



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 147614

DfES Number: 582205

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/06/2004
Inspector Name Maggie Thorp

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Sharon Kindergarten
Setting Address Finchley Synagogue
Kinloss Gardens, Finchley
London
N3 3DU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Sharon Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Sharon Playgroup
Address Finchley Synagogue
Kinloss Gardens
London
N3 3DU

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

Sharon Kindergarten was set up in 1971 and is managed by a management committee of parents of children who have attended the kindergarten. It is situated in a residential road in Finchley with easy access to the A406.

The kindergarten has sole use three rooms in the Finchley Synagogue. A hall and outside area is used for children's large physical play activities. The kindergarten is open from 09:00 to 15:00 Monday to Thursday, 9:00 to 12:00 on Fridays, and in school term times only.

At present there are 33 children aged 2 to 5 years on roll. Nursery education funding is received for 14 of the 3 - year olds and for 10 of the 4 - year olds. There are 8 children attending with English as an additional language. The kindergarten welcomes children with special educational needs, although none are attending currently.

There are 9 members of staff including the manager, who is supernumerary, 7 staff have appropriate early years qualifications. The manager and deputy are working towards an appropriate qualification level. The local authority early years advisory teacher advises the kindergarten. It is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the Agency for Jewish Education.

How good is the Day Care?

Sharon Kindergarten provides a warm welcoming and stimulating environment for children. The overall quality of care is satisfactory. Training opportunities and advice available in the Local Authority have been used to develop staff's knowledge and skills. However, those in charge have not updated their qualifications to the appropriate level. Policies and procedures are mostly very comprehensive.

The weakness of the nursery is that the procedures for checking, keeping full records, and informing Ofsted about new staff are not in place. New staff have had unsupervised access to children before clear checks have been received.

The safety and care of the children is good. There are effective health and safety procedures in place. Risk assessment is thorough, especially for outings and a high level of staff have first aid qualifications. The quality of snacks and lunches is very good, any particular dietary needs are met well and drinks are always available. Good systems are in place to support children with special educational needs with good links between parents and other agencies to this end. The procedures for addressing any concerns about children's well being are effective.

The range of activities offered is very good. Resources are easily accessible and children choose and use these with confidence and imagination. Throughout the day staff involve themselves in children's play to very good effect. Children under three are very happy and secure. Resources and planned activities help children to learn about their own Jewish faith, each others' diverse backgrounds and to find out about other cultures. Children are helped to be kind and to help each other.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff always take time to talk to with parents. However, there is not a key person for each child and their parents to relate to and parents are given little written information about how their children are progressing.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection most of the actions that were agreed have been met well. One has not been addressed. There is a good level of first aid qualified staff so appropriate help can be given to children even if the named first aider is off duty. The facilities for children under three are very good, meeting the needs of this age group effectively. However, the action plan to ensure the manager's qualifications are updated to a level three in child care and education has not been carried out.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide children under three with a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment which results in children being happy and confident.
- The children's rooms are very well resourced providing rich opportunities for children to engage in imaginative play, to build and make things, and to draw and paint.
- Children are given a healthy, balanced diet. They enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables at snack times, healthy cooked lunches and children are able to help themselves to drinking water in every area of the nursery.
- Staff manage children's behaviour in a very positive way and help children to learn how to talk about and resolve conflicts themselves.

What needs to be improved?

- systems for staff recruitment and checking
- the qualifications of those in charge of the nursery

- arrangements to prevent persons not checked from having unsupervised access to children
- the key person system

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
1	The registered person shall notify the Chief Inspector of any of the events set out in Schedule 2 to these regulations..... Regulation 6 (2) states that the notification must be made where it is reasonably practicable to do so, in advance of the event occurring, and in all other cases as soon as reasonably practicable, but not later than 14 days, after the event has occurred.	17/09/2004
1	Make sure the person in charge is appropriately qualified.	16/09/2004
1	Prevent unchecked adults having unsupervised access to children.	17/09/2004

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

Std	Recommendation
1	Improve procedures for appointing staff so that checks are carried out on their suitability and full records are kept.
2	Put in place a key person system to provide the vital link with parents to discuss children's needs and development and provide continuity of care.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Sharon Kindergarten provides good quality nursery education, enabling children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Many aspects of the provision are very good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have good relationships with children and manage children's behaviour in very positive ways. They offer children a wide variety of practical activities to help children to learn through play. The organisation of the indoor environment and resources, and the roles staff play encourage children's independent learning. The outdoor play is less well planned and resourced.

Children with special educational needs are helped to participate fully. Children learning English as an additional language are supported well. Staff do this by using the languages they speak, checking children's understanding in discussion times and having signs in English and other languages.

However, there are weaknesses in staff's knowledge of the stepping stones which effect the quality of planning and assessment. Staff do not have clear learning intentions for activities based on identified next steps for children's learning, and assessment records are not sufficiently detailed, so gaps in provision and children's learning are not always identified.

Leadership and management is generally good. The manager's strong belief in children learning through play is effectively put into practice. Opportunities are given for staff to make use of the training opportunities available. However, monitoring and evaluation systems are not fully effective in identifying weaknesses in practice.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Staff take time to listen to and talk to parents each day and parents appreciate staff's care of their children. Parents receive written information about the kindergarten, but no regular written feedback about their children's achievements. Parents' involvement is good they contribute to projects and share their skills.

What is being done well?

- Children's creativity is fostered very effectively by the freedom children have to participate in open ended art activities using the wide range of accessible resources.
- The activities which enable children to investigate, experiment and to design and make things are very well presented. Children make recycled paper, experiment to find out what seeds need to enable them to grow and build complex scenes in block play.

- The good balance of roles that staff adopt i.e. facilitator, play mate and teacher encourage children's independent learning.
- The music and the movement sessions are both excellent. Children's ability to move confidently and imaginatively, and their agility and awareness of what their bodies can do are very well developed.

What needs to be improved?

- planning and assessment and how parents are informed of this
- opportunities for children to link sounds and letters
- the children's choice of large physical play equipment and opportunities to climb and balance

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff have organised the time at the end of the morning session effectively to enable children to have a choice of activities prior to the arrival of lunch and some children are busily engaged laying the tables. The assessment system is still not fully monitoring children's progress in all aspects of each learning area and keeping parents informed. These were raised as points for consideration at the last inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are enthusiastic about learning. They participate in new experiences and respond well to challenges. They are confident and independent when choosing activities and selecting resources and have a strong sense of community. This is fostered well by the links created between home and kindergarten, and the positive acknowledgement of children's similarities and differences. Children make books about their pets, draw pictures of their homes, pray and celebrate their faith together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's ability to discuss and explain is very well developed. They listen attentively to stories, are able speculate on possible outcomes and retell stories. Children know the names and sounds of some letters but their knowledge is mostly limited to the initial letter of their name. The labelling and signs in the kindergarten stimulate children's interest in writing; children make books, write signs for their coffee shop and label their work. They are learning to form letters correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Older children are able to count, recognise and write numbers to ten and beyond. They can do simple calculations when setting the table. Younger children can recite numbers in order and count, with help. Children's knowledge of shape, size, and positional language is good. Younger children know the names of many 2D shapes and older children are learning 3D shape names as part of construction activities. Music and movement sessions have given children a strong sense of position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore and experiment. They discover the conditions seeds need to grow, and how to make balls from paper. Children design and make complex structures with block play, construction sets and junk modelling. They use technology competently, for example, when using tape recorders. Children learn from visitors to the kindergarten - the mayor showed them his robes and a parent helped children make recycled paper. They celebrate Jewish festivals and learn about those of other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's agility and skills in moving in a variety of ways are very well developed by their participation in the twice weekly sessions in the hall. They move with confidence and control. Children's skills in using large physical play equipment and climbing are less well developed by the choices available at the kindergarten. Children use a wide range of tools safely and skilfully, for example, some are able to draw and cut out paper spirals with no adult help.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children participate in singing, drama, and music and movement sessions with tremendous enjoyment and creativity. They are learning about volume, rhythm and rhyme. Art activities are open ended and children make good use many different media to express themselves and explore different textures and techniques. Children experiment with different roles in the well resourced imaginative play areas, they serve customers in the coffee shop and try to control naughty puppies in the home corner.

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's knowledge of using the stepping stones to learning to:
 - - monitor and record children's progress more comprehensively
 - - identify next steps in individual children's learning
 - - plan clear learning outcomes for focus activities which include the identified next steps.
- Provide parents with a clear and interesting record of what children have achieved.
- Provide more opportunities for children to hear and say the initial sounds in words and to learn the names and sounds of letters.
- Improve the choice of resources for large physical play and opportunities for children to develop climbing and balancing 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.