



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY254456

DfES Number: 535352

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/02/2005
Inspector Name Marilyn Ashley

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name Flockton First Steps Playgroup
Setting Address Flockton First Steps Playgroup
Barnsley Road, Flockton
Wakefield
WF4 4DH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Flockton Playgroup 1035844

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Flockton Playgroup
Address Flockton Working Men's Club
Barnsley Road
Flockton
WF4 4AA

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

Flockton First Steps Playgroup opened in 1979, but has recently moved to its present site. It operates from a portable building within the grounds of Flockton C of E School in the village of Flockton, Huddersfield. The group has one large room with access to toilets, a kitchen and an enclosed outdoor area. It serves the local area.

There are currently 19 children aged from 2 to 4 years on roll of whom 16 children are in receipt of nursery education funding. The group opens five mornings from 09.00 to 11.30 during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup currently supports a child with special educational needs.

At the time of the inspection there were two full time and one part-time staff members working with the children. One full time member of staff holds an appropriate early years qualification, the second new full time member of staff will be working towards an appropriate qualification and the part-time member is working towards the Diploma in Pre-school Practice. The setting receives support from a Pre-School Learning Alliance teacher and an advisory teacher from the Kirklees Early Years Service.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Flockton First Steps Playgroup's provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff form good relationships with the children but do not always manage their behaviour well. The indoor area is inviting and well organised to enable children to choose their own resources and foster their independence. The organisation of the session limits children's time to extend their self chosen learning resulting in restlessness and deteriorating behaviour. The outdoor provision is not accessed for sufficient time or planned sufficiently to ensure children's physical development. Interesting activities are planned but are not extended sufficiently to challenge the more able, particularly in aspects of literacy and mathematics. Over directed activities limit children's creativity. Children with special educational needs are supported well. Staff observe the children but do not use the information effectively to plan for the next steps of learning. Records are not in a clear format for parents or linked to the early learning goals to ensure all children's progress.

Leadership and management has significant weaknesses. The key issues of the previous inspection have not been addressed, but there is now strong leadership from the Headteacher and committee. The staff are developing as a new team and are improving the setting through support and training. There is not a rigorous system to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the setting.

Partnership with parents has significant weaknesses. Relationships with staff are friendly, parents speak well of the setting. They are informed on aspects of the setting, information is shared informally. Parents are not informed on the Foundation Stage which limits their full involvement in their children's learning and records of achievement.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a well organised and inviting environment that enables children to select their own resources and fosters their developing independence.
- Parents speak well of the setting and the friendly, relaxed atmosphere that the staff create. Good relationships are formed and parents are informed on aspects of the provision.
- Children are interested and confident. They select their own resources, work independently and take care of their own needs. They use their imagination well in role play.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children, particularly the more able, to develop and extend their emergent writing skills and their exploration and use of numbers in everyday play
- the organisation of the session
- the observation, planning and recording of children's learning
- the frequency and duration of access to the outdoors and the development of the learning opportunities in all areas of learning in the outdoor provision
- the opportunities for children to freely express their ideas, thoughts and feelings.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Poor progress has been made in tackling the key issues identified in the previous inspection report. The first key issue required the playgroup to improve the organisation of the session to prevent children from becoming restless and to make clear expectations of children's behaviour during group times. The organisation of the routine, particularly the snack time, still limits the time children have to develop and extend their learning, resulting in them becoming restless and their behaviour deteriorating. Staff have not developed appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour in whole group time. This means that children do not develop a sufficient understanding of acceptable behaviour and disruption by some children affects the ability of others to concentrate and to learn.

The second issue was to review the frequency of activities to promote children's physical development and to allow time for more vigorous activity. Planning for the outdoor area is limited and does not ensure that all aspects of children's physical development are covered. The frequency and length of time allocated to outdoor play is still insufficient to ensure children's progress and challenge.

The increase of staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals, so that they could refer to them in planning, was the third key issue. Effective planning remains an issue and staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones in practice is still not sufficient to ensure the progress of all children and the challenge of the more able in the six areas of learning.

This is linked to the fourth key issue as the assessment and recording of children's learning is still not in a format that is linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals to clearly show their attainment and progress. This is limiting children's progress as their individual next steps of learning, in the six areas of learning, are not identified and planned for.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested and show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They choose their own resources, work independently and take care of their own needs. Children behave well most of the time, are beginning to share, take turns and work as part of a small group and learn about the lives and needs of others. The time for children to develop and extend their self-chosen learning and develop their personal responsibility, however, is limited by a restrictive routine.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children talk readily to each other and adults about what they are doing. They enjoy sharing books, stories and rhymes. Some children recognise their first names and are beginning to write these correctly, but opportunities for children to explore sounds are not exploited sufficiently. Planned activities and opportunities, particularly for the more able children, to develop and extend emergent writing skills and to write for a purpose in play and role play are insufficient both indoors and out.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently to 5 and some can recognise numbers to 5 and others to 9. They explore shape in puzzles and the indoor environment. Children are beginning to use mathematical language in play, such as bigger than, when comparing heights on the height chart. They explore pattern through looking at animals' coats. Opportunities, particularly for the more able, to explore, represent and use numbers in everyday play activities and routines both indoors and out are not maximised.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children explore, design and join materials in the design area. Some children use the computer confidently but access is limited. Families share their cultures to help children learn about different lives. Children find out about living things, such as new chicks. There are limited resources and opportunities for children to investigate and find out how and why things work. The local area is not used sufficiently to extend children's experience and understanding of its features and people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children use a range of tools, construction and malleable materials with increasing control. They talk about the importance of being healthy and looking after their bodies. Children use a range of small equipment, but access to large equipment is insufficient. Limited planning and time in the outdoor area restricts children's physical development and progress. The extension of their learning opportunities, in the six areas of learning, to the outdoors is limiting their progress and challenge.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children use their imagination well in role play, but this is not extended sufficiently through adult interaction. They use a range of interesting materials in the design area. Children explore music, but this is not planned effectively to extend their experiences of instruments, movement and dance. Adult directed activities and a lack of planned opportunities for children to record experiences limit children's opportunities to freely express their thoughts and ideas and develop their skills.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve the organisation of the session to ensure children have the maximum time to develop and extend their self chosen learning and developing personal responsibility and to prevent drifting and deterioration in behaviour
- further develop the observation, planning and recording of children's learning, linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals, to inform future planning and to ensure the progress of all children and the challenge of the more able
- increase children's access to the outdoor area and develop the planning of the provision to ensure the development of children's physical skills and their learning opportunities in all the six areas of learning
- increase children's opportunities to freely express their ideas, thoughts and feelings in art, music, movement and dance.

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.