



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220223

DfES Number: 581723

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	24/09/2004
Inspector Name	Rachael Mankiewicz

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Hartwell Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address	Hartwell Community Centre, School Lane Hartwell Northampton Northamptonshire NN7 2HL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Hartwell Playgroup 1029388
------	----------------------------

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Hartwell Playgroup
Address	Hartwell Community Centre School Lane, Hartwell Northampton Northamptonshire NN7 2HL

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

Hartwell Pre-School Playgroup has been established for many years and currently operates from the community centre within the village of Hartwell, Northamptonshire. This is a committee-run group. Children from the village and the surrounding area attend the group. The pre-school is open from 09:30 to 12:00 for 5 mornings a week, and Monday afternoons when necessary from 13:00 to 15:30, during term-time only.

The group has use of the large hall and associated facilities. There is a large storage cupboard off the foyer. The recreation area is adjacent to the building and the group makes use of the fields and equipment.

There are currently 26 children on roll, with 15 children who are 3-years-old and who receive funding for their nursery education. Staff are able to support children with special educational needs and also children who are learning English as an additional language.

There are four members of staff who work regularly with the children. Two of the staff have Level 3 qualifications in early years care, and the other two are working towards Level 2 qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The group became accredited under the Pre-School Learning Alliance scheme in 2002.

How good is the Day Care?

Hartwell Pre-school Playgroup provides good quality care for children. The premises are safe, well-maintained and organised effectively to make good use of the available space. The hall is well-resourced to allow children the choice of several floor and table activities, although the children do not have access to further resources to supplement their play or add to their art work.

The management and staff have a good awareness of health and safety issues. Children are encouraged to learn good hygiene practices and to keep themselves

safe. Trained first aiders are always available and the children's well being is promoted through relevant policies and procedures and good practice. Children are given opportunities to try different foods and tastes. Staff are very aware of child protection procedures and how to implement them if required.

The provision offers a good range of toys, resources and activities to meet the developmental needs of all children. The staff are able to support children with special educational needs and to encourage all children in their individual interests. Staff use sensitive and age-appropriate methods of managing behaviour.

Staff have a good awareness of the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers. Record keeping is of a generally good standard. Systems are in place for ensuring that parents' wishes are recorded and adhered to, and contribute to ensuring that the needs of the children are met. The policy regarding equality of opportunity lacks detail of how the group monitor practice to ensure that the diverse needs of all children are met.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the management agreed to review their record keeping for permission for emergency medical treatment and for any medication administered. They were also asked to have a complaint procedure in place and the guidance on how to react to concerns from the local Child Protection Committee. All these issues have been addressed, improving the clarity of procedures and helping to ensure the welfare of children.

What is being done well?

- Staff organise and supervise the available space well, allowing freedom of movement between the activities on offer.
- The management committee and staff have a good awareness of safety issues that ensure the children are safe and secure when indoors and outside. Security is good, and on-going risk assessments of the premises are carried out.
- Children benefit from the full range of activities and resources. Their interests are encouraged to develop by the staff who know the children well, and activities are planned to cover the areas of development for all children.
- Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the pre-school to benefit the children. Staff know the parents well, make them feel welcome and acknowledge their input in the assessment of the children and the running of the pre-school.

What needs to be improved?

- the children's access to toys and resources to allow them to initiate choice and foster their development

- the equal opportunities policy; to ensure that it is consistent with current legislation and guidance, that it is understood and implemented by all staff, and monitored to show how the needs of all children are met.

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
5	Ensure that furniture, equipment and toys help to create an accessible and stimulating environment.
9	Review the equal opportunities policy to ensure it is consistent with current legislation and guidance. Ensure that this is understood and implemented by all staff and shared with parents.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Hartwell Pre-school Playgroup provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are making very good progress in the areas for their personal, social and emotional, physical and creative development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff's sound understanding of the Foundation Stage has a beneficial impact on some aspects of the teaching, particularly within the area for physical development. Staff generally plan the curriculum well, and present a range of activities in an enthusiastic manner. However, opportunities to increase the children's knowledge in some areas are limited. The staff are able to support children with special educational needs, and work well with outside agencies to ensure that the needs of all children are met. All children are encouraged to take part in all activities. An effective framework for recording observations and assessments informs individual play plans, although it is not so clear how these influence planning overall. Staff manage behaviour well, and are consistent in their approach.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good with a clear delegation of responsibilities within the operational plan. The parent-run committee and staff show a commitment to appraisal, on-going development and for taking advice from others. Staff work well together as a team to create a secure and relaxed environment for children.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. There is a welcoming atmosphere and parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child. They receive useful information about the playgroup, the foundation stage and themes through the starter pack, notice boards and newsletters. Parents are involved in the initial assessment of children at age three and continue to inform and have influence on their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children talk confidently to each other, to staff and to other adults. They listen and interact well in large and small groups, and express their feelings and experiences. Staff encourage good skills for sharing and negotiating and these are developing well.
- Children's progress in the area of physical development is particularly good, despite the limited use of outdoor facilities. The children enjoy the range of activities indoors, which children can choose to take part in during the free-play session or as a large group when the room is partly cleared.

What needs to be improved?

- the spontaneous counting and simple problem solving opportunities within the activities, and use of language comparing shapes, weight and size
- the children's experiences of sounds and how they are used with rhymes, alliteration and further phonic knowledge
- the opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world, particularly in relation to information and communication technology and finding out about how machines work.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection based on staff developing their understanding of the Foundation Stage, a consequential review of planning, observation and assessment and how they are put this into practice. This has resulted in the setting being able to provide a stimulating learning environment for children, where their individual needs are recognised and their development is encouraged.

Staff have addressed the key issue regarding children's experience of numbers and of mathematical language linked with calculation, although the area of mathematics, spontaneous counting and problem solving is a key issue in this inspection. Similarly, the area of sound experience and recognition has been partially addressed and has been made an issue to develop further at this inspection.

The development of children's questioning skills, particularly in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematics, has taken place as the staff offer a variety of activities for children to explore and investigate, and the setting of challenges ensures progress has been addressed. The setting was asked to review the storage of equipment to provide children with access to resources. This has yet to be addressed fully as the problems of storage in a shared building still exist and have been made a recommendation as an outcome of the care inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children show confidence choosing activities, working together in small groups and independently, and sharing ideas and resources. They are developing personal independence in putting on shoes, choosing snacks and helping themselves. Children have an awareness of routines and rules, and behaviour is generally good. Their sense of community is developing through a range of activities about different cultures and the local community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children talk confidently to each other and adults, as they explain activities and act in role play. They are beginning to understand that print has meaning. Children attempt to write and make marks when prompted, with older children making recognisable letters and some able to write their names. They listen well to stories, and participate enthusiastically in rhymes and songs. They do not often talk about sounds and letters, or recognise words that start with the same letter or sound.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children are exploring number through a variety of songs and rhymes, and explore simple problem solving through practical activities. They recognise numbers in a variety of activities, and are beginning to develop their adding and subtracting skills, and although they do not always count as they play, they are able to count reliably to ten. Children explore capacity, and volume in baking and water activities, and space and pattern through other planned activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children explore different materials in crafts, cooking, playdough, construction toys, and the techniques of design and of using them. However, the children have few opportunities to investigate objects and technology and to find out how things work. They confidently talk about events in their own lives and are beginning to show an awareness of time and space. They have a good awareness of the local community, and are learning about other people, their roles and cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children move confidently around the room, and when using equipment they show a good awareness of space, their bodies and what they can do. They are beginning to understand about keeping healthy, through food and hygiene practices, for example hand washing and eating fruit at snack time. The children's manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination are developing through use of a good range of small equipment and tools, of which they handle safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children use their imaginations during role-play, small world play and in craft activities. They enjoy singing and are able to use musical instruments. Children have a good range of sensory experiences, including textures and smells, through working with different materials. They are able to express themselves during free-painting and drawing, and talk confidently about their feelings and experiences.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- increase the children's experiences of rhymes, alliteration and phonic knowledge
- develop the opportunities for spontaneous counting and simple problem solving within the activities, and use of language comparing shapes, weight and size
- provide more regular opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world, particularly in relation to information and communication technology and finding out about how machines work

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.