



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113799

DfES Number: 511291

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 26/04/2004
Inspector Name Joanne Aram

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Toybox Playgroup
Setting Address Wakehams Green Community Centre
Heathfield, Pound Hill
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Toybox Playgroup 1038244

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Toybox Playgroup
Address Wakehams Green Community Centre
Wakehams Green Drive, Heathfield, Pound Hill
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 3NU

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

Toybox Playgroup is an established group in a residential area of Pound Hill which operates from a Community Centre, adjacent is an enclosed play area.

The group is run by a management committee made up entirely of parents. The children come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds, and the majority live locally.

The Playgroup opens Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 12 noon, term time only. Up to 24 children aged 3 to 5 years attend. The playgoup is in receipt of nursery education funding.

There are no funded children who have been identified with special educational needs, no children use English as an additional language.

There are seven members of staff. Two of the staff have relevant qualifications and other staff have various training experience.

The group works closely with the Early Years Partnership.

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 Toybox Playgroup is acceptable and is of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are making generally good progress in personal social and emotional development and very good progress in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff use good strategies to encourage learning. A wide range of well resourced activities are planned for both indoor and outside. Plans state what children are expected to learn from activities. On occasions, during large group activities some children lack concentration and are not grouped appropriately so do not benefit fully from the activity. Resources are not always well treated so are not available for others. Staff observe children regularly and record their progress in detail. Individual children's next steps for learning are not always identified and used in planning which results in a lack of challenge for some children and support for children with special educational need or English as an additional language (when present).

Leadership and management is generally good. The supervisor shows good leadership and the staff work well as a team. Regular staff meetings are held and time preparing and clearing the hall is used to full advantage for evaluation and to cascade training attended. Evaluations are rarely recorded. Staff appraisals identify individual training needs and the strong commitment to training impacts positively on children's learning.

The partnership with parents is very good. This has a positive effect on learning. Parents receive useful information about the educational provision. They share information about their children's progress daily and at 'Open Afternoons'. They provide useful information initially using an 'About Me' booklet. Parents are given good opportunities to be involved in their child's learning by being well informed of topics and sharing books taken home.

What is being done well?

- Children are keen to try activities and often initiate their own, such as a role play scenario based on a space ship, choosing resources well and showing confidence and self esteem as they talk about these activities.
- Children use their own writing systems to show that they are aware of many purposes of writing, especially based on an office, a shop and a café.
- Children count well in practical situations as at registration using numbers over twenty and counting boys and girls separately as well as the whole group.

- Children are developing good observation and recording skills as in the New Life topic when they observe and draw caterpillars, cocoons and butterflies and the Jack and the Beanstalk topic when they make a collage to retell the story and grow beans which they measure and draw at different times as they grow.
- Children are developing very good manual dexterity and are particularly adept at making models choosing the materials and tools they use most appropriately.
- Children demonstrate good imagination especially in initiating and also extending role play scenarios, like extending the café and kitchen scenario with a bus ride to get there.

What needs to be improved?

- children's listening skills in large group situations, such as registration time, when children are holding their own conversations rather than paying attention to the staff member.
- treatment of resources so that activities are still available for other children later in the session rather than scattered on the floor;
- respect for other children's efforts, rather than destroyed like the tower of matched boxes and lids completed and piled up by one child to be immediately destroyed by another;
- identification of all children's next steps for learning and their use to arrange appropriate groupings for children in plans to ensure that children are well supported and appropriately challenged to make maximum progress and fulfil their potential for learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection has been generally good.

As a result of the last inspection the setting was required to state in plans what the children should learn from the activities and how they should be grouped. The setting was also to develop more detailed systems for assessing children's achievements and progress.

Staff were to provide more opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the past; to record their observations and when funds permitted they were to increase resources so that children could experience information technology.

The staff has changed since the last inspection and the action plan handed on was not from the last inspection. However planning now states what children are expected to learn from activities. This means that staff can focus on the learning intentions and children's activity is directed towards the achievement of the intended outcomes. However children are still not grouped according to need but have free choice of activity which means they do not necessarily partake in activities

appropriate to their needs.

Systems for assessing children's achievements and progress have been improved by the adoption of the West Sussex profiling system. Observations are made regularly and recorded by key workers and the child's stage in each area of learning highlighted. This would have considerably enhanced the children's learning if the children's next steps had been identified and used in planning for individuals but this has not happened. The improved system has enhanced key workers' awareness of children's stages of development but the potential benefits have not been used to fullest effect in planning.

Children are now developing a good sense of time. They are making interesting recordings of their observations of plants growing and caterpillars changing to butterflies. They use a computer and a communication box well to further their learning by matching items and words and listening to tapes.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children settle quickly and eagerly at an activity of their choice. They show appropriate confidence and self esteem when describing their activity. They work well in most groupings co-operatively, like a pair in the café kitchen and take turns and share appropriately. They are independent in self-care and can select resources and initiate activities well. Some children however lack concentration in large group times and they do not always treat resources with appropriate care and respect.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy stories like 'Gruffalo' making suggestions as to what next... and also rhymes especially with actions. They talk animatedly about their activities, especially spaceship role play. They recognise letters by shape and sound and match words with rhyming endings on the computer. Many write their own names successfully and some can spell them out orally. Children use their own writing systems especially in role play scenarios like the office, café and shop.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count well in practical situations as at registration, recognising numbers one to nine and often above. Children have good mathematical vocabulary. They can relate to more and less as they try to balance coloured elephants which they count into a scale. They recognise smaller and taller as they measure their bean plants when they show that they can measure and record their findings. Children can talk about, recognise and repeat patterns which they make with coloured links and elephants

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing good observation and recording skills, recognising similarities, differences and changes as in the 'New Life' topic. They are adept at building models like a pirate ship using a range of materials and tools. A computer is used appropriately to develop learning in other areas. Children are developing a good sense of time and becoming knowledgeable about their environment. Children know about other cultures and beliefs sometimes from their peers in this multi ethnic group.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move with skill, confidence, safety and often imaginatively, travelling under, over and around equipment, climbing and balancing well on resources in the adjacent playground. They use large and small equipment well to develop throwing, catching and aiming skills. Children show an awareness of the need for hats and cream in the sun and the effect of exercise on their bodies. Children demonstrate good manual dexterity using a wide variety of materials and tools especially in model making.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore a wide variety of materials, colours, textures and tools to create their art works, like collages of stories read. Children enjoy singing rhymes and songs with appropriate actions like 'Little caterpillar'. They explore sound by hitting suspended tubes of varying length and items of different materials. They show especially good imagination in role play scenarios sometimes initiating their own for which they make their own resources like the control panel of a space ship.

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

- continue to develop the profiling system to identify individual children's next steps in their for learning and develop the use of the identified next steps for learning in planning so that appropriate learning objectives and children's groupings ensure all children are appropriately supported and challenged in their learning;
- develop teaching strategies to ensure the attention of all children in large group situations and to ensure the careful treatment of resources so that activities remain available to all 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.