



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 117216

DfES Number: 515094

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/03/2004
Inspector Name Leoarna Mills - Allen

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Plymstock Community Centre Pre-School
Setting Address 6 Memory Lane
Plymstock
Plymouth
PL9 9GH

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Plymstock Community Centre Pre-School 300944

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Plymstock Community Centre Pre-School
Address 6 Memory Lane
Plymstock
Plymouth
PL9 9GH

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

Plymstock Community Centre Pre-School has been running in Plymstock Community Centre for many years.

The group has use of the main hall and kitchen area at the community centre, as well as a patio area to the rear of the building. There are shops and a library close by. Plymouth city centre is a short distance away.

The pre-school operates from 09:15 hours to 12:00 hours Monday to Friday. An extra session from 12:30 hours to 15:15 hours runs on Wednesday afternoons.

There are currently 39 children on roll, including 8 funded 4-year-olds, and 31 funded 3-year-olds. No children with special educational needs or English as an additional language are in attendance at present.

The committee that runs the community centre is also responsible for the pre-school and employing the staff. There are currently six part time members of staff employed. Five hold the Diploma in Pre-School Practice, and the remaining staff member holds an NVQ 2. The group is also supported by a number of regular parent volunteers.

How good is the Day Care?

Plymstock Community Centre Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children overall.

The play leader brings considerable experience to the group, and manages a team of well-qualified staff. There is a spacious, clean and welcoming environment for children, and plentiful toys and resources, though adults are not always deployed in such a way that helps children make the most of what is on offer. Although some elements of the operational plan are inconsistent, and there are some weaknesses in record keeping, documentation relating to the provision in other areas is adequate.

Risk assessment systems do not yet fully identify hazards that could compromise the safety of the children. However, proper procedures for the management of the majority of children's health and medical issues are in place. Snack time does not currently include healthy alternatives, and staff's knowledge of some children's special dietary needs is insufficient. There is good support for staff training in child protection issues, although some elements of the child protection policy are not in line with regulations.

Children do not, at present, enjoy a programme of planned activities that fully promotes their learning and development. They do, however, enjoy physical activities and role play games. Staff have attended good amounts of training to support their knowledge of equal opportunities and special needs; however, this knowledge is not put fully into practice within the setting. Children are largely well behaved.

Parents do not receive sufficient information about their child's progress. However, a warm welcome is extended to existing and prospective parents, and many are involved as volunteer helpers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the group agreed to make a number of improvements, largely relating to the operational plan and related documentation. In particular the group agreed to ensure staff qualifications were on file; to develop policies for medication, child protection and complaints; to complete a risk assessment; to devise consent forms for administering medicine and seeking emergency medical advice and consent; to keep records for reasonable timescales; to provide copies of fire log books and certificates; to record incidents; and to ensure all policies were up to date and that parents completed all necessary consent forms.

A risk assessment system has been devised, although it does not yet effectively identify all hazards. However, all other requests have been largely completed, increasing the amount of required information that passes between parents and the setting, allowing staff to better care for children.

What is being done well?

- Staff training is well supported.
- There is a warm, friendly welcome to existing and prospective parents.

What needs to be improved?

- the full implementation of the operational plan, including the full recording of arrivals and departure times for children, staff and visitors; the regular assessment of risks and hazards and their minimisation; the system for ensuring parents are aware of medication administered to their child or of

accidents that have occurred; and the updating of the complaints and child protection policies

- the deployment of staff to ensure that the play activities provided, and the organisation of space, time and resources, promotes positive outcomes for all children, while encouraging children to view difference and diversity in society positively
- staff understanding of the needs of children with special dietary requirements, of positive behaviour management strategies, and of the need to be vigilant about children's safety at all times
- internal procedures for ensuring the timely identification and provision of support for children with special educational needs.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
3	Ensure adults plan and provide play opportunities that promote children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Include in this planning more effective staff deployment strategies, and emphasise the importance of praise and encouragement in supporting children's development.	14/09/2004
6	Conduct regular risk assessments, identifying actions needed to minimise hazards, while ensuring that adults are continuously deployed in a way which ensures children are safe at all times.	14/09/2004
8	Ensure staff are fully aware of the needs of all children who have special dietary requirements.	14/09/2004
14	Improve record keeping and documentation, paying particular regard to accurate recording of times of arrival and departure of children, staff, volunteers	14/09/2004

	and all visitors; updating the child protection and complaints procedures to include all required information and references to the regulator; ensuring parents complete permissions and medical documentation in full.	
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
9	Increase children's access to resources and activities that promote their understanding of difference and diversity.
10	Increase the clarity of procedures for identifying and confirming children's suspected special educational needs.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Plymstock Community Centre Pre-school offers acceptable quality nursery education although there are some significant areas for improvement. Children are making generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. However their progress in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is limited by some significant weaknesses. Progress in communication, language and literacy is poor.

Staff have good relationships with the children who generally behave well. Children participate in planned activities with enthusiasm, however regular adult led activities do not allow children freedom to experiment and experience things for themselves. Children have many opportunities to practice a range of physical skills using small and large equipment. However there are significant weaknesses in the teaching of other areas of the curriculum.

The staff's lack of knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and how children progress through them towards the early learning goals results in worthwhile planned activities not reaching their full potential. Staff regularly evaluate activities and assess children, however outcomes are not used effectively to enable them to plan children's next steps for learning or set appropriate challenges.

The person-in-charge provides practical support to staff and children. She supports staff in planning activities. However there are significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the pre-school as the lack of effective evaluation of the educational programme has resulted in limited progress since the last inspection.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Staff foster good relationships with parents. They receive regular information about planned events within the pre-school and are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning, but information on children's educational progress is limited.

What is being done well?

- Children and parents are made to feel welcome and staff foster good relationships with them.
- Children are offered many opportunities to practice a range of physical skills using a range of small and large equipment.
- Children are exposed to a wide range of construction activities allowing them to develop their construction skills.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones children need to achieve in their progress towards the early learning goals, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development
- the use of observations to effectively plan for children's individual progression
- the use of time and resources
- planning to differentiate between three and four-year-olds and less or more able children
- parents' access to information about their children's educational development

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made limited progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection. Staff complete regular evaluations and have a knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning and early learning goals. However they do not assess children or record their progress towards the early learning goals effectively. Staff do not have sufficient understanding of the stepping stones to ensure that learning objectives are identified and achieved and children's progress is not tracked. This results in a lack of sufficient challenge for the children.

Parents only receive informal information on their children's progress towards the early learning goals, resulting in them being unaware of their children's educational development.

Staff regularly supervise the climbing apparatus adding to the safety of the children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children behave well and are confident and secure. They arrive happily and most separate easily from their parents or main carer. Children play well independently and in small groups, forming strong friendships. They have an awareness of their place within the immediate environment and are learning good self care skills in matters of hygiene. They can use the toilet independently and are able to self-select during free play.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Poor

Children have limited opportunities for mark making. Staff deployment during adult led activities results in children rarely looking at books for a purpose or pleasure and stories are rarely shared with adults. Children are encouraged to explore the link between letters and the sound they make. However children have insufficient opportunities to practice writing for a variety of purposes or write their names independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children enjoy singing familiar number songs and rhymes and show an interest in numbers during physical play. However they have insufficient opportunities to explore numbers or calculate to solve simple maths problems during everyday play or during daily routines. There are limited opportunities to interest children in addition or subtraction and older children do not have sufficient challenge to extend any understanding of number or size or pattern recognition.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have many opportunities to develop their construction skills and have access to a small selection of electronic toys. However they have limited access to information and communication technology. Children rarely talk about past events to demonstrate some awareness of the passage of time but staff do plan for visitors to visit the setting. Children are learning about some cultural differences by celebrating different festivals but they have limited access to multicultural resources.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children confidently and safely manipulate a variety of tools and resources with increasing skill. They have good health awareness and are able to recognise the need to wash their hands after toileting. Children have ample opportunities for indoor physical play and move with confidence. Children are able to use climbing apparatus and wheeled vehicles indoors and are provided with a good variety of equipment to develop their manipulative skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:

Significant Weaknesses

Children enthusiastically engage in imaginary play and include other children in their games. They use a variety of media through a range of different craft activities but these often have a pre-determined end result and children do not have sufficient opportunities to express themselves freely through art, music and dance, or explore the different properties of the materials they are using.

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

- ensure plans and staff awareness of the stepping stones promote children's learning overall with particular regard to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development
- ensure observations are used effectively to inform planning for children's individual progress
- make good use of time and resources.

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.