



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220293

DfES Number: 518239

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 06/10/2004
Inspector Name Jill Hunn

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Charlton Playgroup
Setting Address Charlton Memorial Hall
Main Street, Charlton
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX17 3DL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Charlton Playgroup 1034974

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Charlton Playgroup
Address Charlton Memorial Hall
Main Street, Charlton
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX17 3DL

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

Charlton Playgroup was registered in October 1992 but first opened about forty years ago. It operates from rooms within the Memorial Hall in the centre of the village of Charlton. The playgroup serves the local area.

There are currently 20 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 13 funded three-year-olds and 1 funded four-year-old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00.

One full time and four part time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Three members of staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The playgroup is currently working towards the 'Aiming for Quality' PSLA quality assurance scheme.

How good is the Day Care?

Charlton Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The premises are clean, safe and secure and have been decorated with colourful friezes and displays of the children's work to create a welcoming environment. Staff, space and resources are organised effectively to meet children's needs. There is a clear operational plan which ensures that staff have a consistent approach to their work. Records and written policies are maintained to a high standard so that children's well-being is promoted.

The staff are very friendly and caring. They know the children well and ensure their individual needs are met. Staff are vigilant about children's safety both inside the

premises and during outings. They promote children's health by their good hygiene practices and by providing nutritious and varied snacks which meet children's individual dietary needs. However, staff have not yet attended training about the identification and care of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

A wide range of stimulating activities are planned which involve the children well and enable them to progress in all areas of their development. Resources and play materials are used imaginatively and are set out thoughtfully so that they capture children's interest well. They include opportunities for children to learn to value diversity. Staff manage children's behaviour positively and consistently and children behave well.

The playgroup develops positive relationships with parents. A range of useful information is available to advise parents about the playgroup and their child's progress. Parents are involved in the group by helping out at sessions and events and are encouraged to contribute their views about the running of the playgroup.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, a number of issues were raised relating to records, written policies and procedures and supervision of staff. Records and written policies and procedures have been improved so that they are now clear and comprehensive, and the level of supervision of children has been strengthened. These actions have had a positive impact on children's care, safety and well-being.

What is being done well?

- There is a comprehensive operational plan which explains how the playgroup operates and ensures that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Written procedures are detailed and are regularly reviewed so that they promote children's welfare, care and learning.
- The indoor space and play materials are organised imaginatively so that activities are attractive and inviting to the children. Children are able to move freely and develop their ideas as they play.
- The excellent use of written risk assessment ensures that the premises are safe and suitable for use by the playgroup and promotes the safe conduct of any outings provided.
- Staff consistently encourage children and set them clear guidelines. As a result, children learn what is expected of them and they behave well.
- Parents are encouraged to comment about the playgroup and their children's progress by completing written questionnaires, use of the suggestions box and by attending open sessions and informal discussions with staff.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge of the Code of Practice for the Identification and

Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

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
10	Make sure that staff develop their knowledge of the Code of Practice (2001) for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Charlton Playgroup provides good quality nursery education which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good with some very good aspects. Staff generally have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. Planning is clear, linked to the six areas of learning with learning intentions identified. Staff develop warm relationships with the children. They plan an exciting range of worthwhile activities which engage children well and there are few gaps in the curriculum. However, older and more able children are not always fully challenged to further develop their independence and mathematical and physical skills. There are adequate systems in place to support children with special educational needs and children who do not speak English as their first language. Staff skilfully use questioning to develop children's thinking skills and help them move on in their learning. They consistently encourage children and manage their behaviour successfully. They organise their time, space and resources well to promote children's learning. Staff assess aspects of children's progress but the system used is not systematic and the information gained is not used to plan the next stage in learning for all children.

The leadership and management of the playgroup is generally good. Effective management systems are generally in place. The committee and staff are very committed and work well together as a strong team.

The partnership with parents is generally good. A comprehensive range of good quality information is available to parents so that they are aware of the Foundation Stage and how the playgroup operates. Information about children's progress is shared by informal discussion and viewing records. Parents are able to support children's learning at home through visits from the 'Birthday Bear'. Parents regularly help out at sessions and attend events.

What is being done well?

- Staff consistently praise children and value them as individuals. They give children time and space to focus on activities and develop their own ideas through play. They encourage children to assist with tasks, such as putting away the toys or helping to mix paint. As a result, children's self-esteem increases and they become confident in their learning.
- Children count spontaneously and regularly recognise numbers during practical activities. They count out the spoons of powder when mixing paint, the animals in jigsaw puzzles and the number of children present at registration time. Children recognise numbers from cards when establishing the date at group time and successfully match number labels to the corresponding parking bay when riding bikes.

- Staff provide a range of opportunities for children to use their creative skills imaginatively. Children explore colour and texture when mixing paints and when making collages from seeds and rice. They print with leaves, fruit and vegetables and make rockets and clay pots to their own design.
- New parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child by completing the 'About Me' form which includes useful information about children's preferences and parents views. Staff are able to build on this knowledge so that familiar experiences and interests can be used for children's care, teaching and learning.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to use their emerging writing as a means of recording and communicating in differing situations
- opportunities for older and more able children to fully develop their independence and use their developing mathematical skills to compare numbers and solve simple number problems
- the use of programmable toys and technology to support children's learning
- opportunities for children to use large equipment to challenge and develop their gross motor skills and to learn the importance of good health.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the three key issues raised at the last inspection. Improvements have been made in most areas which have had a positive impact on children's learning. The programme now includes increased opportunities for children to create patterns and investigate symmetry during craft activities and through the introduction of new resources. Children sing number rhymes and compare objects but they do not sufficiently develop an awareness of simple addition and subtraction through practical activities.

The staff group has changed since the last inspection. The current staff group make good use of questioning to challenge children's thinking skills and use their time well to support and encourage children in their learning. The record keeping systems have been developed and now cover all six areas of learning to enable children's progress in each of the areas to be more clearly identified.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They confidently take part in activities in small and large groups. Older children persist at their chosen activities for periods of time. Children relate well to adults and peers and are learning to share. They understand the behavioural expectations within the playgroup and behave well. Children are developing their independence but older and more able children do not always learn to operate independently.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children speak confidently to each other and to adults. They listen attentively to stories and discussions at group time and successfully respond to questions and what they have heard. Children regularly share books. Some children recognise their names and words from cards and link sounds to letters. Younger children make marks with older children writing recognisable letters with some, all of their name. However, children do not regularly use their emerging writing for different purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children regularly count during practical activities and older children recognise and represent numbers up to five. Children discover the properties of shapes with a variety of construction materials. They use words to describe position, size and shape and measure height and weight. Children explore capacity with sand and water play and investigate symmetry and patterns. Children begin to match groups of objects but older children do not sufficiently compare numbers and solve simple problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children investigate a variety of interesting objects and materials using all their senses. They look at leaves through magnifying glasses, feel shiny conkers in their spiky cases, plant seeds and explore which objects float and sink. However, children do not use technology sufficiently to support their learning. Children begin to differentiate between the past and present. They find out about their local environment and the wider world and develop an awareness of their own and other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and experiment with different ways of moving. They respond to fast and slow music and play ring games. They show respect for other children's personal space during activities and when moving around the premises. Children successfully use a variety of tools and smaller equipment to develop their fine motor skills. They do not regularly use larger equipment to challenge and develop their gross motor skills or learn the importance of good health.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children express their creativity using a variety of interesting materials and textures. They work in two and three dimensions and experiment with mixing colours. Children make connections in their learning through a variety of role play situations, for example, the travel agents and the café. They respond to what they see, touch and feel and talk about their happy and sad feelings. Children sing songs and action rhymes and explore the sounds musical instruments make.

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 the system for observation and assessment of children's progress so that assessments are systematic and informative and are sufficiently linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Make sure this information is used to plan the next stage in learning for all children
- increase opportunities for children to use their emerging writing as a means of recording and communicating in differing situations and to use programmable toys and technology to support their learning
- increase the range of opportunities for older and more able children to further develop their independence, compare numbers and solve simple number problems, and to use large equipment to further develop their physical skills.

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.