



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 106984

DfES Number: 522341

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 19/01/2004
Inspector Name Kay Roberts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Horfield Playgroup
Setting Address Churchways Avenue
Horfield
Bristol
Avon
BS7 8SN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Horfield Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Horfield Playgroup
Address Horfield Playgroup
Churchways Avenue, Horfield
Bristol
BS7 8SN

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

Horfield Methodist Playgroup was established in 1967. The group is located approximately four miles from Bristol city centre and serves a multi-cultural urban area. The children attending come mostly from the immediate area and are from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. It is a voluntary group and is affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The playgroup has use of a spacious hall, a smaller room for quiet activities, a kitchen and a small outside play area. It operates during term time only and is open for five sessions a week each morning from 09:00 to 11:30 hours.

There are 33 children on roll and the group is registered to take 24 children per session. The ages of the children range from two and a half to five years old. Currently, out of seven four-year-olds, four are funded and there are ten funded three-year-olds. Staff support children with special needs. There are no children who speak English as an additional language.

There are three members of staff, all of whom work with the children at each session. One leader has an NVQ Level 3 in Child Care and Education, and one member of staff is a Registered Nurse. Additional support is provided by two parent/carer assistants attending each session.

How good is the Day Care?

Horfield Methodist Playgroup provides satisfactory care in a large, well organised, clean, secure and welcoming environment. All staff and parent assistants are aware of and implement safety requirements. Child protection concerns are well managed as there is a named member of staff.

There is a stable staff group, who regularly update their skills. Children receive a high level of individual support. Staff are very caring and show an interest in what children have to say. All children are included and valued, although their needs are not always fully met as some resources and activities are limited. Staff follow the

Code of Practice and work in partnership with parents and others to support children with special needs.

Staff provide children with a wide range of interesting, theme based activities. Decision making, exploration and investigation are all encouraged. Resources are well presented. The daily routine includes a satisfactory arrangement for snack time and children are provided with a mid morning drink and biscuit. Although children are generally well behaved, the inconsistency in behaviour management provided by adults, gives 'mixed messages' to children.

Health and hygiene are promoted and children protected from illness and infection. All staff are qualified to administer first aid and accidents are appropriately recorded but records are not kept confidentially. Medication is not administered. Special dietary requirements are met.

There is a close working relationship with parents. However, parents are not fully informed, about either the key worker system or assessment records. Documentation is poor. There is no lost or uncollected child policy. The complaints and child protection policies require updating. Recording of fire drills and the register are not detailed. There is no clear guidance on the expectations of employees, parent assistants or committee members.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the transitional inspection Horfield Methodist Playgroup agreed to meet five actions. The first action agreed was to conduct a risk assessment of the premises and develop an action plan with timescales, identifying action to be taken to minimise risk. This action has been met by completing a risk assessment in June 2002, which was reviewed in May 2003.

The second action agreed was to develop and implement an action plan that set out how the leader would achieve a level 3 qualification. This action has been met. There are two leaders and one has now completed an NVQ level 3 in child care. As the two leaders always work together, there is currently no requirement that the second leader updates her qualification to a level 3.

The group also agreed to ensure that children belong to a key group that has consistent staff. Since September children have been allocated a key worker, who is responsible for monitoring children's progress. However, parents have not been fully informed and no part of the day is organised into key working groups. This action has been partially met.

The fourth action agreed was to make the heaters safe or inaccessible to children. In winter, fitted covers are placed over the radiators. This action has been met in full.

The final action agreed was to ensure that a record be kept of all visitors to the premises. A book now records details of parent assistants and visitors. The action has been met.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a large, well organised, clean, secure and welcoming environment.
- Staff regularly update their skills.
- Children receive a high level of support.
- Staff work in partnership with parents and others to meet children's special needs.
- Staff provide children with a wide range of interesting, theme based activities.
- Staff work closely with parents.

What needs to be improved?

- information provided for parents
- approach to behaviour management
- range of technological toys and equipment in order to provide children with a balanced range of activities that promote learning in all areas
- documentation, including the provision of a clear remit for employees, parent assistants and committee members, devising a lost child and uncollected child policy, updating the complaints and child protection procedure, recording of fire drills, pre-existing injuries and details held in the register, confidentiality of accident records.

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
12	Ensure parents are fully informed about their children, and that any written records are shared.	01/05/2004

14	Ensure all documents as required under the National Standards, and using the Guidance for reference, are in place, that they are fully detailed, regularly reviewed and confidentially maintained as appropriate.	01/05/2004
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
5	Extend the range of resources to provide more opportunities for children to experience everyday technology and programmable toys.
11	Ensure all staff and parent assistants are fully aware of and implement consistent strategies for managing behaviour.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Horfield Methodist Playgroup provides a warm, secure and welcoming environment, within which children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. The stable staff group regularly update their skills and are supported in offering children a high adult to child ratio by two parent assistants at each session. However, not all staff and parents working with the children have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff provide a wide range of enjoyable activities, but these do not fully cover the six learning areas. Planning details the learning outcomes for theme based activities, but not for others. This results in a lack of clear guidance for adults working with the children and opportunities to extend learning, particularly for four-year-olds, are often lost. Plans do not include special considerations or extensions for more able children.

Resources are always well presented. However, the grouping of children is not well balanced. There are two time limited large group activities, but there are no small group activities. Children's special needs are met, and where necessary one-to-one support is provided. Children's behaviour is generally good. However, there are inconsistencies in the way behaviour is managed and social etiquette is not encouraged.

Management and leadership are generally good. Leaders are able to identify personal weaknesses. However, although they are actively trying to improve the quality of care and education, they have insufficient awareness of the weaknesses within the educational programme.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents receive a warm welcome and feel very much part of the organisation as they assist in the setting on a rota basis. However, parents are not fully informed about practices and are unaware of the written assessments on their children.

Overall, Horfield Methodist Playgroup serves its community well.

What is being done well?

- Children are making very good progress in the areas of Communication, Language and Literacy and Physical Development.
- Children receive a high level of adult support and, when required, one-to-one support to meet children's special needs.
- Staff provide a wide range of theme based activities.
- Resources are always well presented.

- Parents receive a warm welcome and feel very much part of the organisation.

What needs to be improved?

- planning to provide balance between the six learning areas
- identification of early learning goals for all activities and sharing of these with parents
- detail in planning with regard to special considerations and extensions for more able children
- detail in planning so that opportunities to extend all areas of learning are not missed
- opportunities to develop independence
- opportunities to extend mathematical knowledge.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection on 8 July 1999, the playgroup agreed to meet three key issues.

The first was to ensure staff continue to develop their planning and assessment systems. Planning should show clearly what staff intend children to learn from planned activities to ensure that children's learning is balanced over all the areas of learning. The assessment system should be organised so that it indicates progression made by the children and illustrates their strengths and weaknesses in all areas of learning. Limited progress has been made against this issue. Planning of themed activities now includes early learning goals and assessments clearly show progress made by children. However, learning is not balanced over all areas and this continues to be a concern.

The second was to provide more opportunities for children to recognise letters and associate them with sounds, particularly those in their own names. Opportunities should be provided for children to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, syllables and words. Very good progress has been made against this issue. There is now a strong emphasis on communication, language and literacy throughout the setting. Children recognise letters and know the sounds, particularly those in their name. Many opportunities are provided for children to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes.

The third key issue was to provide parents and carers with more information on the educational programme, for example, by placing the current topic and session plans in a place where they were able to look at them. Generally good progress has been made with this issue. Parents are now aware of the themed topic and the daily routine. However, parents are unaware of the early learning goals for activities. Overall, therefore, this continues to be a concern.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident, excited and motivated to learn. They are proud of their own achievements. They are developing awareness of their own needs and understand the culture of the group. Generally, children are well behaved and able to take turns. Children form good relationships with adults. However, four-year-olds in particular have limited opportunities to develop independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good communication skills. They listen with enjoyment to stories, are learning to recognise the elements of stories and can retell their favourite ones. Language is used to explore imagined experiences. Children link sounds to letters of the alphabet, and can distinguish between capital and lower case letters. They know that print carries meaning and are provided with good opportunities for informal mark making. Four-year-olds are able to recognise and write their own name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to recognise and name some quite complex shapes. They complete a range of jigsaw puzzles and use their knowledge to solve practical problems. However, there are many missed opportunities to increase counting skills, compare groups, learn about subtraction and to use mathematical language across the range of activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are keen to explore and investigate. They build and construct using a range of materials, and they find practical solutions to problems they encounter. Children can identify features in the area in which they live and show a growing interest in the world around them, including the cultures and beliefs of others. They are also developing a sense of time. However, their opportunities to experience everyday technology and programmable toys are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show increasing control and co-ordination, which is reinforced through action stories and rhymes. They confidently use the climbing frame to climb over, under and round. As they ride bikes they show an awareness of others. Children show increasing control when using both large and small equipment. Older children know how to hold a pencil correctly. They are developing a sense of health and bodily awareness.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore a variety of media and materials such as sand, paint and dough which are always available. They enjoy choosing and singing their favourite rhymes, such as "Peter Plays with Five Hammers", but have limited opportunities to extend exploration of sound through using musical instruments. Children use their imagination well, to create a pretend world. They are able to express their feelings and respond to what they hear, touch and see.

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

- Ensure that all staff and parents working with children have a clear knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.
- Further develop planning so that there is a balance between the six learning areas. Ensure plans include more small group work and take into account any special considerations and extensions for more able children. Identify learning outcomes for activities so that there are no missed opportunities to extend children's learning through play.
- Improve the programme for mathematical development by providing children with more opportunities to develop counting skills, compare, subtract and use mathematical language.
- Enhance the programme for personal, social and emotional development by providing children, particularly the older ones, with more opportunities to develop independence.

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.