large equipment such as the climbing frame and slide to develop large movements and show increasing control over their bodies when taking part in balancing and movement games and songs. They show increasing control in handling small equipment such as crayons and rolling pins that develop small muscle movement. More able children do not extend these skills in everyday situations such as pouring their drinks at snack time for example.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
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Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore colour and shape when painting, and select their own resources to make a card for someone they love. They learn to use their imagination and engage in well prepared role play activities. Children explore making sounds with musical instruments and enjoy moving to music, as in the dancing dragon.
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Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately:	Y
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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

Key Issues: Continue to develop the planning of activities to ensure that all areas of the early learning goals are covered (particularly the use of information and communication technology and design and construction) and that the plans clearly identify what children are expected to learn. The written plans for the role of the adult should support what children are expected to learn. Continue to develop the system for observing and recording children's progress in order to build on children's existing knowledge and skills and to plan for children's future learning and development. Provide more frequent challenges for older and more able to children to extend their progress towards the early learning goals, particularly in developing early reading and writing skills and mathematical calculation.