



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203779

DfES Number: 515161

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/11/2004
Inspector Name Susan Elizabeth Warren

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Thorpe le Soken Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Playgroup Hall, Rolph School Grounds
High Street
Thorpe-le-Soken
Essex
CO16 0NN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Thorpe-Le-Soken Pre-School Playgroup
269990

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Thorpe-Le-Soken Pre-School Playgroup
Address Playgroup Hall, Pre School Playgroup
Playgroup Hall, Rolph School Grounds
Clacton-on-Sea
Essex
CO16 0NN

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

Thorpe le Soken pre School Playgroup opened in 1971 and operates from a purpose-built building with an attached outdoor play area. It is situated in the village of Thorpe le Soken, Essex. A maximum of 22 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08:50 to 11.50 and 12:00 to 15:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, during school term times.

There are currently 37 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 33 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider community. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. Five of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the EYDCP and the PLA, and other professionals as needed.

How good is the Day Care?

The quality of care at Thorpe le Soken Pre School Playgroup is good.

All aspects of organisation are very good. Staff are qualified to a good level overall and training is encouraged to continue to raise standards. All paperwork and supporting documentation is in place to a very high standard. The premises is well laid out and well resourced; children can access the toys and equipment easily.

The children are safe and well cared for. Thorough and regular risk assessments ensure the premises and equipment are safe and in good order. Fire drills are carried out regularly and well documented. Children have a healthy snack each session with fruit and vegetables included daily. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection.

Activities are planned in line with the guidance for the Foundation Stage to promote

children's all round development. Staff have regard to the Birth to Three Matters framework when considering the developmental and care needs of the youngest children attending. Children requiring additional help are sensitively provided for and included in all activities.

The partnership with parents is very effective. Parents have access to high quality information about all aspects of the setting and are kept up to date with regular newsletters. They are very active in supporting the group in a number of ways including helping at sessions, fundraising and providing resources to assist with topic work.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group was asked to initiate a risk assessment; to update the complaints policy, the child protection statement and draw up a safe procedure for outings.

All these have been done and are in place. As a result of these actions completed children's welfare and safety are improved.

What is being done well?

- Excellent information is provided to parents to keep them informed of activities, outings etc and to help them continue to help their child at home.
- The sessions are well paced and integrated with a good choice of activities and frequent opportunities for children to revisit and consolidate what they have learned.
- The playroom is well laid out, bright and colourful with imaginative and creative use of the walls and windows. They incorporate children's work as well as teacher designed displays, posters and good use of labelling.
- Good attention is given to equal opportunities issues, especially multicultural education. Children celebrate a different culture or festival once a month, using food, music, art and costumes to underpin the learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the child protection policy.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since 1st April 2004 Ofsted has not received any complaints about this provider.

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
13	Review and update the child protection policy to include reference to the booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Thorpe le Soken Pre-school Playgroup is very good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a very good understanding of all aspects of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. Planning is rigorous and effective covering all areas of learning with a variety of fun and exciting activities to challenge and extend children, helping them make very good all round progress.

Very good use is made of the premises and equipment and staff are effectively deployed to spend most of their time working directly with the children. There is excellent support for children needing additional help; they are included in all activities with adaptations made when needed.

Staff observe and record children's progress and build a comprehensive folder of work and evidence showing their progress and what steps they need to take next. This record is shared with parents. Children's behaviour is very good: they respond well to the child-centred approach which allows them to freely choose and persevere at activities.

Leadership and management is very good. The manager has a strong ethos and vision for the group which underpins the commitment and dedication shown by all staff to provide high quality care and education. Development has been rapid and effective in the past few years and the result is a strong and cohesive team with an understanding of their strengths and areas for development. A forward looking and wide ranging approach ensures that trends and developments in the field are considered. Training is valued as a way of raising standards and staff are well supported.

Partnership with parents is very good. The excellent prospectus is just part of the high quality information parents have access to. Children's records are available at all times on an informal or formal basis and parents contributions are valued.

What is being done well?

- The sessions are well planned and well paced: children have a good choice of activities both structured and open ended. Within the daily routine they can move around at will and staff are on hand to support and encourage them. They have quiet and more active times as well as time to reflect on what they have learned.
- Excellent attention to multicultural education introduces children to a wide range of cultures and ideas from the wider world. They celebrate festivals using food, art and craft, costumes, music and artefacts. Staff are

enthusiastic about this aspect of the curriculum and prepare well for it, producing attractive displays.

- Staff demonstrate a high degree of enthusiasm and dedication which has a positive impact on children's learning. They make the most of spontaneous opportunities and allow children to structure the play according to their needs and preferences.
- Partnership with parents is very strong: parents are invited to help at sessions and the committee has a large number of parent representatives committed to making the pre-school successful and thriving. The pre-school is at the heart of the community and has support from many outside bodies including the church, the primary school and various local businesses and individuals, all of which contribute to the rich mix of activities and experiences to benefit the children.

What needs to be improved?

- development of the outside area as an all round learning environment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

Children now have one to one help with letter sounds and are encouraged to use their knowledge when writing and reading. This is mainly aimed at the older children within the specially structured play sessions. Staff are aware of and use opportunities in everyday routines to help children have an understanding of letter sounds, for example when looking at their name cards for snack time.

The assessment system has been completely revised and now provides a comprehensive and clear record of children's development and progress. The next stages are clearly shown and key workers plan to help the children towards these. The records are shared with parents and their contributions and comments welcomed and valued.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are excited and well motivated. They enjoy new activities and concentrate well. They develop self esteem as they celebrate birthdays and have a good understanding of their own needs. Children form very good relationships with staff and one another. A happy , purposeful atmosphere is created in which children play and learn and develop social skills. Behaviour is very good: children share and take turns. They are independent and in control of their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are effective speakers and listeners. They confidently talk about real and imaginary events and are articulate in getting their point across. Children are introduced to letter sounds and many learn to write their own names with correctly formed letters. There are opportunities to write for different purposes. They recognise their names and other print in the environment and enjoy books as a group or by themselves. Children enjoy listening to recordings of their own and others' voices.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children regularly practise counting to 20. They use puzzles and number lines to recognise, order and name numerals. Children are introduced to calculation as they play with a birthday cake and candles, adding and subtracting. They sing number rhymes, counting up and down. Shape recognition, sorting, sequencing and pattern are developed using maths equipment. Cooking brings in ideas of weight and measure. Free play with sand and water teaches children about volume and mass.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore and investigate objects and living things. They develop good questioning skills. Children use construction kits as well as found materials to design and build models and shakers. They use many items of real and play technology such as CD player, digital camera, and laptop computers. Children talk about their homes and families and past and present events in their lives. They visit places of interest in the local community and further afield. Visitors are welcomed to the group.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Excellent opportunities are provided for large movement skills using the fixed and moveable play equipment. They have good awareness of space for themselves and others; they can find a chair, space on the carpet or make a line. Children follow basic hygiene routines and take care of personal needs. They are introduced to healthy eating. Children use small physical play equipment such as balls and hoops. Fine motor skills are developed using tools for mark making, dough etc and manipulative toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colours and texture through a balance of free and guided art and craft activities. They bring items for display on a colour table. Instruments are imaginatively used to explore all aspects of sound, rhythm and pitch. Children rehearse and perform a nativity play at Christmas. Role play is enhanced by an excellent range of costumes and props. Small world resources are extensive and stimulating. Sensory development uses topic work, walks outside and tasting fruit, vegetables etc.

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 significant weaknesses to report, however, consideration should be given to improving the following:
- continue with plans to develop the outside area to provide children with play and learning opportunities across all areas of the curriculum.

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.