



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101623

DfES Number: 519058

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	21/11/2003
Inspector Name	Linda Janet Witts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Calton Road Playgroup
Setting Address	Calton Road Gloucester Gloucestershire GL1 5ET

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Calton Road Playgroup 1055666
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Calton Road Playgroup
Address	Calton Road Gloucester Gloucestershire GL1 5ET

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

Calton Road Playgroup has been open for over twenty years. It is a committee run group, accommodated in an annexe within the grounds of Calton Road Infants School. The school is situated in a built-up residential area, close to the centre of Gloucester. The building consists of three partitioned play areas and toilets. Children also have direct access to an outside play area and a garden.

The playgroup accepts up to 26 children aged between two years nine months and five years per session. There are 44 children on roll. Twenty five funded three year olds and 13 funded four year olds currently attend. The playgroup supports children with special needs and English as an additional language. Opening hours are 09:00 to 11:30 Monday to Friday and 12:30 to 15:00 on Tuesday and Thursday.

A team of five experienced staff are employed. The team is led by Mrs Carole Phelpstead who is early years trained and currently studying to gain a level three qualification. All staff are trained in early years care and education and hold certificates in first aid and child protection. The playgroup adopts some aspects of the Highscope philosophy.

How good is the Day Care?

Calton Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The team of longstanding staff are experienced, enthusiastic and friendly. They have good access to relevant skills workshops and short training courses. The playgroup is well organised. Good use is made of space, time and resources. There is a clear session structure which children are familiar with and high child: staff ratios are maintained. The playgroup setting is attractive with different zones within the rooms, equipped and designed to reflect different areas of learning. Clever use of resources helps to create added interest to the environment. Equipment and resources are of good quality, providing stimulation and challenge. They are attractively stored and are accessible to children. Records are well maintained.

Children are safe and secure. Supervision is very good. Staff demonstrate safety

awareness and have taken action to minimise risks, although the written risk assessment does not include all hazards and methods used to minimise them. Good health of children is actively promoted. The premises and resources are clean and well-maintained. Staff and children follow good personal hygiene routines. Children's snacks are varied including a good balance of healthy options. Staff plan opportunities for children to prepare and taste different foods.

Children are happy at the playgroup, engaging in a broad range of activities, showing excitement in their experiences. Aspects of the Highscope principle are used effectively within the playgroup. Staff are caring and responsive to children's individual needs. Children's cultural and religious backgrounds are valued. Children with English as an additional language and special needs are supported well. Children are well behaved and staff are good role models.

Parents and staff have good relationships with one another. Staff keep parents well informed and parents are happy with all aspects of the care that the playgroup provides for their children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the playgroup was asked to draw up an action plan to show how the leader would gain a level three qualification relevant to the post and to ensure that a written record of medication, signed by the parent or guardian, be made. In response to this the leader is studying for a level three National Vocational Qualification in child care. Records of any medication administered are made, parents are asked to sign them and are given a copy of the entry for their information.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy at the playgroup. They engage in a broad range of activities, showing excitement in their experiences. They enjoy exploring and investigating and have control over their play.
- Staff are caring and responsive to children's individual needs. They support play knowing when to play an active role and when to stand back and let children play freely. They pose questions to promote children's thinking, offer new vocabulary, talk with and listen to the children.
- Aspects of the Highscope principle are used effectively within the playgroup. This gives children control over their play. They select the activities they wish to join in and are able to freely access resources to extend or change activities.
- The atmosphere within the playgroup oozes with the acceptance that play and learning is fun. The playgroup setting is attractive and space is utilised well. Different zones within the playgroup rooms are equipped and designed to reflect different areas of learning. This works well. Each zone has every available piece of wall space adorned with eye-catching posters and displays of children's work.

- Children with English as an additional language are supported well. They are made to feel welcome and staff take positive action, working closely with their parents to help them. Good use is made of dual language books, pictures and resources which reflect the children's homelands. Whenever possible outside support of interpreters is used.
- The staff team is very experienced in the care of children with special needs. They are skilled in identifying special needs and offer appropriate support, working hard to enable children to meet their full potential. Individual education plans have been drawn up and outside support obtained as appropriate.
- Children are well behaved and staff are good role models. The atmosphere within the play group is calm and positive. Good behaviour is encouraged, with praise and encouragement offered spontaneously.

What needs to be improved?

- The risk assessment to ensure that identified hazards within all areas of the setting and methods used to minimise them, are included.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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

Std	Recommendation
6	further develop risk assessment to ensure that hazards are identified within all areas of the setting and methods used to minimise them are included.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They select and carry out activities showing independence. They are also well behaved. Most children speak confidently, enjoy mark making and can count confidently to ten and beyond. Greater opportunities to calculate and problem solving would be beneficial. Children are curious, observe and examine objects and know how to operate simple equipment. Some four year olds can complete simple computer programmes. All are confident movers and engage in creative play using their own ideas.

Teaching is very good. Staff are all trained in the implementation of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. They have a clear understanding of the Early Learning Goals and developmental stepping stones. Planning and assessment methods used are effective. They make regular assessments of children's progress resulting in a clear understanding of where each child is at in their learning. Assessments are then used to inform future planning to ensure that activities are designed to help children move onto the next stage in their learning.

Leadership and management is very good. The leader fosters team spirit, working closely with her experienced, enthusiastic, friendly staff. High child: staff ratios are maintained, enabling support of individual children, as appropriate. The playgroup committee and staff are committed to providing good quality care and education. Regular fundraising enables staff to have good access to training, increase of resources and more recently has enabled the extension of the premises which is now underway.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are happy with all aspects of the playgroup. Staff keep parents well informed. The parent prospectus outlines the Foundation Stage of learning clearly. Regular newsletters and verbal communication ensures that parents are kept up to date with children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children feel secure and separate from their main carer with confidence. They relate well to their peers and staff. They sit quietly, share and take-turns, working as individuals, in pairs and in groups of different sizes.
- Children listen to stories with attention and describe what they have heard and seen in the illustrations. They handle books carefully, understand that print carries meaning and that books can be a source of information.
- Four year olds and most three year olds can count confidently to ten and beyond. Many can also recognise numerals to ten. Some can even recognise higher numbers. Four year olds know shapes and can put objects in sequence.

- Children show curiosity, observe and examine objects and features of the local environment. They are able to identify similarities and differences. Some four year olds can complete simple computer programmes and also assist less able children using the computer.
- Children engage in imaginative play based on their own first-hand experiences. They use available resources to create props to support role play and play alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme. Children join in favourite songs, sing familiar songs from memory and explore and learn how sounds can be changed, using their voices and musical instruments.
- Each member of staff is trained in the implementation of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. They have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and developmental stepping stones. Each has an area of expertise and has attended skills workshops to aid children's development in these areas. Planning and assessment methods used are effective. They make regular assessments of children's progress resulting in a clear understanding of where each child is at in their learning. Assessments are then used to inform future planning to ensure that activities are designed to help children move onto the next stage.

What needs to be improved?

- more regular use of problem solving and simple calculating within routine activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup was asked to give children plenty of opportunities to expand their role play and imagination. The home corner is freely accessible to children, along with suitable props. This area is also changed to reflect different themes such as hospitals, music room, shoe shop, travel agent and gingerbread cottage encouraging further imaginary use and role play.

The need to improve assessment for creative development. Planning and assessment for all areas of learning has been reviewed following the introduction of the Foundation Stage. Assessment for creative learning is now detailed focusing on all its early learning goals and associated stepping stones.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children feel secure, separating from their main carer with confidence. They relate well to their peers and staff. They sit quietly, share and take-turns, are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They select and carry out activities showing independence. Children are aware of behavioural expectations within the setting, show care and concern for others. They have a strong sense of self as a family members.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in language and literacy is very good. Most children speak confidently and are happy to talk with children, staff and those less familiar to them. Three and four year olds enjoy using mark making as a means of communication. Many attempt to write their own name. They listen to stories with attention and describe what they have heard and seen in the illustrations. They handle books carefully, understand that print carries meaning and that books can be a source of information.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in mathematical development is very good. Four year olds and most three year olds can count confidently to ten and beyond. Many can also recognise numerals to ten. Some can even recognise higher numbers. Four year olds know shapes and can put objects in sequence. Children use mathematical language in relation to size and position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Some four year olds know the days of the week. Children are learning about seasons, months of the year and weather. They show curiosity, observe and examine objects and features of the local environment. They are can identify similarities and differences. Both three and four year olds know how to operate simple equipment. Some four year olds can complete simple computer programmes and also assist less able children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in physical development is very good. Children are confident movers. They run at speed and change direction, moving freely with pleasure in a range of ways. They can climb rope structures and steps competently. Children demonstrate controlled kicking skills using a ball to knock down large skittles. Children manipulate and use a wide range of tools, small and large equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in creative development is very good. Children engage in imaginative play, based on their own first-hand experiences, using available resources to create props. They join in favourite songs, sing familiar songs from memory and explore and learn how sounds can be changed, using their voices and musical instruments. Children paint freely, using different methods of adding the paint to paper, using it as a means of representation or simply enjoying the sensory experience.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- Further extend the use of problem solving and simple calculating within routine activities.

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.