



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127103

DfES Number: 583271

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/03/2004
Inspector Name Malini Parmar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Chislet And District Playgroup
Setting Address Village Hall
Hoath
Canterbury
Kent
CT3 4LA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Chislet & District Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Chislet & District Playgroup
Address Village Hall
Hoath
Canterbury
Kent
CT3 4LA

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

Chislet and District Playgroup has been established since 1975, when it opened as a committee run playgroup. The playgroup is still run by a parents committee to which all parents and carers are invited to take part. The playgroup operates from the Hoath Village Hall, in Hoath village near Canterbury. The playgroup caters for local children from the surrounding communities.

Children have access to a main play hall, toilets and a newly refurbished garden. The group are allocated an amount of wall space to display examples of the children's work. Staff set up and clear away at the end of each session.

The playgroup is open for 3 mornings a week - Monday, Thursday and Friday, from 09.00 to 12.00 during term times. There are a total of 25 children on roll. There are currently 2 funded 4-year-old children and 3 funded 3-year-olds. None of the funded children are identified as having special educational needs or have English as a second language.

There are four staff who work with the children; three are qualified and one is working towards a childcare qualification.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Chislet & District Playgroup, provide a caring and welcoming environment for children. The educational provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff provide some worthwhile activities and work positively with children, encouraging them to be confident and raising their self-esteem through praise. The outdoor area is used well to stimulate children's interest in the natural world. However, the staff's lack of knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage does not ensure children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Planning is evolving; staff plan activities for the 'free-play' session and do so by listing activities on a flexible three-week rota. However the activities are not clearly related to the six areas of learning and do not accurately reflect what children are expected to learn, the intended focus of learning, or how staff will differentiate to develop individual children's progress. Systems for using observations of children's involvement in activities to identify what children need to learn next and to inform the planning are not fully implemented. This uncoordinated approach often leads to more able children being presented with insufficient challenges. The routine and pace of the sessions, does not successfully retain children's motivation and interest, as children spend too long in whole group situations. There are systems in place to support children with special educational needs.

Leadership and management has significant weaknesses. Staff work positively together and have regular training opportunities. Procedures to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the playgroup practice are not yet fully developed.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are happy with the provision. They receive regular information via newsletters and are invited to participate. Opportunities to learn about progress are limited.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a caring, welcoming and safe environment; in which the children are happy, secure and settled, to ensure a firm base for progress.
- Staff work positively with children and they encourage them to be confident and promote self-esteem through consistently offering praise.
- The outdoor area is used well to stimulate children's interest in the natural world. Children benefit from and clearly enjoy exploring wood lice, examining shoots and roots and watering their plants. The indoor nature table supports the children's learning in this area well and children frequently visit it.
- Staff consistently use mathematical language to describe shape, position, quantity and size.

- Children have access to a good selection of age and stage related books and use them well.
- Children speak clearly and confidently as they engage both adults and their friends in conversation.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, to plan and implement a coordinated programme of daily activities
- the effective use of assessment to identify children's next steps; in order to inform the planning
- opportunities for parents to learn more about their children's attainment and progress within the six areas of learning
- challenges for more able children
- the routine and pace of the sessions, to reduce the length of time children spend waiting in whole group activities; in order to retain motivation and interest, and opportunities for children to consistently increase their independence.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report, but a number of points for development were noted. The group agreed to provide regular assessments of the children's attainment and progress and ensure that the policy for children with special educational needs was available to all staff, along with all other policies, by way of an updated prospectus.

The group have made some progress towards these. They have recently revised all existing policies and procedures in the form of a prospectus and all parents receive a copy. However, taken overall the group have made limited progress and they are still working towards regularly assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals to inform the planning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident and secure. Children persevere in chosen activities for example watering plants. Firm relationships are established as children learn to share, take turns and work co-operatively. They have inconsistent opportunities to develop their independence. The pace of the routine does not consistently retain interest and children become restless and bored as they wait for their turn in the whole group times. Occasionally, challenges set for more able children are insufficient.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate effectively and clearly, making conversation with friends and adults alike. They have daily opportunities for song. Children enjoy looking at books and use them well. They receive insufficient opportunities to select their names. There are insufficient opportunities for children to link sounds and letters through planned practical activities. Children enjoy making marks but they receive inconsistent opportunities to write for a variety of purpose.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children count confidently for example at registration. They benefit from the consistent use of mathematical language and receive useful support to recognise shapes and sizes. They learn about space and measure through practical activities such as sand and water. Children have insufficient opportunities to be aware of simple ideas of addition and subtraction through practical activities. The lack of effective planning and assessment does not ensure children's progress within this area.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

The outdoor area is used well to stimulate children's interest in the natural world. Children enthusiastically explore ants and wood lice in the garden using their senses. Children benefit from trips to the local farms. They clearly enjoy mixing sand and water to notice the change. Opportunities to use programmable toys are provided. However, lack of planning and use of assessments does not ensure the effectiveness of activities provided, thus it is difficult to monitor children's progress.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children move around freely and safely from area to area. They have opportunities to refine and strengthen their small and gross movements through the daily routine, for example using scissors and riding bikes. Children enjoy cutting, sticking and jumping. Opportunities to raise health and bodily awareness are missed. Lack of planning and the use of assessments do not ensure the effectiveness of opportunities provided; consequently it is difficult to monitor children's progress.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children clearly enjoy the daily opportunities for songs and role-play. They respond in a variety of ways expressing delight and disgust, to the array materials used to make their bonnets. They eagerly play with sand and water to communicate their thoughts ideas and feelings. Role-play activities are varied; they enjoy playing in the 'post office' although the quality of play varies with the amount of support they are given. Children do not receive regular opportunities for music and movement.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals in all six curriculum areas
- continue to develop effective use of observations in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning and use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities
- ensure the routine and pace of the sessions, effectively retains children's interest and motivation particularly during whole group times
- ensure challenges set for more able children are sufficient.

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.