



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220068

DfES Number: 547040

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/10/2003
Inspector Name Rachael Mankiewicz

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Brendans Parish Playgroup
Setting Address St Brendans Catholic Infant School
Beanfield Avenue
Corby
Northamptonshire
NN18 0AZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Brendan's Parish Playgroup

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Brendan's Parish Playgroup
Address St Brendans Catholic Infant School
Beanfield Avenue
Corby
Northamptonshire
NN18 0AZ

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 Brendan's Parish Playgroup is a committee-run group which opened in 1992. It operates from St Brendan's Catholic Infant School, on the Beanfield estate in Corby. The playgroup is registered to provide 20 places for children aged between two years and under five years. The playgroup is open five mornings and two afternoons per week during school term time. Sessions last from 9.00 am to 11:30 am. and 12.30 pm to 15.00 pm. The playgroup serves the local community.

There are currently 38 children on roll, this includes 8 funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. Staff are able to support children with special needs. Currently no children are learning English as a second language.

The Supervisor and Deputy are full time, the provider and two other members of staff work with the children. The provider is a qualified teacher and the supervisor holds an appropriate early years qualification. The group receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The group have sole use of the premises during playgroup hours.

How good is the Day Care?

St Brendan's Parish Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The premises are well-maintained and well-organised. The children are able to move freely and safely between activities and facilities. Good staff:child ratios also allow this freedom of movement, as staff have time to play and talk with the children throughout the activities. The management committee and staff have a good awareness of health and safety issues and good hygiene is seen as important. The staff encourage good behaviour through positive and consistent methods of behaviour management.

The group provides a good range of toys, resources and activities for children of differing ages and stages of development. Staff are aware of the needs of different children and support their individual interests. The registered provider and the supervisor have relevant early years qualifications and the staff continue to attend short courses to update their knowledge. However, the requirement regarding

qualified staff may not be met if the registered provider is not available.

The policies and procedures in the operational plan are thorough and record keeping is of a generally good standard. Parents wishes are recorded and adhered to, although their permission for emergency treatment has not been sought. Parents are encouraged to take part in their children's learning. They generally receive good information about the setting. Information on their children's progress is shared on an informal, daily basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the management agreed to address several administrative issues; make improvements to planning and assessment of children's learning and to address a safety issue. The children and staff's times of arrival and departure are now recorded in the register, and staff details are available in case of emergencies. The planning and assessment of the children's learning have been developed further, and have been inspected and reported on in the Nursery Education report. The safety issue regarding the radiators has been addressed and these are now covered.

What is being done well?

- The pre-school is well organised with time for the individual care of children, and good organisation of space and staff allows children to move between areas and activities and still receive adequate supervision and necessary attention. Staff also have time to support the individual needs of children.
- Children benefit from the full and appropriate range of activities and resources for children of differing ages and stages of development. They are interested in the activities which are extended with the encouragement of the staff.
- The management committee and staff have a good awareness of safety issues that ensure the children are safe and secure when indoors and outside. There are good safety procedures in place to stop unvetted people on the premises coming into contact with children.
- Children are aware of the limits on their behaviour and what is expected of them, and therefore behaviour overall is good.
- Parents receive good information about the pre-school, their children's interests and their progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the level of childcare staff holding a level 2 qualification to be at least half of all childcare staff
- documentation, to include written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment

- the policies and procedures to show how they help the pre-school and parents work in partnership to meet the needs of the children, and the content made known to the parents.

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
2	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare.
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.
12	Ensure that parents are aware of the contents of the policies and procedures and how they help the pre-school and parents work in partnership to meet the needs of the children.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Brendan's Parish Playgroup provides a generally good quality of nursery education in a welcoming atmosphere where the children feel happy and secure. The children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. They are making very good progress in personal, social and emotional development which can be seen through the confidence and good behaviour of the children.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The required level of qualified staff is not always met although they are all building on their knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They have taken advice from others to plan a full and interesting range of activities and resources to help children learn through play. Planning is being developed further, including evaluation and monitoring to ensure that the children have covered what was planned, and that it has been adapted to meet children's individual and developing needs. A key worker system is in place, with a staff member responsible for a small group of children. The staff interact well with the children. They have high expectations of the children, and as a result children are respectful of friends and adults. The support system for children with special needs is particularly good. There are currently no children who speak English as a second language.

The leadership and management of the group is very good. The strong management base has systems in place for induction and appraisal, and encourages staff to undertake training. The management and staff show a commitment to the improvement of their service and the care of children by reviewing practice, and the achievement of their aims.

The partnership with parents is very good and has a positive impact on the quality of children's learning. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the setting and the educational provision. Staff share the records of the children's achievements and parents are invited to make their input.

What is being done well?

- The staff give high priority to nurturing children's personal, social and emotional development. The children behave well, with the older children acting as role models for the younger children, being kind to each other and taking turns in activities.
- Children talk confidently to each other, to staff and to other adults. They listen and interact well in large and small groups, and express their feelings and experiences.
- There is a good choice of activities during free-play sessions and the children's natural enthusiasm for learning is being developed. Attractive displays and resources are used well to help create a stimulating learning

environment.

- The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are given useful information about the curriculum, and children's progress on an informal daily basis. They are also included in the assessment of children and planning their progress, particularly in respect of children with special needs.

What needs to be improved?

- Children's use of technological equipment to support their learning.
- Older and more able children's recognition of familiar words and development of their ability to form recognisable letters.
- The level of choice given to children about which resources to use in their creative and design work.
- Evaluation of activities to ensure that all areas of development are covered and the information is used to inform planning and progress children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable as this is the first Funded Nursery Education inspection. Issues that were raised at the Transitional Inspection regarding care and education have been addressed, such as taking advice re planning the curriculum. The setting can be judged as making generally good progress. There is a key worker system in place with a member of staff responsible for a small group of children, and these staff provide regular updates about the children's progress.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children show confidence and independence as they move between self-chosen activities. Most of the older children show perseverance. They are aware of routines and rules, and they behave well. The interaction between children and adults is very good. Children show care and concern for others, as they share and take turns. They develop an awareness of other cultures through interest in festivals and the community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

The children communicate confidently and take turns in conversations. They enthusiastically sing in groups. Children listen to each other and staff, and convey what they are doing and how they feel. They are beginning to understand that written words convey messages. Most of the children recognise the initial letters and sounds in their names although they do not frequently see them written. They are beginning to make marks, with some children attempting their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children count at every opportunity and are able to solve simple problems. They compare different numbers of objects, and learn about simple subtraction as they talk about more and less. They consolidate this knowledge by playing mathematical games. They are beginning to develop their knowledge of different shapes by comparing objects such as squares and triangles. They are beginning to understand about patterns by using pegboards.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

The children have an awareness of the natural world around them and of the changing seasons. They talk about how things grow and change. They explore some different materials used for crafts. Their awareness of their own families, their cultures, and the beliefs of others is also developing. They talk about past events and what happens in other countries. Children do not have use of a computer or other programmable toys.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

The children handle a range of materials, tools and small equipment, and their manipulative skills are good. The children confidently move around the room, showing awareness of the other children. The children develop their larger muscles through indoor and outdoor play. Older children show an awareness of their own physical needs, through good hygiene practices and a topic on their bodies.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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The children enthusiastically take part in role-play. They also work imaginatively with small-world resources. Children experience a good range of sensory experiences throughout free-play activities. They sometimes explore sound with a range of instruments. They enjoy creative activities using different craft materials, although they are not always able to choose and access these independently.

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 children's knowledge and use of everyday technology, information and communication technology, and programmable toys to support their learning.
- extend the use of assessments of children's progress and evaluation of activities to inform planning and teaching.

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.