



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 253629

DfES Number: 581263

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/04/2004
Inspector Name Katherine Powell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Sutton St James Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address The Unit
Sutton St James CP School, Bells Drove
Sutton St James
Lincolnshire
PE12 0JG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Sutton St James pre-School Playgroup
Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Sutton St James pre-School Playgroup Committee
Address The Unit
Bells Drove, Sutton St. James
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE12 0JG

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

Sutton St. James Pre-School Playgroup is a committee run provision which first opened in 1970. It operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of the village primary school. The premises consist of an entrance hall, main playroom, kitchen, toilet facilities for staff and children and storage areas. There is an enclosed outdoor play area attached to the building. Children from the village of Sutton St. James and surrounding rural areas attend the group.

The pre-school operates each week-day during school term-time from 09.00 until 11.45. The group offers two afternoon sessions during the Spring and Summer terms for children preparing to transfer to school. There are currently 29 children on roll. This includes 16 children in receipt of nursery funding for 3-year-olds and 3 children in receipt of funding for 4-year-olds. There are children attending with special needs and no children speak English as an additional language.

The provision employs six members of staff on both a full and part-time basis. Of these, three staff hold childcare qualifications and one member of staff is currently undertaking a teaching qualification. There is a bank of relief staff which includes members of the committee.

The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the teacher advisor at the Lincolnshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Sutton St. James Pre-School Playgroup provides good quality care for children aged from two to five years.

Children are cared for in a happy, harmonious and stimulating environment. There is an effective keyworker system in place and staff work well as a team. Children benefit from high staffing ratios and children with special needs are well supported. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place which reflect

day-to-day practice, although some lack sufficient detail. The premises are clean and well maintained and staff are vigilant about children's safety. However, procedures for recording risk assessments of the premises are not effective. Good hygiene routines are promoted with children, however, they are not able to make healthy choices at snack time everyday.

Staff have formed effective relationships with the children and acknowledge and respect their differing needs. They make good use of space and children are encouraged to move freely between different activities and select their own play resources. Children regularly visit the community and local people are invited in to talk about the work they do. Effective planning and assessment systems ensure that staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes learning in all areas and activities build on children's previous skills. The nursery has a good range of equipment, however, children do not have access to a wide range of tools and materials during creative activities and are not encouraged to freely express themselves. Standards of behaviour are very good due to high levels of supervision and effective strategies used to manage children's behaviour.

There is a good partnership with parents and carers which is fostered through effective written and verbal communication. Parents receive detailed information about the provision and are actively encouraged to be involved in the children's learning. Staff share verbal information about children's progress on a daily basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to: develop an operational plan and a written statement about bullying; implement an action plan regarding staff qualifications; conduct a risk assessment of the premises and identify the action to be taken to minimise risks; develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection and equal opportunities issues and develop planning and assessment systems.

The committee and staff have taken positive action to address the actions raised. Several staff have undertaken child protection and multi-cultural awareness training and all new staff receive induction training in these areas. A detailed operational plan has been developed and implemented and this is made available to parents. The behaviour management policy now includes a statement regarding bullying. Staff have reviewed planning and assessment systems and have also sought support from the curriculum advisor at the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Minimum staff qualification requirements are now exceeded and there are plans for further staff to undertake training this year. Staff carry out daily visual checks of the premises, however, systems to record risk assessments do not identify the action that has been taken to minimise potential hazards. As a result, this will carry forward following this inspection as an area for further development. On the whole, the group has made good progress since the last inspection and this has had a positive impact on the care given to children.

What is being done well?

- Staff know children well and have formed effective relationships. They provide good support for children with special needs.
- Staff have developed effective planning and assessment systems and provide a broad and balanced range of activities which promote learning in all areas.
- There are good systems in place for communicating with parents. Useful information is included in the prospectus and displayed throughout the setting.
- Children behave very well in response to high expectations from staff.
- Staff make good use of space and children have regular opportunities to use the outdoor area for activities and physical play. Children's awareness of the local community is well promoted through planned trips and visits.

What needs to be improved?

- systems for recording and monitoring risk assessments of the premises
- documentation, with regard to developing a lost child policy, obtaining written permission from parents to administer medicines to children and reviewing procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- opportunities for children to freely express themselves and select from a wide range of tools and materials during creative activities
- the choice of healthy snacks provided for children.

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
3	Ensure children are able to access a wide variety of materials and tools

	and express themselves freely and imaginatively during creative activities.
6	Improve systems for recording and monitoring risk assessments of the premises.
14	Develop procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost, obtain written permission from parents before administering medicines to children and review the child protection policy.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Sutton St. James Pre-School Playgroup offers good quality nursery education where children enjoy learning through a range of stimulating activities. Effective teaching helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning and assessment systems generally provide a suitable framework to help children make progress, however, activities are not differentiated effectively to provide appropriate challenge for more able children. Staff provide good support for children and skilfully foster their independence skills and self esteem. There is an effective system in place to support children with special needs.

Children are developing good concentration skills and their thoughts and ideas are valued. However, children have limited opportunities to practice writing their names or to develop their awareness of letter sounds and numerals. Children behave very well in response to high expectations and support from staff. The pre-school has a good range of resources to cover all areas of learning, although children do not have regular opportunities to use the computer independently. Children have good opportunities to use and explore the outdoor area. Craft activities are too adult directed and as a result children have limited opportunities to express themselves freely and imaginatively.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff work well as a team and effective systems are in place to ensure good early years practice is shared and areas for further development are identified.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Staff regularly talk to and share information with parents about their child's progress. Parents receive useful written information about the provision and the curriculum, although they have limited opportunities to contribute to children's assessment records.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a stimulating learning environment where children are well supported and encouraged to make independent choices.
- Children have developed effective relationships with each other and staff. Very good standards of behaviour are maintained.
- Staff plan an interesting range of activities which help to promote learning in all areas.
- Staff make good use of the available space and children have regular opportunities to engage in outdoor physical play and activities. Children learn about the natural world and to care for living things.

- Staff have developed quality written information for parents about the setting and the curriculum.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to write their own name and to name and sound letters of the alphabet
- opportunities for children to develop their awareness of numerals
- opportunities for children to independently use the computer to support their learning
- opportunities for parents to contribute to children's assessment records
- planning systems: to identify how activities can be differentiated and extended for more able children
- opportunities for children to express themselves freely and imaginatively during creative activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection to address the key issues raised. Staff have identified clear procedures for identifying, assessing and supporting children with special educational needs. The provision has appointed a special needs co-ordinator who has attended appropriate training to develop her awareness of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. A clear policy has been developed and individual learning plans have been implemented to support children.

Staff have undertaken further training to develop their awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum and early learning goals. The group continually monitor the training needs of all staff and regular access support and share good practice with other professionals at the primary school. The group has sought advice from the curriculum advisor at the Lincolnshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and offered in-house training to further staff's knowledge and understanding.

The pre-school has implemented an effective system to monitor children's progress which is clearly linked to the stepping stones for children's learning. Staff share information about children's progress during parents evenings and through daily discussions with parents. However, parents have limited opportunities to contribute to assessments by sharing their observations of children's learning at home. As a result this will remain as a key issue following this inspection.

Staff use effective questioning during practical activities to extend children's learning and the supervisor has implemented effective systems for monitoring the planning of the educational programme. However, daily plans do not effectively identify how activities will be differentiated for varying ages and abilities, which leads to missed opportunities to further extend activities for more able children. This will carry forward

as a key issue following this inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's behaviour is very good and they learn to take responsibility for their own actions. They relate well to each other and have formed effective relationships with staff. Children are confident, interested and motivated to learn, they select resources and activities independently. Children show care and concern for others and learn to share resources and play co-operatively during group activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children engage easily in conversation with others. They read and select their name cards but have limited opportunities to write their own name. They listen with interest to stories and enjoy looking at books independently. Children are developing good pencil control and practice writing for different purposes during role-play activities. There are insufficient opportunities for children to name and sound the letters of the alphabet.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to count in sequence to ten and beyond and learn to use number in everyday situations. They are developing their understanding of addition and subtraction through number rhymes and practical activities, however, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their awareness of numerals. Children recognise and name familiar shapes and use appropriate language to describe size, quantity and position. They are able to create simple patterns using beads.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have opportunities to explore the natural environment, care for living things and use their senses to describe materials. They talk about past and present events in their own lives. Through topic work and discussion they are developing an awareness of diverse cultures. Children are able to use a variety of simple technology resources to support their learning but have limited opportunities to work independently on the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's small hand skills and whole body movements are developed through effective use of a wide range of equipment and tools. They move with control and confidence and are developing good spatial awareness. Through daily routines children are developing their awareness of the need for good hygiene. They have the opportunity to engage in regular outdoor physical activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Opportunities are provided for children to play musical instruments and to explore different sounds. They enjoy participating during group singing times. Children use a range of media to explore colour, shape and texture, however, some adult-directed craft activities limit children's use of imagination and free expression. Children draw on first hand experiences when engaging in role-play activities.

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

- further develop planning systems to identify how activities can be extended to provide sufficient challenge for more able children
- further develop opportunities for parents to contribute to children's assessments and share their observations of their child's learning at home
- extend opportunities for children to name and sound letters of the alphabet, write their own names and develop their awareness of numerals
- extend opportunities for children to independently access the computer to support their learning and to express themselves freely and imaginatively during creative activities.

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.