



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109514

DfES Number: 520147

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/12/2004
Inspector Name Sue Taylor

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Peter and St Paul Playgroup
Setting Address St Peter & St Paul Church
Parkstone Road
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 2NT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Peter and St Paul Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Peter and St Paul Playgroup
Address St. Peter & St. Paul Church
Parkstone Road
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 2NT

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 Peter and St Paul Playgroup opened in 1971 and operates from a room within the church building. It is situated in a residential area of Hastings close to local shops and schools. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday morning from 9:30 to 11:45, except for Wednesday when it opens at 9:15am, with afternoons on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12:30 to 2:45pm for 38 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 48 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The playgroup currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff. None of the staff, including the supervisors hold appropriate early years qualifications and no one is working towards a qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

St Peter and St Paul's Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children.

The staff team are experienced child carers, though the required level of appropriately qualified staff is not being met. The group is welcoming to parents and children with space organised to provide varied activities. There is a wide range of good quality resources for both indoor and outdoor play. However these are limited in providing positive images of cultures and disabilities. Children can easily access resources put out by staff, making choices about their play. Most of the required documentation is in place, though some policies are basic in their content.

The premises are secure and access to the group is monitored. Staff are vigilant and supervise children well, especially when using the outdoor play area. The group have a high level of trained first aiders. Staff follow hygienic practices, though the hand washing routine is less effective. Healthy snacks and drinks are provided. At

the rising fives session the older child learns to use a lunch box, which is helpful for the transition to school. Children's individual needs are respected and met, after discussions with parents. The staff have an awareness of their responsibilities with regard to child protection.

Varied activities are planned for. The children are interested and keen to be involved. Adults listen to children, giving praise and encouragement. The staff know the children well and are able to adapt some activities to meet individual needs. Children's progress is not always effectively assessed or used to plan the next steps in their learning. The staff manage children's behaviour well, acting as good role models. They are polite to children and each other and offer clear explanations.

Parents and carers are welcomed into group. They are happy with the care their child receives and feel they can chat informally to staff when they need to.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group were set four actions. They were asked to provide an action plan outlining how they intended to meet the staffing qualification requirements and to revise the recruitment process to ensure it met current requirements.

There has been little change with regard to staff qualifications. Some staff have attended some short courses relating to their practice, however no one is undertaking training to meet the minimum requirements. The chair stated that the group has not taken on new staff since the last inspection but should this happen she would ensure that the process meets the requirements.

The group were also asked to take advice from the Environmental Health Department with regard to the hand washing routine. The routine is still not ideal, particularly before eating and after using the toilet.

The group were asked to amend certain policies to bring them in line with the national standards. The policy documents are basic and some required detail is still missing.

Three of these actions remain outstanding and are covered under the recommendations for this report.

What is being done well?

- The staff manage children's behaviour well. They get to know the children and adapt their approaches whilst providing consistent messages.
- The quality and range of the play materials and resources. A selection is put out each day that is interesting to children and encourages play. There is a good mix of plastic and wooden equipment.
- Parents and carers are encouraged into the group. They are able to become

involved with the committee or take part on the helper rota. This helps give them an insight into their child's day.

- Healthy snacks and drinks are provided during the week. Children have fruit that they help pass to other children. They get to try new tastes.

What needs to be improved?

- the number of staff with appropriate qualifications to meet the minimum requirements
- documentation, ensuring that all of the required information is available and shared with parents
- the hand washing routine
- resources and activities that provide positive images of cultures and disabilities.

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 | Develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met. |
| 7 | Ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing. |
| 14 | Ensure procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost and written and shared with parents. |
| 14 | Ensure that the procedure to be followed in the event of allegations being made against an adult at the playgroup are written and shared with parents. |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Peter and St Paul's Playgroup provides nursery education that is acceptable but has significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Although the staff generally work positively with the children, encouraging them to be confident, their lack of knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals inhibits children's progress. The staff develop trusting relationships with children who are encouraged to try new experiences. However children are not always sufficiently challenged and often lack positive adult interactions that extend their thinking and abilities. An interesting range of activities and play materials are planned for each day but the learning intentions are not clear and do not show links to the stepping stones or early learning goals. Additionally staff are only recently gaining familiarity with the new assessment process. Consequently, individual children's progress is not effectively monitored nor used to influence future planning.

Leadership and management have significant weaknesses. The staff work positively together as a team, however a lack of effective training means they are not fully developing their understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage. There is no formal process in place to monitor the quality of teaching or develop staff practice and children's progress has not been fully evaluated.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. The formal discussions lack effectiveness in informing parents of the progress their child is making towards the early learning goals. They get some advice on how they can support their child at home such as letter formation though these opportunities are limited and do not reflect individual children's needs. Friendly relationships are developed and informal chats about their children happen regularly.

What is being done well?

- The children have daily access to pencils and paper where they can practise their pre writing skills. They recognise their name and learn to write it with staff using different methods, such as tracing or dots to encourage the less confident child.
- Friendly relationships are developed with parents. They are welcomed into the group and able to see how a playgroup session runs by taking part in the helper rota.
- Warm and caring relationships have developed between staff and children. These help children feel secure and they settle quickly. They are motivated to learn.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones
- planning, to ensure learning intentions are clear and link to the early learning goals
- assessment of children's progress towards the early learning goals
- parental involvement in their child's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection has significant weaknesses.

The playgroup were asked to introduce a system of assessment that thoroughly monitors children's progress towards the early learning goals. Encourage parents to contribute their views. Use the information that is collated to influence the planning and teaching and to help identify and monitor special educational needs.

They were also asked to introduce a system to ensure that parents are kept thoroughly informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals.

Both key issues are linked to the need to have an effective assessment system that shows children's progress towards the early learning goals. According to the group it was decided not to pursue a detailed system and a tick list was introduced. Whilst this showed children's achievements under six areas of learning it related to the previous system of desirable learning outcomes and as such did not show children's progress to the early learning goals.

Termly meetings were arranged for staff to discuss children's progress with parents. The usefulness of sharing this assessment information with parents was limited and did not adequately demonstrate any progress the children may have been making towards the early learning goals.

The lack of an effective assessment system meant that planning and teaching was not influenced to provide positive challenges for children, encouraging progress. The staff's lack of familiarity with the stepping stones and early learning goals also affects the effectiveness of the daily programme.

Very recently the group has introduced assessment profiles that show children's achievements along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. There is provision for parents to contribute.

This inspection has identified similar key issues.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The children arrive happy and settle quickly. They show confidence in making choices about their play from the selection available. They are relating to other children, with some making friends. They generally behave well. Most children show pride in their achievements, though displays of their work are limited. They have some personal independence though this is not extended for the more able child.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

All children communicate, some have clear speech. They enjoy rhythmic activities, though the learning of letter sounds is limited. They show an interest in stories, however books and print are not used much at other times. Children have daily opportunities to practise mark making in free play. This is not valued by the staff who rarely get children to ascribe meanings to their pictures or 'writing'. Most children are learning pencil control, with some children writing some recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children receive some opportunities to count during the session though this tends to be adult led. There is a good selection of interesting resources to develop children's knowledge and understanding but limited effective adult interaction restricts their usefulness. The children observe and use positional language well and use some size language in their play. They are not given opportunities to look at solving simple problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show curiosity and are keen to explore though this is not fully supported with objects to investigate nor by staff asking questions. Children enjoy construction toys. They are helped to gain a sense of time by planting bulbs. They have little opportunity to operate simple equipment or gain an understanding of ICT. They are beginning to show an interest in the world in which they live, gaining some awareness of the lives of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children move freely and confidently around the room. They show awareness of themselves and others. They have some opportunities to use small equipment such as glue sticks, developing their hand eye coordination. Most children use the balancing beams and climbing frame confidently. However the lack of assessment on children's abilities and limited planning for this area inhibits progress.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|------------|------------------------|
| Judgement: | Significant Weaknesses |
|------------|------------------------|

Children enjoy painting and mixing colours though opportunities are lost to explore this further. They make pictures using different materials, however craft work is often adult directed and children are not able to be creative or use their own ideas. Most enjoy songs and ring games. The use of role play helps develop imaginative play, though this could be extended to other areas. Children have limited opportunities to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings or to use all their senses.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop the staffs knowledge and understanding of early learning goals and stepping stones
- use the assessment profiles effectively to (i) inform future planning and (ii) identify children's next steps in their learning, ensuring that they are shared with parents to show children's progress
- develop planning to ensure activity learning intentions are clear and help children progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals
- encourage further parental involvement in supporting their child's learning and in contributing to the assessment process.

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.