



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 400421

DfES Number: 536640

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	30/11/2004
Inspector Name	Elizabeth Patricia Watton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Hertford Vale Playgroup
Setting Address	Hertford Vale School Staxton Scarborough North Yorkshire YO12 4SS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Hertford Vale Playgroup SC409 1078329
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Hertford Vale Playgroup
Address	Hertford Vale Primary School Ings Lane, Staxton Scarborough North Yorkshire YO12 4SS

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

Hertford Vale Playgroup operates from a purpose built nursery classroom in the Hertford Vale Church of England primary school in Staxton. The village is situated adjacent to the A64, seven miles from Scarborough. There is an enclosed area for outdoor play and learning: this is shared with the reception class as are the toilet facilities.

The playgroup has been registered since September 1997 and is open Monday to Friday 9:00 to 12:00, term time only. It serves families in the immediate locality and offers places to children from neighbouring villages if spaces are available.

Funded nursery education places are provided for those children of eligible age. For this they have the support of the local education authority. There are currently 19 children on roll, there are 10 funded 3 year olds and no funded 4 year olds. The group supports a small number of children with special educational needs and none who speak English as an additional language.

The group is run by a committee of parents with the head of the school taking a significant role. They employ 3 permanent staff and up to 2 volunteers to ensure that adult-child ratios are kept high. The group are working towards minimum qualification levels.

How good is the Day Care?

Hertford Vale Playgroup provides good care for children. There is a bright welcoming environment where children are relaxed, confident and settle well. The group are still working towards the minimum qualification level and recent staff changes have resulted in additional challenges in this respect although the playgroup improvement plan shows clearly how and when the recognised training will be completed. There is an excellent range of resources addressing all areas of care, learning and play; those showing positive representation of the diversity in British culture are limited. The attention to documentation and particularly the improvement plan promote a very professional approach to organisational matters. Some minor amendments to

policy statements are recommended.

All reasonable measures are taken to ensure the children's health and safety. Door security is very good and specialist risk assessments have been undertaken for specific situations. The staff get to know the children and their families very well and offer a high level of individual care. They work carefully with other agencies to ensure the safety and integration of children with special needs. The children respond very well to the positive behaviour management techniques used. The staff provide a good range of carefully planned activities both indoors and out; these are invitingly arranged to ensure that the children are highly motivated to explore and use their imagination. Effective links with the school further contributes to the firm emphasis on early years education.

Relationships with parents are very good. They receive clear information about playgroup business and how their child spends their time. The group invites parents to offer their views on the playgroup: this then contributes to the improvement plan. Social events further strengthen relationships.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. Although the manager still does not have a level three qualification, completion timescales are imminent as outlined in the group's development plan. Documentation regarding the health, safety and protection of children is now all in place although further minor development of this is recommended. The staff's knowledge of child protection has been addressed through training and the attention paid to procedures. These measures contribute positively to all aspects of the children's care.

What is being done well?

- The children's free access to the adjacent outdoor classroom and the broad range of opportunities provided there, ensures that they are motivated and develop their natural curiosity as learners.
- The staff get to know the children very well and enjoy the children's individual personalities: they sensitively encourage quieter children to participate and the more confident children to develop their independence further.
- The calm manner and the cheerful nature of the staff is key in promoting pleasant relationships: minor disputes are handled sensitively and the children behave very well.
- Parents are welcomed warmly into the group and feel that the attention paid to settling the children provides the children with a positive start to their school life.
- Strong links with the school ensures that children have access to a wider range of resources and a stimulating, purpose built environment: this has a positive impact on the children's care, development and overall wellbeing.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation: specifically that the handling of allegations is further clarified and that the policy for uncollected children similarly more detailed
- resources: to include increased items showing positive representation of the diverse nature of British culture.

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
14	Further develop the section of the child protection policy relating to any allegations being made against staff and extend the policy for uncollected children.
9	Further develop the resources which show positive representation of cultural diversity.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Hertford Vale Playgroup provides a calm yet stimulating environment where the three year old children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. The staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the foundation stage and the detailed planning shows how children will progress through the graded stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They plan a broad range of play-based activities which easily cover all six areas of learning. The adults then use relaxed conversational questioning techniques effectively to extend the children's learning. The attention paid to the children's self-esteem has a positive impact on all areas of learning: they are confident and motivated to take part in the opportunities provided yet able to sit and listen in group situations. The group works well with other agencies to provide effective support for children with special needs.

Leadership and management is very good. The approach to overall development is positive: the playgroup improvement plan is professionally presented and regularly updated. The close links with the school ensures that the indoor and outdoor facilities are very good, the resources and the strong knowledge base of each party are shared to maximise opportunities for children.

Partnership with parents is very good. They receive clear information about playgroup business and their child's progress toward the early learning goals in formal and informal ways. The settling in process including an introductory day, provides parents with information about the curriculum, the opportunity to share what their child can already do and promotes positive relationships from the outset.

What is being done well?

- The staff talk to the children to help them focus on events: for example, they help them to talk about their computer games and offer them additional vocabulary to think about the ice melting in the water tray.
- The approach to overall development is very good: the playgroup adapt their self assessment system and development plan in response to new challenges and liaise effectively with other agencies for training needs, risk assessment and special needs provision.
- Information about the children's achievements is clear: the staff talk to the parents informally every day and formal assessments are shared at parents evenings.
- The playgroup leader links effectively with the early years staff in school on aspects of planning: this ensures a coordinated approach to the curriculum and a broader range of resources for the children.

- The free-flow use of the adjacent outdoor area enables children to explore and investigate the wide range of opportunities provided: they develop their independent learning skills and their physical skills to a high level.

What needs to be improved?

- the confidence of children in using the craft area to mix different media and to express themselves freely

What has improved since the last inspection?

There have been very good improvements since last inspection. The introduction of the free flow arrangement into the adjacent outdoor area and the daily group-use of a range of equipment in the playground has extended the programme for physical development well. The regular use of the school hall further contributes to this area of the curriculum.

A further point raised was to develop the staff's knowledge of including children with special needs. This has also been well addressed: the special needs coordinator has attended relevant training and the necessary documentation for inclusive play and learning are all in place. Recent liaison with other agencies has further enhanced this aspect of the provision.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children come into the playgroup confidently and happily. They are motivated, freely seeking out their favourite activities and persevering for extended periods of time. The children respond very well to the adults' calm manner and professional approach and they behave very well. There are meaningful routines which actively promote the children's self esteem and independence: well planned circle time sessions promote turn taking and sharing. The more able children do this easily.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

The children use spoken language increasingly well; they are encouraged to speak in smaller and larger groups. They can explain clearly what they are doing at the computer and ask good questions. The book corner is regularly staffed: the children enjoy books and stories. They recognise print in the environment, easily finding their own name cards. The more able children recognise written prompts on the computer. They enjoy practicing their pre-writing skills by pretending to take the register.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Through a range of daily routines, interesting resources and the regular use of number rhymes the children develop a good understanding of number and it's various applications. They spend considerable time completing number jigsaws and playing sorting and matching games. The children learn about shape and size through enjoyable activities at the sand, water and construction. The adults make sure that the children can name the shapes they are making and playing with .

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

There lots of opportunities for children to explore and investigate using all their senses as appropriate; they investigate what happens to ice throughout the morning, they enjoy scooping the salt and glitter as they play with the snow scene and talk about how the corn flour gloop feels. The more able children use the computer confidently to support their learning in other areas, they talk about the pictures they have created, explain how to print them and can save them with a little help.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The free flow arrangement for outdoor play for much of the morning enables the children to develop their climbing and balancing skills to a good level. They pedal tricycles and scooters around the slightly sloped playground with increasing control and strength. They enjoy jumping in and out of hoops, spin them and roll them, often successfully, to their friends. The children practice their fine motor skills by threading, drawing and using construction kits.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The children can sing a wide range of songs from memory, the songs are carefully chosen to support learning in all other areas. They know songs about expressing their feelings, counting, and giving thanks for their snack. The children explore colour shape and form and are taught a range of techniques. Much of the displayed art and craft work is adult led and the children are sometimes reticent in accessing the full range of craft materials. The children confidently engage in role play.

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:

- There are no key issues to report but consideration should be given to the following points;
- consider ways of encouraging the children to use the craft area more confidently to express themselves and to understand that different media can be mixed.

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.