



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 141094

DfES Number: 537744

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/12/2004
Inspector Name Carole Argles

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Blandford Opportunity Group
Setting Address Williams Opportunity Hall
Whitecliff Gardens
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7BU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Blandford Opportunity Group 1027771

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Blandford Opportunity Group
Address Williams Opportunity Hall
Whitecliff Gardens
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7BU

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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

Blandford Opportunity Group was opened in 1992 to support children who have special needs and their families. The group is a charitable organisation run by a voluntary management committee.

The group operates from rented premises situated in a residential area close to the centre of Blandford Forum. Children use four rooms, including a sensory room, and a fully enclosed outside play area. In addition there are cloakrooms, a kitchen, an office and a room set aside for parents to use.

A maximum of 12 children aged from birth to under 5 years may attend the group at any one time but currently this is limited to 5 children per session. The group opens on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 09.30 to 12.00 during school term times.

There are currently 13 children on the role. Of these, 4 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide area and all are referred to the group by staff of the statutory services. Currently no children have English as an additional language.

The group employs five staff to work with the children. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Blandford Opportunity Group offers nursery education of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning, taking account of each child's learning potential.

The quality of the teaching is very good. The staff have a very good understanding of children's development and use this to help them provide a wide range of interesting activities for the children. Each child has an allocated member of staff who works with them each session and liaises with others involved in their development. They form a very good relationship both with the child and their parents and have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. This allows them to plan the next steps in their learning so that they provide an appropriate level of challenge at all times. Staff monitor and record children's progress each session but at present the records do not show their development across the areas of learning. Staff create a stimulating learning environment with an excellent range of equipment and resources which meet the needs of all children. Staff have a good understanding of positive ways of managing children's behaviour.

The leadership and management is very good. The committee and staff work together to make sure that the group runs smoothly and all are committed to further development. The manager ensures staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is regular monitoring of the teaching and nursery provision to make sure that children are making progress. Staff frequently attend training and review procedures at the group.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff respect parents' contribution. They value the information parents give about their child and encourage their continued involvement. The parents are kept fully informed about what their child will be doing and progress they have made. Parents are very appreciative of the support provided for them and their children.

What is being done well?

- Each child at the group has a named member of staff who works individually with them every session. This ensures that a good working relationship is established between the staff member, the child and their parents. Staff have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and make sure these are met. They give every child plenty of encouragement and praise to help them reach their potential.
- Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities each session which can be used to support children's development in all areas of learning. The activities are adapted to allow all to take part and to provide an appropriate level of challenge for each child.

- There is an excellent range of equipment, toys and resources which staff use to support the children's development. They make effective use of the premises to provide a wide range of activities. These include daily opportunities to use the sensory room and the well-equipped hall for physical play. The resources are imaginative and staff make sure that children are able to explore them freely but safely, using all their senses.
- The partnership between staff and parents is excellent. Staff value parents' involvement with their child's care and learning and respect their knowledge about their child. They talk with the parents daily to keep them fully informed about the activities being provided and progress made. The group has a philosophy of supporting the whole family and facilities are provided so parents can meet together, relax and talk.
- There is clear leadership and management. Both the staff and committee regularly monitor the effectiveness of the group and work hard to ensure there is continual development of the provision for the children.

What needs to be improved?

- the system for recording children's progress to show their development in the six areas of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The key issues for improvement identified at the last inspection were:

Staff skills and confidence in writing children's individual educational plans (IEPs).

Children's experience of using appropriate information and communication technology.

There has been very good progress since the last inspection.

Staff have attended training to help them write IEPs and all are developing more confidence. They work closely with parents and others involved in the child's care to ensure that the IEPs are appropriate to the needs of the child and these are reviewed regularly to help staff plan the next steps in their learning.

A new computer system is now available. This includes a touch screen facility and a large ball mouse making the equipment accessible to all children. The children enjoy using the equipment and staff use it effectively to support their learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and settled and separate readily from their carer. They form good relationships with the staff who know them well and give them plenty of praise and encouragement. Children are interested in the activities and resources and some show developing levels of concentration. They are encouraged to become independent and are able to make choices about the toys and activities they want to use. They are beginning to accept the needs of others, for example taking turns at snack times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children communicate with others through speech and gesture. Some children communicate their ideas with the staff in pretend play situations. Children enjoy listening to stories and taking part in group singing activities. There are many activities to encourage children to develop their small muscle movements and hand-eye coordination. They take part in mark making activities including painting and drawing and some are encouraged to make marks for a purpose, for example making shopping lists.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

More able children are beginning to count correctly linking the numbers to objects and to recognise some numerals. They are beginning to understand the concept of position and correct language to describe and compare the position and size of objects. More able children are encouraged to think about shapes around them, for example when they are moulding play dough. They have opportunities to use shapes for a purpose when they are using puzzles or construction toys.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

There is an excellent range of materials provided for children to examine and explore independently using all their senses. There are activities and resources to help children to find out about their own community and culture and that of others through small world and pretend play and food tasting. More able children are beginning to join construction pieces and to use tools for a purpose when using play dough. All children are able to use the touch screen computer to perform simple tasks.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are encouraged to develop their physical skills through planned activities according to their individual needs. They use the well-equipped physical play area each session. They are developing an awareness of space and position to carry out a task. More able children can judge space and move over or under objects. There is a wide variety of equipment which is used to help children develop their hand-eye coordination. More able children use playdough, moulding it to a planned shape.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

All children have frequent opportunities to take part in art activities and are given scope to use the materials as they wish. More able children can recognise and name colours. There is a wide range of pretend play resources and some more able children are beginning to use their imaginations and communicate their ideas as they play with staff. There are many opportunities for children to respond to their senses both in the sensory room and to the wide range of materials in general use.

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 but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- extend the system for recording children's progress to show their development in the six areas of 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.