



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101752

DfES Number: 518625

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/06/2003
Inspector Name Karen Elizabeth Screen

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Avening Playgroup
Setting Address Sunground
Avening
Tetbury
Gloucestershire
GL8 8NW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Avening Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Avening Playgroup
Address Sunground
Avening
Tetbury
Gloustershire
GL8 8NW

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

Avening Playgroup was established in 1972. It operates from a purpose-built building, in the village of Avening, a rural location near the town of Stroud in Gloucestershire. The group serves the local community and is managed by a voluntary committee with charitable status. They use an adapted form of High/Scope to organise children's learning. Playgroup facilities include: an entrance hall, toilets and a main room with a separate kitchen area. There is a fully enclosed outside play area with large physical play equipment.

The playgroup provides sessional care for 26 children from the term in which their third birthday falls, to age five years. There are 35 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. This includes 12 funded three-year-olds and 10 funded four-year-olds. The group is open daily in term-time between 09:15 and 12:00.

Three members of staff work with the children, two have appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup supports children with special needs. There are no children on roll who use English as a second language. The group is a member of the Parent and Toddler Association.

How good is the Day Care?

Avening Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children. There are effective procedures for appointing and vetting new staff. However induction arrangements are not regularly reviewed. The group maintain good staff ratios above the required number. However registration arrangements do not clearly show when staff, children and visitors are present e.g. children arriving late or leaving early. The premises are warm, welcoming, clean and well maintained. Space is organised well to meet the children's needs. e.g. setting up a makeshift canopy outside, to shade children from the sun while they played in the paddling pool. The group is well resourced and children can easily extend almost all activities for themselves. Some policies and procedures need to be improved.

The group take positive steps to promote children's safety. Good quality food and

drink is provided in good quantities. Staff act quickly to protect children from illness and infection. The group need to make sure that they regularly review the child protection policy.

Staff meet children's individual needs and promote their welfare. However deeper knowledge and understanding of the principles of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs is necessary. They provide good play opportunities and activities to help children make good progress in all areas of their development. Staff manage children's behaviour in ways that promote their welfare.

Parents feel very involved, valued, able and welcome to contribute to their child's development in playgroup. Good relationships between staff and children help children to settle well. Staff, parents, committee members and parents are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. However information provided for parents about the curriculum, complaints and toilet training, is not up-to-date.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to:

1. Develop and implement an action plan that sets out how the playleader will reach a level three qualification;
2. Keep a written record signed by parents of medication given to children.

The group has met both actions well:

1. Although the leader is retiring in September 2004, the committee will ensure that her replacement holds a Level 3 qualification.
2. The group keep a written record of medication given to children, which is signed by parents.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy and keen to attend. They make confident choices from the activities provided and are interested in and enjoy their play. They form excellent relationships with staff, who know the children well and respond quickly to their needs. Staff are friendly and approachable, they give reassurance, encouragement and appropriate praise.
- The group is well resourced and children can easily access toys and equipment which are strategically arranged at child height; enabling children to extend most activities for themselves.
- Snack time is a major strength of the group. It is of excellent quantity, quality, variety and is healthy and nutritious. Snacks are also guided by children's dietary and religious needs. Children know to ask for extra drinks when they are thirsty and are offered more in hot weather.

- The group's strategies for dealing with difficult behaviour work well. Staff have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged. Staff act as good role models and encourage children to treat each other kindly. They set and maintain reasonable and consistent limits which are observed by children.

What needs to be improved?

- registration arrangements recording the time of arrival and departure, of children, staff and visitors;
- the equal opportunities policy consistent with current legislation and guidance;
- staff knowledge and understanding of the principles of the Code of Practice (2001) for the identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs;
- child protection policy including action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff; and contact details for the Area Child Protection Committee and Ofsted.

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

Std	Recommendation
2	make sure the registration system records the time of arrival and departure of children, staff and visitors;
10	further develop staff knowledge and understanding of the principles of the code of practice (2001) for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs;
14	review group policies and procedures, to take account of the standards and guidance against which the group are registered and assessed; and make sure they are understood and implemented by all staff and 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?

Avening Playgroup offers good quality provision which helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Relationships with children are excellent. Staff provide exemplary role models and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. Staff promote self-confidence and a positive attitude in all children. The premises are well organised and good use is made of staff strengths. Staff create an environment in which children can take risks and use many interesting and stimulating methods of helping children to make progress in their learning. However staff do not use the early learning goals to organise children's learning. They are still using the desirable outcomes to plan, evaluate and assess children's learning and progress. Consequently their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is limited. Plans generally meet requirements, but some areas included in the early learning goals are not covered in planning at the moment.

Leadership and management is generally good. Observations and assessments are used well to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education e.g. they are used to inform discussions with the speech therapist. Staff and parent helpers are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and partnership with parents is very strong. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator oversees their policy and provision, attends regular training, but does not adequately cascade information to staff and parents.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents feel involved, valued and welcome to contribute to their child's learning. They feel very well informed about their child's achievements and progress. However, information provided to parents about their children's learning still refers to the desirable outcomes; and little information is provided about the foundation stage of learning for which the children receive funding.

What is being done well?

- Children develop excellent relationships with staff and other children and are sensitive towards others. They are confident, cooperative, well behaved and independent. Staff are excellent role models.
- Children demonstrate a keen interest in numbers and counting and are given many opportunities to explore size, shape and comparison through activities and play e.g. two 3YO boys using different shaped blocks to make a garage for the cars and trucks, noticing that they could fit two triangular prisms together to make a cube. Staff encourage children to talk about shapes and how they can be arranged.
- Most children move with control and coordination and competently use a

range of large and small equipment. Staff plan a wide range of opportunities for children to practice skills which refine control and coordination.

- Children enjoy using their senses to explore objects and materials in practical activities e.g. touch, hear, see, and smell the playgroup frogs and butterflies at different stages of maturity. Staff provide interesting and stimulating opportunities for children to investigate their environment.
- Children have an excellent understanding of past, present, future and change over time e.g. studying the life-cycle of the playgroup frogs and butterflies. Staff provide opportunities for children to observe and discuss sequence of events.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage;
- planning, in line with the early learning goals;
- opportunities for children to practice their emerging writing skills in role-play contexts, for example in the home area;
- information for parents about the foundation stage of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were two key issues raised at the previous inspection:

1. Continue to develop planning to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are included, paying particular attention to the use of books, opportunities for writing, the use of technology and the exploration of sound. Plans should take account of children's different learning abilities and link more effectively with the assessment process.

2. Improve the programme for language and literacy. All the children should be encouraged to look at books regularly, supported by adults, and plans should indicate when this will happen. Ensure that the book area is more accessible and inviting. There should be more planned opportunities for children to use writing to convey meaning, for example in role-play

1. Planning has been developed to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum under the desirable outcomes are included. However, they should now be following curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, for which they are funded. The use of books, technology and the exploration of sound have been adequately addressed, but some opportunities for writing are not sufficiently supported. Observations and assessments are used well to support different stages of children's individual development e.g. providing additional support from adults when necessary; and are used to inform discussions with relevant professionals e.g. speech therapists.

2. Routine planned times are made for children to share books with adults or "read" by themselves. The planned improvements mentioned in the group's action plan to

make the book area more inviting and accessible, have not worked out in practice. There has been a measurable improvement, however there is still room for further development. Some opportunities for children to use writing to convey meaning in role-play, are still being missed. However staff do provide materials and purposes for children to initiate writing in everyday situations.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children form excellent relationships with staff and other children and are sensitive towards others. They learn to be cooperative and work well together e.g. a three-year-old girl concerned that a child has fallen over, rushing to inform a member of staff. Children are confident, well behaved, independent and show high levels of concentration e.g. children listening intently to their key worker explain the activities on offer and waiting their turn to plan their day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's spoken language is developing well. They use talk well to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what is happening next. Children are beginning to recognise and write some familiar words e.g. four-year-old independently writing her name on the back her snail picture before beginning. Staff occasionally miss opportunities to encourage children to use writing in their role-play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show an interest in shape and space e.g. two three-year-olds using different shaped blocks to make a garage for the cars and trucks, noticing that they could fit two triangular prisms together to make a cube. Children show a keen interest in numbers and counting e.g. children confidently say and use numbers up to five; also children count the number of children in their group during snack time, to find out how many cartons of milk will be needed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have an excellent understanding of past, present, future and change over time e.g. studying the playgroup frogs and butterflies at different stages of maturity. Children confidently select and use appropriate materials e.g. children enjoy making snails from cheese straw mixture. Children enjoy using their senses to explore objects and materials in practical activities e.g. four-year-old describing the life-cycle of the group's frogs and butterflies.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show an awareness of space themselves and others. Most move with control and coordination and competently use a range of large and small equipment. Children show an awareness of good hygiene practices e.g. children washing hands after using the toilet without being reminded, also a four-year-old asking for help to take off her T-shirt before going into the paddling pool "because it will be cold and wet if I don't".

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk about personal intentions, describing what they are going to do e.g. three-year-old describing how he was going to make a snail out of his cheese straw mixture by rolling it into a worm and then rolling it up. Children explore the different sounds of instruments with enthusiasm and engage well in imaginative play based on their own experiences e.g. children independently choosing musical instruments and forming a marching band. The home area is not very inviting for children.

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

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage;
- develop planning, in line with the early learning goals;
- continue to extend and model opportunities for children to practice their emerging writing skills in role-play contexts, for example in the home area;
- continue to develop information for parents about the foundation stage of learning.

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.