



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113814

DfES Number: 582407

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/12/2004  
Inspector Name Felicity Gaff

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Washington Playschool  
Setting Address The Old School House, Rectory Lane  
Ashington  
Pulborough  
West Sussex  
RH20 3AS

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Washington Playschool

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Washington Playschool  
Address The Old School House  
Rectory Lane, Ashington  
Pulborough  
West Sussex  
RH20 3AS

## 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

Washington Playschool is a committee-run playschool. It opened in 2000 and occupies the former village school in Ashington. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playschool at any one time. It provides sessional care on Mondays to Thursdays during term times. All children share a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children on roll. Of these 14 receive funding for nursery education. The playschool serves families from the local rural area.

There are 4 members of staff, of whom 2 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The nursery receives regular support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is undertaking the Quality Assurance Kitemark. All staff attend first aid and child protection training, they also attend further professional training to enhance their knowledge and awareness.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Provision for nursery education at Washington Playschool is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

Teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff have a reasonable understanding of the Foundation Stage; they plan what children will do and make observations of what they achieve. They work directly with children most of the time, listen to what they say and know them well. However, they provide too few opportunities for children to learn from direct first-hand experience. The organisation of some activities does not meet the needs of all children. Behaviour management is inconsistent and children are often disruptive. Staff often offer too much assistance and therefore fail to challenge older and more able children.

Leadership and management are generally good. The committee offers good support and delegates the day-to-day running of the group to the manager. The manager assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the group reasonably realistically. She undertakes a great deal of training herself and organises all the planning for the group. However, there are ineffective systems in place to ensure all staff are able to deliver the foundation stage, or to monitor and evaluate the education offered.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents receive adequate written information about the playschool and complete an information form about their child before admission. They receive good ongoing information about the setting through regular newsletters, notices and additional letters when necessary. Children's records are shared with parents once during the summer term. There is insufficient opportunity for parents to discuss their children's progress with staff and written records are not easily accessible to parents throughout the year. Staff provide no suggestions of activities for parents do with their children at home.

### What is being done well?

- The playschool offers a friendly, welcoming environment. Staff provide good role models; they give children a great deal of personal attention.
- There is good provision for vigorous physical activity. Children play outside frequently throughout the year. They show some very good skills in riding bicycles and sharing space.

### What needs to be improved?

- the management of children's behaviour through the organisation of appropriate, challenging activities and consistent staff expectations

- the identification of how continuous basic provision is used to promote children's learning
- the provision of an exciting range of meaningful, first-hand experiences that allow children to make decisions, plan, explore, experiment and learn from their mistakes
- the monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching.

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

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. The setting was asked to improve the monitoring of the educational provision including the use of assessments to inform planning, the clarification of planning and provision for continuity for four-year-olds. They were also asked to develop the system to support children with special educational needs, including the appointment of a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator(Senco).

The monitoring of the educational provision has been improved. Assessments are now used to inform future plans and planning systems have been modified to show what children are intended to learn. The organisation of the 'Rising Five's' group has been modified to improve continuity.

The manager is now the Senco and has attended training for this role.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Staff provide good role models, they organise resources well to promote children's independence. Children approach staff confidently and play well together. However, they have too few opportunities to develop high self esteem by planning, solving problems and learning from their mistakes. They wait for staff to tell them what to do and are sometimes reluctant to try things for themselves. Behaviour at snack and story times is noisy and disruptive and staff do not act decisively to improve it.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children recognise their own names but do not learn to identify the sounds in words. For example, a four year old could not give the first sound in 'Jack'. They do not listen attentively to well-read stories and rhymes in a group, although some enjoy informal small-group stories with adults. Staff encourage children to describe what they do but rarely ask them to explain, predict and notice patterns. They do not incorporate informal reading and writing activities into imaginative play.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn to count in everyday practical activities and to compare two numbers. They explore shape and space with a good range of structured sorting and grouping toys. They confidently compare size and length. However some activities are repetitive and children do not maintain interest and involvement. Staff underuse the mathematical potential of everyday routines and activities such as sand and water play.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children experience some interesting opportunities to explore and investigate the world around them through absorbing, first-hand experiences. They learn about time passing as they compare pictures of themselves as babies. However, staff do not ensure that computer programs are appropriate and children do not explore how things work. Plans do not show how they develop a sense of place or learn to respect cultural diversity.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children often engage in vigorous physical activity and play outside every day. They build on both a large and small scale indoors and out. They practice real-life skills such as pouring drinks, cutting fruit and mopping floors. Staff tell children how to care for themselves but do not always follow good practice themselves, for example allowing a child to ride a bike without a helmet. Some activities are over-directed so that children rarely explore, experiment and solve their own problems.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a wide variety of opportunities to paint and model, cut and stick to create work in two and three dimensions. They respond with delight as they experiment with foam, bubbles or cornflour. They explore sound and rhythm when playing instruments and have regular opportunities to sing together. However, many craft and role play activities are devised and directed by adults. Children have too little scope to develop their own ideas and learn by their own mistakes.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- Improve the management of children's behaviour through the provision of appropriate, challenging activities and consistent staff expectations
- Identify how continuous basic provision is used to promote children's learning
- Provide an exciting range of meaningful, first-hand experiences that allow children to make decisions, plan, explore, experiment and learn from their mistakes
- Monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the teaching.

*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.*