



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203441

DfES Number: 582753

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	12/01/2004
Inspector Name	Lynn Clements

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Rainbow Playgroup
Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall Nayland Road, Mile End Colchester Essex CO4 5ET

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Rainbow Playgroup Committee 1041244
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Rainbow Playgroup Committee
Address	Nayland Road Mile End Colchester Essex CO4 5ET

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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

Rainbow Playgroup opened in its current premises in 1990. It operates from a hall at the back of the Methodist church in Mile End, Colchester. The pre-school serves the local area.

Rainbow Playgroup is registered to take children from 2 years to under 5 years. This includes 18 funded three year olds and 5 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and works closely with their area SENCO. A small number of children have English as an additional language and the setting has strategies in place to support these children.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 09:30hrs until 12.00hrs and Tuesday's 12:15hrs until 13:45hrs. On Wednesdays and Thursdays a lunch club is available for older children from 12:00hrs until 13:30hrs.

Seven part time staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications, two are currently working towards a level 2 and another to level 3. The Supervisor is continuing her training to level 4. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and PSLA.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Rainbow Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their personal social and emotional development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have good knowledge of the foundation stage, and provide interesting and appropriate activities to help children learn. However assessment procedures are not sufficiently evaluated against the stepping stones and early learning goals. As a result, they do not currently provide a secure basis on which to plan the next steps in children's learning. Children behave well in response to the high expectations and sensitive approach of staff. Activities are well managed and messy play times are a particular strength sustaining children's interest and promoting their investigative skills.

A good system is in place to identify and support children with special educational needs, so they can make good progress. There are strategies in place to help children with English as an additional language to communicate and become fully included in the setting.

Leadership and management are generally good. The supervisor has worked hard to develop a strong staff team and all staff are committed to their professional development. Regular staff meetings enable ideas and information to be shared. Staff work well as a team.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are well informed about activities and termly topics and planning. They are encouraged to approach staff and discuss their child's progress and written records at any time. Although opportunities for parents to provide observations and information for development records are limited.

What is being done well?

- There is a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development throughout the playgroup. Staff support children's independence and provide a child centred environment enabling children to investigate and build on what they already know.
- Staff have a good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and how young children learn through play situations and practical experiences. They provide a multi sensory environment for children to explore textures such as sand in shaving foam, paint with lentils and sawdust and malleable materials like play dough.
- Children are confident and curious. They initiate conversations and are motivated to explore a wide range of resources and activities. They talk with

each other developing their role play ideas and imaginative games such as making sausages for adults and then washing them in the washing machine to make them clean before cooking.

- Commitment to professional development is high, all staff undertake training and a development plan highlights areas for further training including courses which can be fed back at in house training sessions.

What needs to be improved?

- the system for assessing children's progress, so that regular observations of what children can do and understand can be used effectively to identify their next steps
- opportunities for parents to share observations about their child with staff thereby giving a clearer picture regarding children's actual level of development
- current planning needs to be extended to ensure all six areas of learning are being addressed and reflect clearly children's next steps

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good improvements have been made since the last inspection. At the last inspection the following key issues were identified.

To improve staffs knowledge of the six area of learning with emphasis given to communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Staff have accessed foundation stage training and now have sound knowledge of how young children learn best and what activities to provide to support specific areas of learning identified.

To increase staffs knowledge of the special educational needs code of practice and appoint a designated coordinator. The group now has a designated SENCO who works closely with the area coordinator. Staff receive in house training which enables them to offer children effective support.

To Provide resources to support children's learning in knowledge and understanding of the world. The group has invested in resources such as programmable toys, communication technology such as telephones, irons and role play equipment which help children make generally good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world.

Finally to develop the planning and assessment procedures to fully reflect the stepping stones and six areas of learning. Helping children make good progress towards the early learning goals and provide parents with clear records showing their child's development and highlighting their next steps. The setting has begun to focus on their planning and assessment procedures and has started to use stepping stone assessment sheets. They are also developing their short term planning to reflect learning intentions in all six areas and identify focus, differentiation and staff

support. However these are in the very early stages of development and staff are continuing to access training and support to enable them to plan and assess effectively in the near future.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children's confidence and self esteem are supported by staff who know them well and are sensitive to their needs. They are encouraged to move independently around activities and select resources to extend their play and learning. Children's behaviour is good. They learn to share and be polite and considerate to others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in communication, language and literacy. Children are keen to communicate with staff and peers. They listen to stories and access books on their own. They follow text with their fingers and know how to turn the pages and follow the story from left to right. Children are beginning to write for a purpose making lists in role play and putting their names on their creations. They link language within physical movement through music and imaginative play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in mathematical development. Children recognise numerals through number rhymes and counting games. They discover weight and capacity when following recipes to make biscuits. Children develop their understanding of shapes such as squares and rectangles when creating shape houses and garage collages. Staff are careful to use mathematical vocabulary which helps to consolidate children's understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are making generally good progress towards knowledge and understanding of the world. They notice weather changes at registration and learn about different home cultures when they talk about how they celebrate their birthdays. Planned activities help them notice changes that occur, for example when adding sand to shaving foam and lentils and sawdust to coloured paints. They experiment with three dimensional shapes constructing fire engines with extendable ladders, lorries and cars.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are making generally good progress towards physical development. Children can handle tools, objects and malleable materials effectively and safely. They run and move confidently around activities, showing an awareness of space both for themselves and others. Staff are on hand to develop new skills such as balancing on the beam or jumping on the trampoline. Children move equipment and resources appropriately to extend their play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
<p>Children are making generally good progress towards creative development. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and express their ideas through a variety of different activities and opportunities including planned music sessions. Children use their senses to explore colour, shape, space and texture and to experience different smells and tastes such as pancakes cooking for snack time. Opportunities are provided for children to listen, observe and use their imagination.</p>	

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

- Continue to develop planning and assessment procedure to ensure all six areas of learning are reflected with the curriculum, ensure individual learning intentions are identified and based clearly on children's next steps.
- Provide opportunities for parents to participate in their child's record keeping helping to provide a broader developmental picture of their child's progress

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.