



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 500211

DfES Number: 513922

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/11/2004
Inspector Name	Christine Myerscough

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Vine Playgroup
Setting Address	St Chads Parish Church Hazeldene Road New Moston Manchester M40 3GL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Ms Kath O'Hara
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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

The Vine Playgroup opened in 1997. It operates from two rooms in the Parish Hall of St Chad's Church in the New Moston area of Manchester. A maximum of 25 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup serves the needs of local families.

The playgroup is open term-time only every weekday from 09.30 until 12.00 and also opens on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12.30 until 15.00.

There are currently 27 children aged 2 and 3 years on roll. Of these, 4 children receive funding for nursery education.

There are 5 staff working with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from an Advisory Teacher from the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

The Vine Playgroup provides good quality care for children. Staff work extremely well as a team and clearly defined roles and responsibilities ensure the smooth running of the group. The way the environment is organised enables children to move freely and confidently between the play areas and they are able to choose from a good range of toys and equipment. Documentation is well organised and stored securely to maintain effective record keeping and ensure confidentiality. Staff show a strong commitment to improving practice and attend regular training to broaden knowledge and skills and keep abreast of current issues.

Staff take reasonable steps to ensure the physical environment is safe for children and the premises are maintained to a good level of cleanliness. Staff supervise children closely and effective systems are in place for their safe arrival and departure. Most aspects relating to safety and hygiene are satisfactory. Children enjoy a variety of snacks which, in the main, are nutritious to promote healthy growth and development. Staff have a clear understanding of their role and the procedures

to follow with regard to child protection and policies are shared with parents.

Staff plan and provide a broad range of activities and learning experiences to help children make very good progress in all areas of their development. There is a good balance of free play and adult-initiated activities, which allows children to play independently in addition to activities which involve support and encouragement. Children's individuality is valued. Boys and girls have equal access to the full range of activities so they can freely express themselves and develop a positive self-esteem. Staff have high expectations of behaviour, and as a result, children behave very well and show respect for one another.

Staff form good relationships with parents and they are warmly welcomed. Parents are very happy with the care and activities on offer for their children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to complete relevant training and include an equal opportunities statement in the operational plan.

The provider has completed an NVQ Level 3 in Child Care to meet qualification requirements and is suitably qualified to care for children. Four staff now hold valid first aid certificates so are in a position to administer first aid treatment, if necessary. The operational plan is updated to include a policy on equality of opportunity, and is shared with parents to enable them to have a clear understanding about how the playgroup promotes and respects diversity.

What is being done well?

- Teamwork ensures staff are working to a common purpose. They reflect critically on what needs to be improved, and put measures in place to develop practice to provide a good quality service to parents and children.
- Children's free access between the play areas promotes their confidence and independence effectively. They are happy, relaxed and comfortable in their environment and as they explore their surroundings.
- Staff form open and friendly relationships with parents and they are warmly greeted. Parents and staff work closely together to ensure children settle into playgroup successfully. As a result, children settle in quickly.
- The well planned session has a positive impact on behaviour and children are familiar and feel secure with the daily routine. Staff give the children clear messages about the manner in which they should behave. Children respond well, listen to staff and are clear about what is expected of them. They happily co-operate with each other and enjoy their play.

What needs to be improved?

- the arrangements for hand washing for children

- the safety of the heaters in the main hall
- the nutritional value of snacks.

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.)

There are no complaints to report since April 2004.

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
4	Ensure hot water is available to promote good hygiene practices regarding hand washing.
6	Make sure the heaters in the main hall do not pose a hazard to the children.
8	Improve snacks to include more healthy options for children.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Vine Playgroup provides high-quality nursery education overall which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are well qualified and secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They deploy themselves very effectively to support and encourage children's individual learning both in planned activities and during child-initiated play. The structured routine and the organisation of the learning environment strongly promotes children's confidence and independence. Staff's skilful interactions and varied teaching methods gain children's interest and promote positive attitudes to learning. Plans reflect a varied programme of activities to support children's development in all six areas of learning, although do not always link clearly to the stepping stones. Staff manage behaviour very well and provide a clear framework for the children to work within. Children respond well to this and are keen to please.

The leadership and management are very good. The manager has a well established team who work closely together to provide an effective learning environment for children. Regular staff meetings ensure clear open lines of communication and very good organisation. The manager and staff are receptive to new ideas and show commitment to the continuing improvement of the nursery education. There is not yet a rigorous system in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of nursery education.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff promote parental involvement and all parents are invited and take part in helping out on a rota basis. Parents are happy with the positive impact the playgroup has on their children and the progress they are making. Feedback from parents demonstrates how highly they regard the playgroup.

What is being done well?

- Children's communication, language and literacy are well fostered. Staff use good questioning techniques and an extended vocabulary linked to topic work to promote and extend children's language and thinking. Children listen attentively and link their new vocabulary to current events, such as bonfire night. Children demonstrate a love of books through regular story telling. They have good pencil control and confidently practise their writing with good support from staff.
- The learning environment is very effective. Staff create a calm and purposeful environment where children feel safe and secure and quickly become confident, ready to participate and learn.

- Well thought out props are used at group time as effective teaching aids to give children meaning to their learning. Children eagerly wait in anticipation and show a sense of wonder and excitement, building their concentration levels and making learning fun.
- A harmonious and effective working environment is sustained, by staff who work collaboratively and are very clear about their roles and responsibilities to support children's overall learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning to ensure it links more clearly to the stepping stones
- the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the nursery education.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in response to the key issues raised in the previous inspection report. The staff have introduced effective measures to provide appropriate challenges for children with regard to calculation and letters sounds, and have revised the procedures and information to make parents aware of the early learning goals and how they assess children's learning.

Daily activities such as songs, stories and action rhymes promote children's skills in calculation. Staff support children's understanding of more and less as they play together with the sand and take part in small group games. Children show an interest in number problems and willingly participate in such activities. Good emphasis is placed on helping children learn about letters and sounds through enjoyable activities built into the daily planning at group time. Children are making excellent progress linking initial sounds to letters of the alphabet, and show great enthusiasm for such activities and books linked to phonics.

Parents receive good quality written information about the early learning goals and Foundation Stage. Plans of topics and themes are well presented on the notice board for parents so they know what their children are intended to learn. Regular meetings take place between the child's key worker and parents to share observations and assessment records. This provides an opportunity for parents to contribute their own observations of their child's learning and keeps them well informed about progress towards the early learning goals.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy, settled and friendly towards others. They play purposefully and explore the wide range of activities with enthusiasm and interest. They have good levels of concentration, persevere at activities and play independently. Children are very well behaved and wait patiently at group time to share their news about their favourite toys. They confidently take care of their personal needs, such as taking themselves to the toilet and washing and drying their hands.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Group time is very effective in promoting children's listening and speaking skills. Children enthusiastically discuss the sounds of fireworks and talk about favourite Disney characters. They hear and say initial letter sounds with confidence. Children freely select books for pleasure, eagerly listen to stories and request their favourites often. They recognise their own names, make good attempts at writing them on their work and concentrate well as they write messages in meaningful situations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children willingly attempt to count and are beginning to recognise numbers as they play with tills and number jigsaws. They enjoy singing rhymes such as 'five currant buns' helping them to calculate and solve simple number problems. Children make very good use of a range of mathematical equipment to support their learning as they sort, thread and match by colour, shape and size. Good adult support helps children develop an understanding of volume, capacity and measure as they play in the sand.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Daily conversations at group time are helping children gain an understanding of time and place. They eagerly talk about days of the week, months of the year and events in their lives. Through topic work, children are developing an awareness of change as they study lifecycles and learn about the seasons. Children play for considerable periods on the computer and are developing their skills in using a mouse. They sample different foods and celebrate festivals to gain awareness of other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enjoy using their physical skills and concentrate well as they jump, hop, balance successfully and climb up the frame independently. They use tools competently and show high levels of skill and perseverance as they use glue spreaders, mark making tools and scissors. Children show respect for one another's personal space as they sit side by side on the bench and make space for their friends. Through daily routines children are aware of healthy practices.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children confidently explore the properties of materials. They take an interest in musical instruments and talk about their sounds. They become totally immersed applying paint in different ways, creating their collage and join in enthusiastically at song time. They draw freely and comment on their creations. Indoor role play activities are varied and interesting. Children enjoy playing imaginatively as they pretend to buy items from their toy shop and have conversations on the telephone.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- ensure short-term plans make clear links with the stepping stones for children's learning
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of the nursery education.

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.