



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 133597

DfES Number: 581954

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/07/2004
Inspector Name Jan Leo

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Chasewell Playgroup
Setting Address C/o Chasewell Community Centre
Avocet Way
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 9YA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Chasewell Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Chasewell Playgroup
Address Chasewell Community Centre
Avocet Way
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 9YA

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

Chasewell Playgroup opened in 1973. It operates from a community centre, which is situated close to two schools on the edge of Banbury town. The group has the use of the main hall and all the facilities and has an agreement with the neighbouring primary school to share its outdoor area. Chasewell Playgroup serves the local area of Cherwell Heights and Bodicote.

There are currently 45 children on roll, of whom 12 are funded 3 year olds and 14 are funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children with special needs attending and none who have English as a second language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30.

Four staff work with the children each day and four relief workers are employed as required. The relief staff work a Friday rota to keep up to date with operational procedures and remain familiar to the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three. The playgroup is managed by a committee of parents and is a registered charity. It receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Chasewell Playgroup provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for mathematical development is very good, and children are progressing well in this area.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team. They plan a wide range of stimulating activities linked to topics that are relevant to the children, and support children so they can develop ideas with friends. One to one support is given to those who are less confident, and to children who need extending, staff know when to intervene and when to watch from a distance. Staff have amassed a wide selection of resources but these are not used to full advantage.

The leadership and management are generally good. There have been considerable staff changes over the past year, which has reduced consistency in operational practice, and the committee have been unable to identify the main reason for these changes. They are working closely with staff to standardise procedures and raise standards, and encourage staff to continue with their personal development to increase their skills. The staff are developing good relationships with the school to enable the sharing of facilities to continue and ease the transition for children who move on.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. Mothers say they feel welcome, but fathers and carers less so. Parents and carers are encouraged to share information verbally about their children and are invited to help occasionally to learn more about the group. There are no formal procedures in place for keeping parents and carers informed about the curriculum, or their children's progress, and some of the information supplied to them is misleading. Lack of notice for special events makes it hard for parents and carers to become involved.

What is being done well?

- Mathematics is linked across all the activities and the daily routine. It is skilfully extended to reinforce children's understanding of mathematical concepts within everyday experiences.
- The children are settled well and given freedom to choose what to do. They confidently play with different groups of friends, are becoming increasingly independent and organise their own play effectively with little adult help.
- The staff work well as a team. They deploy themselves effectively to support children when necessary and help them to progress. Staff join in enthusiastically and act as good role models, building caring relationships with children to ensure they are occupied productively and enjoy their day.

- Children are given a wide range of activities and experiences linked to current events and things that are important to them. They eagerly create medals in preparation for sports day, discuss wedding plans with staff, and count children in at registration time to see if everyone has arrived.
- The committee and staff are working closely together to raise standards. They are all fully committed to improvement and attend training, build good relations with the school, and continue to work on ways to improve operational practice. They have effective hand over arrangements in place to induct new staff with minimal disruption to the group.

What needs to be improved?

- partnership with parents and carers to ensure they are supplied with well timed, good quality information about the curriculum and how their children are progressing
- the opportunities for children to develop understanding of the link between sounds and letters and use writing for different purposes
- the use of resources to enrich children's experiences in role play, and enable them to practice and develop skills and learn more about how things work
- the opportunities for children to challenge their physical skills using large equipment
- organisation of snack time to avoid children sitting unoccupied for extended periods, to ensure children are clear about when they can leave the table and to give children the opportunity to serve themselves.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. There were three key issues identified and work is still continuing to improve in these areas.

The group was asked to enhance assessment, link records to the six areas of learning, date records and make provision for children who need extending. Activities are now evaluated and children's profiles are brought up to date each month to clearly indicate children's next steps, and this information is used to aid planning. There is still no written information to show how more able children will be extended. Staff say they know which children need extending and provide extra one to one support to move them on, but with a high staff turnover some children could get overlooked.

The provision for mathematics was to be improved to provide children with opportunities to recognise and recreate patterns. Mathematical provision has been successfully developed to give daily opportunities for children to build, construct and recreate patterns in different ways. Children freely choose to use the equipment, which is offered.

Planning was to be extended to provide practical experiences for children to practice

skills. Planning has been reviewed to give children a broader range of activities and experiences linked to current events and items of interest. Themes are carried across the curriculum to bring in different skills but equipment is not detailed in the planning and there is nothing to indicate which skills are being targeted. Resources are not currently well used and more could be done in this area.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children eagerly move from one activity to another and play with different groups of friends, organising their own play with little adult help. They make tickets and plan journeys, negotiating over resources to 'police' the bus station. Children are developing independence by accessing resources and they are keen to help tidy away. Mixed messages at snack time and lengthy waits before snacks are served, cause confusion and make it difficult for children to manage their behaviour effectively.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact confidently sharing their news at circle time. Staff question children constantly to get their opinions and promote thinking. Children respond appropriately, listen well and reason things out for themselves. Children have regular access to mark making equipment and some children can write their names. Others are beginning to form recognisable letters but staff do not develop the link between sounds and letters or routinely promote writing for different purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are given meaningful tasks to develop mathematics; they enjoy counting children in at registration time. They check the register to reinforce understanding and some count accurately above 12. Staff seize opportunities to develop concepts like more and less and children can say what comes next as children join the snack table. Children match shapes and patterns well and have a good understanding of positional language. They confidently use numbers to enhance their free play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are given a range of experiences to investigate through planned activities and they recreate some aspects when initiating their own play. They 'police' the ticket office, remembering police as people who help from previous topics. Themes are linked and children enjoy making medals and practicing for sports day. Children have limited access to technological equipment but what they have, they use well. Resources do not develop skills to learn more about how things work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have limited access to the schools outdoor area and few opportunities to use large equipment, but they move well in a variety of ways using space safely to run, jump and throw things to friends. Children select and use small equipment well, walking on stilts, balancing eggs on spoons, and some use the equipment for their own purpose saying 'silly beanbag, it used to be a pancake'. Good use is made of painted markings on the playground to develop other areas of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have lots of opportunities to use media in different ways to put their own ideas into practice. Staff are on hand to offer suggestions but do not inhibit creativity. Children and staff have fun dancing and singing, and interpret music well using appropriate movement. Children effectively organise their imaginary play, working with and alongside their peers, making good use of the few resources that are provided. Resources in the role play area are uninspired.

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

- provide parents and carers with well timed and good quality information about the curriculum, their children's progress, and special events
- improve the use of resources to give children a broader experience of modern life in role play, and enable them to use a wider variety of equipment to develop skills and learn more about how things work
- increase the opportunities for children to link sounds and letters, and use writing for different purposes.

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.