



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 148124

DfES Number: 546089

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 25/10/2004
Inspector Name Susan Tuffnell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Hardings Pre-School
Setting Address Church Rooms
Hardings
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL7 2EJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Hardings Pre-School 802263

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Hardings Pre-School
Address Church Rooms
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL7 2EJ

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

Harding's Pre-School Playgroup is a committee run group and operates from the Church Rooms at Harding's in Welwyn Garden City. The group have sole use of the premises when sessions are running. The group serves the local community.

Registration is for 26 children aged between two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 59 children on roll. This includes 40 funded 3 year olds and 0 funded 4 year olds. There is 1 child attending with a special need and no children who have English as an additional language.

The group is open 5 days a week, term time only. Opening times are 09:15 to 11:45 Monday to Friday with an afternoon session on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between the hours of 12:45 and 15:15.

There are 5 staff working with the children which includes the manager and deputy. All staff have experience in childcare and 3 staff have early years qualifications.

There is an ongoing training programme.

The group receive support from the EYDCP.

How good is the Day Care?

Harding's Pre-School Playgroup provide good care for children.

The premises are clean, well maintained and very welcoming. Children have ample space in which to play. The outside play area is safe, secure and gives children opportunities for stimulating play.

The operational plan works very well with effective policies and procedures to ensure the smooth running of the sessions but there is no lost child policy.

Staff are qualified and experienced and most have completed training courses in childcare.

There is a good variety of quality toys and play materials giving a broad range of activities, however there is insufficient planning and resources to promote diversity.

Play materials are accessible giving children opportunities to make decisions and organise their own play. They are involved in activities that encourage exploration and investigation, are happy, secure and confident and have excellent relationships with staff.

Measures are in place to reduce potential risks to children and there are clear policy guidelines for their health and wellbeing. Children learn about personal health and hygiene through everyday routines. However, staff need to ensure that children have appropriate equipment for self care.

Children are treated with equal concern. Staff are proactive in providing a suitable environment to include children with special needs and they have a satisfactory awareness of special dietary needs. Some staff have gained valuable knowledge from training in child protection matters.

Staff implement the behaviour management policy well. Children respond to direction from staff and behaviour was good from all children attending. Staff are good role models and encourage positive behaviour with skilful management.

Partnership with parents is strong with a regular exchange of information and access to policies. There are positive comments on the Ofsted questionnaire for parents.

A comprehensive and well organised system is in place for record keeping.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the management agreed to ensure fire drills are recorded fully, keep a written record signed by parents of medicines given to children, ensure there is a system in place to record any visitors, obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment, provide evidence of administration of medication policy and ensure that the child protection procedure for the pre-school complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures.

Fire drills are recorded on the register and evaluated. A medicine book is in place. Visitors are recorded when they arrive and leave. Permission is in place from parents for emergency medical advice and treatment and there is an administration of medication policy. the child protection policy now complies with the ACPC procedures.

What is being done well?

- Staff use resources in an imaginative way to encourage children to explore and investigate. The water tray was filled with dry straw and many plastic creatures were hidden (linked to the theme woodland animals). The children enjoyed finding and identifying the animals and making corresponding animal

sounds.

- Children make decisions and organise their own play. A child playing in the home corner carried a handbag around the room containing a few items, he was soon joined by several other children who also had bags and began to collect different items. The children took turns to show each other the contents of their bags making up stories about each item.

What needs to be improved?

- equipment for children's self care
- a lost child procedure

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

none

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
6	ensure children have appropriate equipment for self care
14	devise a procedure to be followed if a child is lost

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 Harding's Pre-school is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards their personal, social and emotional development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the early learning goals. They are well deployed throughout the sessions offering guidance and support to the children. Activities are planned that reflect all areas of learning but there are weaknesses in the implementation of the plans that directly influence opportunities for children to participate in more challenging and child initiated activities. Teaching methods often fail to produce a learning environment that reflects the whole of society.

Planning includes good interlinking activities but children's attainment targets and achievements are not recorded in a way that clearly shows progress in their development.

Effective systems are in place to support children who may have special educational needs.

Children are well behaved and respond to direction from staff, they display good social skills and show kindness and consideration for their peers.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a committed staff team and dedicated manager and deputy. Staff support each other and work well together however supervision and appraisal systems are still being developed and therefore staff do not have regular assessment of their practise. Monitoring and evaluating the setting is discussed at team meetings but action plans are not in place to ensure that progress is ongoing.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are made welcome and provided with verbal and written information regarding their children's learning. There is open access to policies and procedures. The parents information leaflet is printed in several languages.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority which helps children to grow in confidence and feel secure in their environment. They are given opportunities to become self-motivated, responsible and independent which has an impact on their behaviour towards each other and staff.
- Children are showing natural curiosity and enjoy activities that allow them to experiment and explore, they ask questions and listen well to others. Staff

give children time to express feelings and share personal events with others, children bring in items from home to show at group time and their contributions are valued by the staff.

- Children's physical development is fostered well by staff. They are given time and space to move freely with expression through regular outside play that challenges body control and awareness.

What needs to be improved?

- activity planning that clearly outlines learning intentions and resources
- regular assessment of children's achievements to ensure progression within the early learning goals
- the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching
- children's access to a wide range of resources to include; technology and the use of tools, materials and opportunities to explore shape in the environment
- children's interest in the wider world
- children's independent use of books

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children work in an atmosphere of mutual respect. They are developing skills in co-operation, sharing and resolving conflicts. Self-confidence is promoted with extra responsibilities such as "helper of the day" and children are able to share news and views with their peers. Children make independent choices and work confidently seeking out support when needed. Their concentration levels are high as they become absorbed in activities such as the mirror and emotions activity.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact well, play and talk together. They have good listening skills at circle time and converse with staff confidently. Staff are skilled at introducing new words and reinforcing them during activities such as naming woodland animals and their babies with children repeating the words and making respective animal noises. Children enjoy stories but there is limited independent use of books and the way stories are structured.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They count to 10 and beyond through everyday activities and number songs and rhymes. However, there is limited opportunity to observe and use positional language. They are beginning to use size comparisons and number language such as "smaller, bigger or the same size". Fractions are introduced at the playdough activity by the staff while the children cut and divide the material but there is little opportunity to play with shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are showing curiosity and interest in some activities such as the woodland animal tray and enjoy exploring natural materials. They have a good sense of time and place and are able to relate and express feelings about personal events from the past. However, they have little opportunity to learn about the wider world outside their personal experiences. Children construct confidently but do not have much access to technology, operating simple equipment and using tools.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have opportunities to use movement, space and body awareness through physical play. They display good skills in both large and small movements. They move well in groups negotiating space and combine and repeat a range of movements using trikes, cars and scooters. Staff provide activities for children to develop good hand-eye coordination in threading, construction and jigsaws but children do not have many opportunities to use 1 handed tools and equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are beginning to differentiate colours and make 3D structures in Lego. They join in favourite songs with enthusiastic body movements and have access to musical instruments. Children are interested in the collage activities but are limited in their choice of imaginative and creative materials that give them sensory experiences and allow them to experiment with texture.

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

- ensure assessment of children's learning clearly shows their progression within the early learning goals, is used to inform planning and teaching, and that planning for learning reflects the whole of society
- provide an effective system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching
- plan opportunities for children to participate in more challenging and child-initiated activities, and to have access to a wider range of materials including IT equipment. Planning should also include children's interest in the wider world and their independent use of books.

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.