



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 119538

DfES Number: 582226

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 22/01/2004  
Inspector Name Gillian Jefferson

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Whittingham Playschool  
Setting Address Whittingham Avenue  
Southend-on-Sea  
Essex  
SS2 4WA

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Linda Kennedy

## 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

Whittingham Playschool opened in 1976. It operates from a room within the Whittingham Methodist Church in Southend. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 36 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 17 funded 3 year olds and 8 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports no children with special needs or those who speak English as an additional language

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 Monday to Friday.

Seven part time and one full time staff work with the children. Three of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Four staff are currently working towards enhanced early years qualifications and another two are planning to train in the near future. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and is currently working towards PSLA accreditation.

### How good is the Day Care?

Whittingham Playschool provides good care for children aged two to under five years.

The group is well organised, using the room, outside area, resources and deployment of staff effectively to assist in the promotion of all children's development and learning. Although staff qualification requirements are not yet met the staff team are well on their way to achieving them, through implementation of their action plan. The group has all required documents, policies and procedures in place, although their better organisation will increase their use by staff and assist their ability to care for the children to a high level through easy reference.

Children's welfare and safety is of importance to the staff. They gather detailed information, which helps them in catering for all the children's individual needs, including special educational needs. Children learn about health and hygiene, and the wide variety of snacks and drinks offered further support the topics and themes and broaden the children's experiences.

Children are involved in diverse and stimulating learning opportunities that support their development in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to develop appropriate independence and high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Staff adeptly question children to support and extend their learning. Inclusion and positive behaviour are also successfully promoted.

The group work effectively in partnership with parents and carers, who are given regular information about the provision, opportunities to discuss their children's progress and see their written developmental records. Very supportive comments were received from parents/carers during the inspection.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the registered provider agreed to ensure all staff working with the children are vetted and evidence kept of this, this has been complied with in full.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff's skill in high quality interaction, where they converse and question children to make them think and encourage them to take the next step in their development.
- Children's involvement in a broad and interesting programme of activities to develop in all areas, including the regular use of practical opportunities to make learning relevant and stimulate their imagination.
- The gathering of detailed information to support the provision of care and meet all the children's individual needs and according to the wishes of parents/carers.
- Staff's promotion and role modelling of positive behaviour, from which the children learn.
- Partnership with parents and carers, through the sharing of information about topics and their children's progress, as supported by the positive statements made on parental questionnaires and to the inspector during the visit.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the display of the public liability insurance throughout opening hours
- the organisation of the operational plan, policies, procedures and records, so they can be referred to easily by the whole staff team.

**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
6	Ensure the certificate of public liability insurance is displayed at all times during opening hours.
14	Review the organisation of the policies, procedures and records, especially the operational plan information, to increase their use as reference documents by staff.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at Whittingham Playschool is of good quality and enables children to make very good progress towards their early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff provide a dynamic variety of stimulating activities. Links to the early learning goals and stepping stones within the planning and assessment documentation are in place, but more detail of this within the short term plans is required. The balance of the programme in covering all six areas of learning is also not yet evident as some activities, particularly for mathematics and communication and language and literacy are not fully represented within the planning. Staff widely use assessment observations to inform them of the children's progress, but clear links of how these inform the planning of future activities is unclear. Staff members do however, demonstrate real skill in their interaction with the children to promote their learning and in keeping activities relevant and exciting. The staff team effectively help the children develop good relationships and motivate them to learn, through their modelling of acceptable behaviour and their enthusiastic involvement in activities.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. The staff team works well and shows commitment to improving the learning environment they create. The implementation of monitoring procedures will assist them in evaluating their provision and addressing any weaknesses identified.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. The group keep parents well informed, through daily verbal feedback, regular newsletters and notices. They also have access to their children's developmental records at any time and this is also a key feature of the group's open evenings.

### What is being done well?

- Children's high level of independence, self-esteem and confidence in keenly approaching new activities and forming relationships. This in turn assists in them developing well in all six areas of learning.
- Children's access and involvement in a dynamic range of activities and opportunities, particularly for their physical and creative development, as well as expanding their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The children's spontaneous use of their imagination, enabling them to use narratives within their role-play and to independently respond creatively to experiences, such as dressing up as Chinese dragons and rhythmically moving around the room.

- The high quality of staff interaction and broad use of observation, to monitor the children's progress towards the early learning goals.
- Partnership with parents/carers to keep them well informed of their children's development and the topics and themes being covered by the group so they can be involved in their children's learning.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- detail within the planning to demonstrate learning intentions and links with the early learning goals within short term plans. To include detail of how activities are adapted to meet the needs of more or less able children. To ensure the balance of activities used to support development across the six areas of learning is appropriately reflected.
- the links between the assessments and observations made about children's achievement and the planning of activities to direct them towards taking the next steps in learning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Whittingham Playschool has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

The group have encouraged parents and carers to have more access to their children's developmental records, with the use of open days/evenings to share them being a particular success.

The organisation and monitoring of the children's participation in activities that build on the skills in mathematics has been addressed. Children now have regular access to activities to make patterns, sequence and develop their understanding of addition and subtraction. However, the evidence within planning still requires extending to reflect the full programme and good work achieved in practice by staff.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a high level of motivation to learn, be involved in activities and try new experiences. They become confident and have a high level of self-esteem. Strong relationships are forged between the children and also with staff, which assists in the development of good behaviour and is seen in the care and concern they show for others. The programme of activities supports the children's sense of community. They also show an increasing level of independence.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children develop good communication skills and widen their vocabulary with the support of staff. They continually chat and share their ideas with increasing skill, whilst participating in role-play and other activities. The children enjoy stories and learn to use books with care and confidence. Children have a wide variety of opportunities to develop their early writing skills and they bring in objects from home to support their awareness of the sounds of letters.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are actively involved in a wide range of activities to support their understanding of space, shape and measure. Wider use of everyday activities like snack time will encourage them to use mathematics to solve problems, such as not having enough chairs. They learn to make patterns and use numbers for counting and as labels within their play, counting cubes in towers they have made and 'writing' the times of puppet shows.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have access to a dynamic programme of relevant activities, through topics and themes that captures their enthusiasm. They are involved in spontaneous activities that build on their own interests and experiences, as well as a programme of activities that develop the awareness of other cultures and beliefs, such as celebrating Chinese New Year. They are encouraged to explore and investigate a wide variety of materials. They also make models and construct objects with skill.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children enjoy their daily access to opportunities to build on their skills in moving. They capably climb, jump, roll, run, spin and carry equipment. Many set challenges for themselves and are sensitively supported to safely use equipment in increasingly challenging ways. Staff help promote the children's awareness of their health and bodies within their play as well as during snack-time. The children gain increasing control in their use of a large range of tools and equipment.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are confident and imaginative in their artwork and exploration of different materials. They show skill in expressing their ideas, feelings and in responding to experiences such as imitating the dancing of the Chinese Dragon video, including using equipment to dress up and beat out the rhythm of the drums. The children freely use musical instruments to support their singing and learn about sound and speed within their music. They also often act out stories with puppets or in their play.

**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**

- expand the detail within the planning to demonstrate learning intentions and links with the early learning goals within short term plans. To include detail of how activities are adapted to meet the needs of more or less able children. To ensure the balance of activities used to support development across the six areas of learning is appropriately reflected.
- develop the links between the assessments and observations made about children's achievement and the planning of activities to direct them towards taking the next steps in learning.

*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.*