



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 126947

DfES Number: 522619

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	10/06/2003
Inspector Name	Linda Patricia Coccia

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Abbey Playgroup
Setting Address	Vicarage Road Minster on Sea Sheerness Kent ME12 2HE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Abbey Playgroup
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Abbey Playgroup
Address	Vicarage Road Minster on Sea Sheerness Kent ME12 2HE

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

Abbey Pre-School opened in 1991. It is registered to provide care for 25 children under five years; of these, none may be under two years. Overnight care is not provided. The pre-school operates from one room in a church community hall, in Minster, Isle of Sheppey. The pre-school serves the local area.

The setting opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:15 to 12:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

There are currently 36 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 16 funded three year olds and 8 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. One child has special needs and the group supports one child who speaks English as an additional language.

Six staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications. One staff member is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The group are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

How good is the Day Care?

The pre-school provides satisfactory care for children. The staff and children have good relationships and children are happy and engaged in their play.

The day care is well organised but would benefit from an active parent committee. The staff to children ratios are good, but qualified staffing ratios are sometimes not met. Staff use a visitors book to record unvetted persons on the premises. Students on placement are never left alone with children. The environment is warm and welcoming for children and their parents. The group have a lot of indoor and outdoor space for children to use. However, this is not always used effectively.

The children are safe and well cared for. Regular emergency evacuation drills are carried out. However, there are no written fire procedures. Children are able to take

themselves to the toilet if they are able. Staff are on hand to help. The rooms are cleaned weekly by a cleaner and daily by staff. Attention needs to be paid to floor hygiene. The group has a staff member currently attending Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator training (SENCO). The group needs to provide individual play plans for those children who need them. Children and staff have very good relationships.

Activities contribute to the children's development. The group has photographic evidence of activities used by children. However, more effective planning and use of space would allow the children far more choices. All children have access to all activities, but the toys which promote equality of opportunity could be made available for use daily. The staff have effective procedures for managing children's behaviour and there is good use of praise and encouragement with children.

Staff have good relationships with parents. Policies and procedures are not readily available to parents and parents are not given the opportunity to see their child's development records on a regular basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions arising from the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- The group ensures that the premises are safe and secure for children. Children cannot leave the premises unaccompanied. The children practice evacuation procedures to enable them to leave the premises safely in an emergency. (Standards 4,6)
- The staff use positive and consistent strategies to manage children's behaviour. They give praise for good behaviour. The children are well behaved and respectful to each other and staff. (Standard 11)
- The group offers a warm and welcoming environment. Parents and children are greeted at the entrance. Children feel safe and secure. (Standard 4)
- The staff have very good relationships with children. They enjoy their company and know the children well. They spend a lot of time talking and playing with them. The children are happy and settled. (Standard 3)

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures for staff recruitment, vetting and induction; (Standard 1)
- qualifications of staff; (Standard 2)
- the use of the space; (Standard 4)
- the procedures for sharing information with parents; (Standards 3,12,14)
- risk assessments on premises, equipment and toys; (Standard 6)

- individual play plans for children with additional needs; (Standards 3,10)
- the use of toys and equipment promoting equality of opportunity; (Standard 9)
- the written permission for the taking of photographs; (Standard 12)
- the sick children procedures; (Standard 7)
- the child collection procedures; (Standard 6)

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
1	ensure that a registered committee are in place by the start of the autumn term;	15/09/2003
2	ensure a list of committee members, staff, persons living or employed on the premises, and any other person who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children, is kept on the premises;	15/09/2003
14	provide a statement of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.	15/09/2003

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
1	ensure that effective procedures for the recruiting, vetting and induction of staff are in place;
2	ensure the registration document is displayed;
2	ensure space is used effectively;
6	carry out risk assessments more frequently;
6	review child collection procedures;
7	review the sick child policy;

14	ensure all policies, procedures and child development records are shared with parents.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Abbey Playgroup offers acceptable nursery provision.

Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

Teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff are approachable and caring towards the children. A good staff to child ratio allows staff to work in small groups during focussed activities. Some activities lack challenge for more able children.

Planning has improved, although staff need to be consistent when evaluating activities and assessing the children's progress.

The group fosters good relationships with parents, who are welcomed into the setting. Parents receive information about the group and the aims and objectives. Some information needs to be updated. Parents are aware that the group holds written records on the children. Parents can access these, and discuss children's progress with their key worker.

Leadership and management has some significant weaknesses. The group plan interesting and enjoyable activities for children. However, staff training needs to be actively encouraged. The staff generally work as a team and show they are committed to caring for the children.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Children are confident and form good relationships with peers and adults.
- Children have a developing awareness of their own needs and that of others. Children show a caring attitude to others and are willing to help them.
- Most children are confident communicators. They use resources well to act out every day situations and make up stories.
- Staff are approachable for both parents and children. Staff show they are committed to caring for children.
- Staff use focussed activities to work in small groups to extend children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities to support and encourage children's independence;

- information about the group, progress and activities undertaken by the children which is shared with parents;
- outdoor play opportunities;
- the learning opportunities given at story and snack time for three and four year olds;
- the management of staff deployment so that children gain the most from all activities and experiences.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Staff have attended some training on the Early Learning Goals and Special Needs.

Planning is beginning to show how the group differentiate between the older more able children.

Children's behaviour is generally good.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children play imaginatively in everyday situations and treat their peers and other adults with respect. Children take turns and show a developing awareness of their own needs and that of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children's development in communication language and literacy has significant weaknesses. Children are becoming confident speakers. Children are given some opportunities to practise mark making and writing, although older and more able children are not always challenged sufficiently. Children with English as an additional language are not always planned for and included in activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children's mathematical development has significant weaknesses. Children are given opportunities to count up to ten and begin to recognise numerals. They learn about shape and colour through practical activities such as puzzles and shape sorting. However, limited challenges mean more able children are not given opportunities to consolidate their mathematical development in everyday situations.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make generally good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff plan interesting and exciting activities that allow children to look at other cultures and beliefs. Children are beginning to find out about themselves and others, and past and present events. A range of resources supports children's learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's progress towards physical development is generally good. Children are given opportunities to develop their large and small motor skills. They handle tools and equipment safely. Children enjoy limited opportunities to explore and develop their large motor skills outdoors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children's progress towards creative development has significant weaknesses. Role play is popular and children show they are confident in acting out everyday situations with props and appropriate language. Children have limited opportunities to develop their creative abilities through sand, water, painting and 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

- plan and extend activities to ensure older and more able children are sufficiently challenged, in all six areas of learning;
- record activity evaluations;
- ensure staff undertake training opportunities offered to them, to increase and update their knowledge;
- ensure more opportunities are given to support and encourage children's independence during toileting and snack time;
- look at staff deployment and how groups are managed during story time to ensure all children benefit and are sufficiently stimulated.

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.