



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221791

DfES Number: 515086

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/04/2003
Inspector Name Veronica Sharpe

SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name Fowlmere Playgroup
Setting Address Fowlmere URC Chapel Hall
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
SG8 7RX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Fowlmere Playgroup Committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name
Address

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

Fowlmere Playgroup is an established pre-school group that operates from the Chapel Hall in the village of Fowlmere in South Cambridgeshire. It is a registered charity managed by a committee of parents. During sessions the playgroup has sole use of the premises, which includes a large hall, toilets and kitchen. The building is shared with other users, therefore all equipment has to be set up and put away daily. The hall has recently been rebuilt and refurbished. Current registration is for 20 children aged between two and five years. At present there are 17 children on roll including one funded three year old and nine funded four year olds. There are no children attending with special needs, nor with English as an additional language. The group operates four mornings weekly (not Wednesdays) term times only, opening times are 9.15am. - 11.45am. Three members of staff work with the children. One permanent staff member is on maternity leave and a temporary staff member has been employed. The leader has an early years qualification and two members of staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from an associate teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Fowlmere Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children. Children have access to a wide range of activities that contribute to their learning; resources are good and are well planned to offer children variety. However, opportunities for children to develop and extend their own learning and interests are at times limited by the level of adult directed activities. Staff are caring and thoughtful, they offer praise and encouragement to children and provide a safe and caring environment. At times, staff do not appear to have developed effective teamwork, they are not always clear about their role or responsibilities and wait for direction rather than taking individual responsibility. The premises are warm, bright and welcoming and resources are set out prior to children's arrival in order to stimulate their interest. Furniture and other resources are good quality and selected with care, however, some of the mobile storage units could be deployed more effectively to provide children with a wider range of accessible resources. Children are happy and well cared for, they interact

confidently with staff and are caring and sensitive to each other's needs. There is good partnership with parents and carers. They are provided with good information about the provision and their children's progress. They are invited to be part of the voluntary parent's rota and take part in social and fund raising activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the committee was asked to ensure that the play leader and relevant committee members update their knowledge of child protection procedures. This was completed as required, but the leader who was in post then has since left. A new recommendation has been made for staff knowledge to be updated and a staff member has been identified to attend appropriate training before the next inspection

What is being done well?

Children are able to play independently, they share and take turns and are sensitive to each other's needs and feelings (Standard 3). The premises are bright and welcoming, furniture and resources are good quality and selected with care (Standard 4). Children have access to a wide range of activities that contribute to their development (Standard 5). Children are polite and well behaved, they demonstrate affection and respect for staff and for each other (Standard 11). Relationship with parents or carers is very good, parents feel informed and comfortable to talk with staff. The committee and staff ensure parents receive a variety of information, both about the setting and individual children's well-being and development (St 12).

What needs to be improved?

organisation, so that staff develop their own roles and responsibilities during sessions and have opportunities to develop individual skills and effective teamwork (Standard 2). organisation of resources, to maximise accessibility for children and ensure furniture is used effectively (Standard 5). organisation of snack time, to enable children to develop their independence skills (Standard 8) documentation, to contain all required up to date information (Standard 12). knowledge of current child protection procedures (Standard 13).

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	ensure staff are used effectively as resources during sessions. This should include development of an induction and appraisal system to ensure staff are confident about their role and responsibilities and have opportunities to develop and use their skills.
5	improve the deployment of resources to ensure children can make the best use of equipment and toys.
8	Provide children with opportunities to serve themselves and each other at break time, thereby developing their independence.
12	amend complaints procedure to include regulators name, address and contact telephone number.
13	ensure staff's knowledge of child protection procedures is updated regularly through appropriate training.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Fowlmere Playgroup offers good quality provision, which helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Teaching is generally good. The staff's clear understanding of how children learn through practical experiences enables them to provide a wide range of interesting activities to help children learn. There is a good range of equipment that is used well to support children's progress. Children behave well in response to the sensitive support of staff and are very caring and considerate of each other's needs. However, high levels of adult intervention in some activities limits children's potential to extend their learning. Curriculum planning is generally good. However, plans are not informed by assessment records, and some activities lack appropriate challenge for older or more able children. A good system is in place to help children with special educational needs, and those who do not use English as a first language are well supported. Leadership and management has some significant weaknesses but the team are committed to developing their practice and improving the way they care for children. Two members of the team are currently attending early years training to increase their knowledge of the foundation stage. Staff consistently work alongside the children at activities and develop good relationships with the children and each other. However, staff are not always deployed effectively to support the manager in her role, particularly between organised activities or in the observation and assessment of children. The partnership with parents and carers is generally good, and contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are well informed about the foundation stage and the playgroup's activities and routines. They receive weekly updates on their children's progress in the form of a diary and are comfortable to approach the staff for further discussion.

What is being done well?

Children are making generally good progress in all areas of learning. They are supported by staff who plan a wide range of activities that enable children to learn through practical experiences, such as sorting 'washing' or making water xylophones. Relationships between adults and children are good. Children are sensitive and caring towards each other and respect each other's needs. They are confident to approach adults and to initiate or join in discussions. Children's behaviour is good. They negotiate and take turns, sharing resources and equipment. Adults act as good role models to children and provide an environment that promotes positive behaviour and enables new children to settle quickly into the group.

What needs to be improved?

The use of children's progress and assessment records to inform curriculum planning using 'stepping stones', so that activities offer appropriately progressive

challenges for all children and build upon what they already know. The use of staff as resources so that children are not kept waiting between organised activities and staff work together as a team. The teaching strategies used to ensure that opportunities to extend children's learning are always capitalised, not just restricted to rising fives sessions. The system to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and their role within the setting, in order that they can take more responsibility for the day to day running of the group and provision of activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup has made generally good progress with key issues from the previous inspection. The manager of the group has updated her knowledge of Equal Opportunities and a range of resources is available to promote positive attitudes in children and provide an environment that represents all members of society. Behaviour management strategies used are consistent with children's age and stage of development and staff act as positive role models, resulting in children displaying positive behaviour and working together collaboratively. Planning now shows learning intentions, resources and staff roles. However, differentiation is not yet shown and planning is not informed by assessment or stepping stones to provide suitable challenges for all individuals. Activities are evaluated. However, the evaluations do not give details of what individual children have learned from the activities and are therefore, not useful in informing progress records or future planning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children's development in this area is generally good. They develop good relationships with adults and each other. They co-operate and share resources, showing respect for each other's needs (i.e. children playing snap and making gardens in the sand). They are confident to approach adults and express their needs and views; they are caring towards new members of the group. However, high level of adult direction in art and craft affects some children's disposition to learning.	

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Development in communication, language and literacy is generally good. Children interact with each other and with adults, speaking clearly and confidently in small and large groups and show an understanding of the links between sounds and letters. Some children are able to identify initial sounds in spoken words. They use writing for a purpose; making lists and writing labels for displays. Some children write their names accurately and others attempt to write their names on artwork.	

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Mathematical development is generally good. Children use number names and count to ten in their play. They count confidently and accurately and show a developing understanding of addition, i.e. they count children at registration with an adult and say "If I have one more.....". However, they do not show interest in number problems or appear to compare groups of objects. They do not use mathematics for solving problems associated with capacity or size except at rising five sessions.	

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children's development in this area is generally good. They observe their environment and the natural world. They plant seeds and measure changes, compare similarities and differences. They illustrate their understanding of the natural world during discussion at circle time. Children show a sense of time and place and talk about their home and families and past events in their lives with understanding. They learn about their own cultures and those of other people.	

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children's physical development is generally good. They move confidently and imaginatively, indoors and out. They show good co-ordination and are able to balance and climb in safety. They show an awareness of space and control their movements to avoid collision with others. Children use a wide range of small and large equipment. They handle tools and objects of all sizes, such as scissors and pencils, with control and purpose and they are competent to pick up small beads for	

threading.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children' creative development is generally good. They show an interest in making sounds and they explore how they can be changed and repeated as they experiment with the cooking utensils and sing loudly and quietly at circle time. They explore colour, shape and texture through a variety of practical activities such as foot painting and shoe printing. They respond to a range of experiences and express their imagination in small world and role play.
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Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately:	Y
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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

1. Continue to develop the system of curriculum planning and assessment of children's progress, using 'stepping stones' from the Foundation Stage Curriculum, so that:- i) activities build upon what children know and offer appropriate challenges for each child and in all sessions. ii) staff are used effectively as resources in all aspects of the provision, and children are not kept waiting between activities without being purposefully engaged. 2. Develop an induction and appraisal system so that new staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and areas for further professional development are identified and supported.

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.