



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402071

DfES Number: 581520

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 11/09/2003
Inspector Name Patricia Mary Champion

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St John's Green Playgroup
Setting Address St Johns Green Primary School
St Johns Green
Colchester
Essex
CO2 7HE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St John's Green Playgroup Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St John's Green Playgroup Committee
Address St John's Green Primary School
St John's Green
Colchester
Essex
CO2 7HF

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

St John's Green Playgroup opened in 1981. It operates from a classroom within St John's Green Primary School located in a residential area within walking distance of Colchester Town Centre. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 24 children from 3 to 4 years on roll. This includes 7 funded 3 year olds and 16 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs or who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08:45 until 11:45.

Four members of staff work with the children. The playgroup is working towards over half the staff having an early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and Colchester Greenshoots.

How good is the Day Care?

St John's Green Playgroup provides good quality care for children.

The staff are very experienced, motivated and work well as a team. The effective staffing levels allow staff to organise space and resources so that children are well cared for. All children have settled well into their surroundings, know the routine and freely choose their activities throughout the session. Documentation is mostly in good order; recommendations have been made where policies need to be reviewed and updated.

Children's welfare and safety is a paramount consideration and staff undertake risk assessment inside the premises and in the outdoor play area. Staff sensitively

promote good hygiene procedures and healthy eating and they are confident about their child protection responsibilities.

An extensive range of activities and learning experiences are provided for the children. Good use is made of the excellent outdoor play opportunities and interesting outings are organised. The staff promote language development by asking questions, reading stories and singing songs and children respond well to the staff's high expectations for behaviour and play confidently with each other. They are supervised by adults who respond to their individual needs.

There is an effective partnership with parents. Information is shared through regular newsletters, visual displays and good verbal feedback is given when they arrive to collect their children. Several parents were spoken to at the end of the session; they were all very happy with the care their children receive in the setting.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the registered provider agreed to draw up a policy for the administration of medication and provide a consent form for parents, start to keep a record of significant incidents, draft a written risk assessment and a safe procedure for outings, update the complaints and child protection policies and submit an action plan showing how the level of staff qualifications will be raised to meet the National Standard requirements.

A medication policy has now been implemented and consent from parents is obtained prior to administering any medicine. A significant incident book is now maintained and comprehensive risk assessments have been undertaken which include outings procedures.

The complaints and child protection policies have been updated since the last inspection, however further details still need to be added. An action has been devised that shows that the staff are still working towards meeting the minimum staff qualification levels. There has been a delay as they have been waiting for the appropriate training relating to Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning (APEL) to be implemented.

What is being done well?

- The staff are enthusiastic about their work with the children and plan imaginative ways of promoting language development and conversation. The children enjoy their role play and the staff have the skills to use open questions that promote interesting answers from the children. The use of story sacks involves the children and allows them to use their imagination.
- A wide range of play equipment is provided to challenge and stimulate the children. A lot of thought is given to providing everyday objects such as telephone books within role play and there is an excellent outdoor climbing frame for physical play.
- A very high regard is given to the children's safety and security.

Comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken to assess potential hazards relating to the premises, equipment and the activities and outings that are organised. A keypad entry system prevents unauthorised access to the premises.

- Healthy eating is actively promoted with regard given to allergies and special diets. Snack time is organised to be an interesting social occasion where skills such as turn taking are developed.
- Staff have developed effective strategies in their behaviour management. All staff have attended training and provide calm role models. Lots of praise and encouragement is heard, especially at tidying up times. Children are generally well behaved and play cooperatively together.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The staff effectively promote learning through play to support the setting's child centred ethos. A well balanced routine allows children to play and learn independently, initiate their own ideas and also take part in activities which need more support and direction from staff (Standard 3).

What needs to be improved?

- documentation, policies and procedures regarding child protection, complaints and lost or uncollected children need to be developed or updated to meet the National Standards.

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 |
|-----|--|
| 2 | devise a written statement regarding the procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost or a parent failing to collect a child |
| 12 | update the statement of procedures where a parent has a complaint to |

| | |
|----|---|
| | include Ofsted's address and telephone number |
| 13 | update the child protection statement to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children attending St John's Green Playgroup make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Achievement in all areas is very good. All children benefit from a thorough and well thought out assessment system which evaluates progress and helps to plan future development. Children with special needs or who have English as an additional language have a very well planned support system to ensure they receive support which enables them to participate fully.

The quality of teaching is very good and has a positive impact on children's learning; staff make very good use of the resources and equipment available to plan a broad range of stimulating activities covering all areas of development. They are linked directly to the early learning goals; children enjoy learning through play in the well structured environment.

Leadership and management is very good. Clear vision and a commitment to improvement of standards are strong features of the group's ethos. All staff are included in planning and delivering activities and have responsibilities in line with their experience.

There is an effective partnership with parents; they are given good quality information about the setting in the prospectus and regular newsletters keep them updated about events and activities. The process of settling new children is given a high priority; staff like children to be confident and settled before they are left for a full session. The group tries to be as accessible as possible; regular open sessions are arranged to meet staff and try resources.

Parents are involved at all stages of their child's learning; they receive regular informative progress reports as well as informally exchanging notes on a day to day basis.

What is being done well?

- children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. They are well behaved, confident and independent learners. They form meaningful relationships with adults and other children
- staff's clear understanding of the foundation stage and knowledge of how children learn through play leads to worthwhile planned activities which stimulate children's interests and encourage them to learn
- children with English as an additional language are very well supported and make excellent progress; the programme for multicultural teaching makes use of a wide range of resources including parents' specialist skills and knowledge
- the programme for children's creative development is supported by the

provision of excellent resources for imaginative and role play. Children become absorbed in acting out real and imaginary events and creating small world situations

What needs to be improved?

- There are no key issues for action following this report but a point for consideration concerning the teaching of information technology. At present the computer is housed on an adult sized unit; children would benefit from the provision of a low level surface where they could access equipment more easily and comfortably.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup have made very good progress since the last inspection. A point for consideration was to develop staff awareness of speaking and listening to children in small and larger groups.

An action plan was drawn up to address this issue. As a result staff ensure that a planned speaking and listening time is included in every session, giving opportunities for children to talk about what they have done and to listen to others.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show interest and curiosity and are eager to try new activities. Children form good relations with staff and other children; some strong friendship bonds are evident. They understand the need to share and take turns. Independence is encouraged at all stages; children are used to choosing their own resources and adapting activities to their own needs. There is a very good multicultural programme in place.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use language to express their ideas and feelings; discussing real and imaginary events. They listen well to staff and to one another. They enjoy using books and join in enthusiastically with stories and rhymes. All children are encouraged in early mark making; some children learn to write using well formed letters and begin to understand that words are made up of different sounds. Children who have dual language skills are well supported.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Imaginative resources are provided to help children learn about number. The use of real coins makes addition and subtraction meaningful; children soon understand that by adding two groups they can make one larger group. Children learn about shapes by handling them and drawing them, cutting and collage work and using a wall display. Children freely use comparative mathematical language, such as big and small, appropriately when playing.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children investigate objects and living things and ask questions about them. They design and build models from construction kits and found materials; these include exciting imaginative projects such as a zoo with large blocks or a pirate ship from a carton. A computer encourages children to develop IT skills; they use this independently or with non intrusive help from staff. Everyday technology is represented by telephones and a till in the role play area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy a range of activities both indoors and outside. They skilfully steer bikes and other wheeled toys and use the fixed climbing equipment to move with increasing confidence and coordination, balancing and climbing. Children are aware of the need to look after themselves by eating healthy food and by washing their hands after playing outside and before eating. They use a range of small tools to develop fine motor skills such as pencil control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
|------------|-----------|

Children enjoy free exploration of colour and texture through painting and printing, colour mixing, collage work and drawing. Music and movement is used to express feelings and imagination; children enjoy known and new songs, these often have a multicultural focus. The role play area allows children to enact real life situations and extend their imagination, using the dressing up clothes and props provided. They develop elaborate games, sustained over time.

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:'
- review the siting of the computer to allow children easier and more comfortable access

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.