



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113694

DfES Number: 517410

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	25/11/2004
Inspector Name	Loraine Wardlaw

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Shekinah Playgroup
Setting Address	Western Road Shoreham-by-Sea West Sussex BN43 5WD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Trustees of Shekinah Playgroup
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Trustees of Shekinah Playgroup
Address	Western Road Shoreham-by-sea BN43 5WD

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

Shekinah pre-school opened in 1980. The pre-school operates from two rooms in the Baptist church, which is located in Shoreham-by-sea. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school is managed by the supervisors, but the Baptist church has overall responsibility of the setting.

There are currently 28 children from two years six months to five years on roll. This includes 13 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four morning sessions a week and one afternoon session, during school term time. Sessions are from 09:30-12:00 and from 13:00-15:30 on a Thursday. The group are closed on a Wednesday. Five staff work with the children; four of which have early years qualifications to National Vocational Level Two or above. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Shekinah pre-school provides high quality nursery education. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Overall, staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Planning is effective, but does not cover differentiation for different ability children. The pre-school provide a wide variety of exciting and stimulating activities for children. Staff regularly observe, assess and record children's progress which relates to the stepping stones within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Most staff know children well, are good role models and interact skilfully with children, extending their learning at every opportune moment. Children with special educational needs are very well supported at the group.

Leadership and management is very good. There is an enthusiastic and keen approach to leading and managing the provision. The curriculum is constantly monitored and evaluated and staff keep up-to-date with their knowledge by attending short training courses. There is a high level of commitment from the staff, with continual awareness of improving practice, but without formal appraisals on individual staff's practice.

Partnership with parents is very good. An excellent, detailed prospectus and welcome pack is given to parents and a large, well presented notice board gives information to parents. Children's progress records are regularly shared with parents by the friendly, approachable staff. Parents have the opportunity to be involved in their child's learning either at the group or by continuing the learning at home. Parents are aware of the topic children learn about but not the weekly focus activities offered.

What is being done well?

- Staff plan and offer practical, hands on activities for children which are often linked to different areas of the curriculum. For example, the children make a Japanese poster, prepare chicken and noodles for their snack and all sit together at a low table on the floor to eat with chopsticks.
- Staff put a high emphasis on introducing maths into all play activities and are skilful at talking to children, encouraging them to think and ask questions; they effectively extend their learning. This ensures that the three year olds are making rapid progress in mathematical and communication, language and literacy development.
- The setting do not have access to an outside play area, but the programme for physical development is very good. Staff meticulously plan the physical part of the session and offer children exciting experiences full of variety and challenge.

- Staff are dedicated, well organised and a competent team of practitioners who are knowledgeable about how young children learn. They set up attractive displays for children to look at or touch, such as a nature table and a display showing Japanese culture; items included photographs, a kimono, coins and a recipe book.
- The pre-school build a successful partnership with parents. They involve parents in the children's learning by asking them to contribute items of interest linked to the theme, and offer a share a book scheme, as the children become older. Parent representatives assist the staff in organising special events and parents are invited to social evenings.

What needs to be improved?

- the further development of individual staff practice through more rigorous appraisals.
- the information given to parents about weekly learning activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Shekinah pre-school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The setting had two key issues to address, which they have done successfully. The first, was to provide more opportunities for children to practice pencil control, to develop children's early writing skills through a more structured approach, teaching the formation of letters initially to encourage children to write their own name. Also to introduce writing during activities and into the surroundings. Teaching now focuses on this area and children have ample opportunity to practice emergent writing in their play for example at the supermarket or the petrol station. Written signs are made by staff which say ' please pay here' which children are very aware of. Staff encourage children to write their own names on their work, showing them the correct letter formation. The three year olds at the group during the inspection were making very good progress in this area of learning.

The second key issue was to review the organisation of activities and large quantities of resources presented in the quiet room. Also to ensure children have an environment that establishes a clear framework for learning. This has also been successfully achieved by the group re-organising the two rooms into specific learning areas and reducing the amount of resources on offer in the smaller room. Children access both rooms at different times of the session and staff ensure that there is a good balance of activities across all of the curriculum areas, to ensure progress is made in their all round development.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Three year olds are excited learners, are well motivated and show sustained interest in activities. They are developing good levels of confidence and self esteem; they happily come into pre-school and show care for others. Children are making friendships and are learning to share and take turns. They are well behaved, understand the routine and expectations within the setting and have times to reflect on their day. Children are developing personal independence, by choosing activities themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are keen communicators, with their peers and with adults. They often ask questions and are able to recall songs or elements of a story. They use speech to talk through their ideas and experiences. Three year olds enjoy rhyming and are beginning to link sounds of the alphabet to the letters. They recognise their names, understand that the written word has meaning and are developing a good interest in books. Children have very good opportunities to practice emergent writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Young children can recognise numerals and are developing good counting skills. They are aware of simple number problems and some children are able to solve these problems. For example a three year old was tidying up a puzzle and said " one train, one train, two trains". Children can identify shapes, match colour, make patterns and complete puzzles. They have a good understanding of size and are developing and understanding of weight.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have opportunities to explore sand, experiment with magnets or the floating and sinking of objects. They build and design with construction sets and recyclable materials. Children use every day technology in their play such as calculators, tape recorder, microwave. They are developing a good sense of time, through the excellent questioning by the adults. Children have good opportunities to observe and learn about their local community; they walk to the river, visit the local music shop.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children move confidently using their bodies in a variety of ways in the tunnel, along the plank or on the climbing frame. They have good spatial awareness, especially when using the wheeled toys. Children are able to take care of their own physical needs such as using a tissue, and through planned activities understand about healthy parctices.They peddle trikes with skill, going fast, slow, turning corners and have good opportunities to use a variety of tools and small and large equipment.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore colour, texture, shape through art and craft activities such as printing, foot painting and free collage. They enjoy regular music and singing times where children tap out rhymes or move to music and 'grow like flowers'. Children role play in the laundry area and use their imaginations well during drawing and play doh activities. They use all their senses when they play with custard or jelly. Children regularly cook and taste different foods at snack time.	

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:

- introduce a formal appraisal system to develop staff's individual practice further; with particular emphasis on implementing focus activities effectively and with differentiation.

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.