



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203560

DfES Number: 514300

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/10/2004
Inspector Name Julie Ann Birkett

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Little Hallingbury Playgroup
Setting Address Village Hall
Lower Road, Little Hallingbury
Bishops Stortford
Herts
CM22 7RD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Ann Luke

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

Little Hallingbury Playgroup opened in 1974. It operates from one main hall and a smaller side room in the village hall in the centre of Little Hallingbury. The group serves the local and wider areas.

There are currently 52 children from 2 years to 5 years on roll. This includes 29 funded 3 year olds 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Currently there are no children attending who have special needs or English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:15 from Monday to Friday.

Eight full and part time staff work with the children with additional staff for cover. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Little Hallingbury Playgroup provides good daycare.

The playgroup operational plan provides clear, positive aims and objectives for the group. There is a strong team of staff. Good adult ratios enable staff to get to know the individual children well. Space is used effectively and provides opportunities for children to play and work together in small or large groups, with or without adult support. However the clearing of equipment at the end of the session does impact on the children's ability to listen to the whole group activities. Staff use the wide range of equipment and resources imaginatively to ensure children remain motivated. Organisation of the session enable children to learn effectively through play. The staff make the environment interesting through displays of pictures and interest tables. Children are eager to come into playgroup and are secure and settled.

Documentation is in very good order. Well written policies, procedures and recording systems are effectively put into practice to ensure that the children are well cared for and are safe. There is an ethos of inclusion for all children. Staff have the experience and skills to meet a wide range of children's individual needs.

Qualified and experienced staff plan and provide a wide range of purposeful activities. Staff are involved with the children, ask questions and encourage the children to listen, think and offer their own solutions. Children build good relationships and treat each other and resources with respect. Confidence and independence is fostered through everyday opportunities and meaningful praise. Children are confident and articulate.

Staff have developed good relationships with the local primary school. Partnership with parents is also good. Parents receive information about the group and are regularly updated through newsletters. Daily communication between staff and parents is open and friendly. It is not always evident to new parents who the staff and volunteers are.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection the group have fitted alarms to the fire exit doors to alert them should any child open the doors. An incident book is in place so that any significant issues can be recorded and shared with parents. The complaints procedure has been updated in line with current requirements. A risk assessment of the side room has been made and steps taken to ensure that children cannot access the billiard table and stacked chairs used by other users of the hall. As a result of these changes children's safety has been enhanced.

What is being done well?

- Interaction between staff and children is very good. Staff ask meaningful questions which encourage the children to think and offer solutions to problems. As a consequence children are motivated and interested in their play and learning and want to know about what, why, when, where and how.
- Good staff ratios allow time for one to one and small group sessions. This individual attention promotes the children's learning and encourages good relationships between staff and children.
- The organisation of the session is mostly given over to free play where children are able to choose their activities and be independent in their play and learning. Staff support children well at these activities but also are aware of when to let children develop their own ideas and games.
- Staff manage children's behaviour very well. Staff are very caring and supportive of the children, particularly when settling in new children or when a child is feeling sad. Staff give lots of meaningful praise and encouragement and children are confident, settled and happy.
- The liaison between the playgroup and the local primary school is very good. These systems help both children and parents make a smoother transition

into compulsory education.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation of the clearing away of furniture and equipment from the hall at the end of the session
- systems to identify who staff and volunteers are.

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
2	Review the organisation of the end of session whole group activity to ensure that the clearing away of furniture and equipment does not impact on the children
12	Devise a system to ensure that all parents are able to identify who the playgroup staff and volunteers are

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Little Hallingbury Playgroup is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a purposeful curriculum. Staff provide a positive learning environment where children benefit from a breadth of activities which enable them to make very good all round progress. Staff support and guide children's learning throughout the sessions and are very good at using everyday opportunities to extend the children's ideas, skills and knowledge. They make regular observations of the children and record their progress. Staff have a good understanding of what the children enjoy and what they already know. They use this information to inform the planning for individual children's development. Children are engrossed in their play and learning because they are interested and challenged. Staff and children build good relationships. Children have good self esteem and are confident to try new things and offer ideas and suggestions. Children's behaviour is excellent in response to the high expectations, consistent and caring management by all staff.

Leadership and management is very good. Management and staff are a cohesive team and work effectively together complementing each other's strengths. The team have a positive attitude towards ongoing training to maintain good practice within the setting. They all meet regularly to plan the children's next steps.

The partnership with parents is very good. Home and setting links are formed initially by parents completing an information sheet about their child. Parents have access to information about the setting, the Foundation Stage and how children can learn through play. Newsletters go home regularly which include the next planned learning intentions so that parents can support children at home. Parents contribute to the children's assessment records.

What is being done well?

- The programme for mathematics is very strong. Staff plan and provide a breadth of activities and opportunities in this area. Children's skills and knowledge are constantly practiced and reinforced and as a consequence they become adept at solving mathematical problems.
- Staff are very proficient in encouraging children to experiment with letter sounds. They plan activities but also use spontaneous opportunities to enable children to learn the names and sounds of letters which ultimately promotes children's reading skills.
- The quality of teaching is very good. A mix of very experienced staff and newly qualified staff has resulted in a strong, knowledgeable team. They use their skills and abilities to plan and deliver a purposeful curriculum. They also

seize every opportunity to promote the children's learning through spontaneous everyday practical opportunities.

- Children are provided with a range of resources and the time to develop their own imaginative play. Children confidently and effectively use available materials to make their pretend play very detailed, for example, rearranging furniture to make an aeroplane and then using writing materials to make tickets.

What needs to be improved?

- There are no key issues to report.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The groups have made very good progress in addressing the one key issue from the previous education inspection. They have reviewed the provision and activities provided to enable children to learn about the use of everyday technology and the use of ICT equipment. This has had a positive effect on the children's learning. They use everyday equipment such as bread makers to teach the children about the changes that take place when cooking bread. Children use hand whisks in the water play to create bubbles and stethoscopes to listen to their heart beats. They turn on the tape player to listen to stories and music or record their own. They use an electronic till when scanning things brought at the play shop. They are provided with simple table top computer games and programmable cars. These improvements have contributed to children's very good progress in the learning area of knowledge and understanding of the world.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and settled. They are eager to join activities and remain interested and motivated. They concentrate well and take pride in finishing a task, for example, making a feely book. They share and take turns and are polite and helpful. They have good independence skills but also show concern towards others. Children form good relationships with their peers and work and play amicably together. Children learn about their local community and the wider world through many activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers and express their ideas enthusiastically as they play. They listen well. They share books and know that they can be used for enjoyment or to find information. They understand the structure of stories and make up new and retell old ones. They learn letter sounds and rhyme through everyday opportunities. They understand that writing has meaning and write for many purposes e.g. making shopping lists. Many read and write their own names and those of friends and family

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count with confidence. They learn to recognise and name numerals as they play lotto games or look at the number of the week. They begin to represent number by using their fingers, making marks and making graphs and charts. They match, sort, compare size and can order and sequence. They discuss weight and volume. They learn about shape both in 2 and 3D. Children begin to understand simple addition and subtraction when they sing rhymes or work out how many crackers they have eaten.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children investigate a wide range of natural and man made objects. They ask questions about how things work and why things happen. They comment on change when making bread and growing sunflowers. They develop a sense of past, present and future when talking about the weather and seasons. They design and build constructions and use tools well. They use technology equipment such as tape machines, stethoscopes, whisks and programmable toys. They benefit from visits out into the local community.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use large equipment skilfully. They have a good sense of space and awareness of others when using the wheeled toys inside or choosing somewhere to sit at group time. They notice the effects of exercise on their bodies when they are hot and their hearts are beating faster. They develop an understanding of healthy eating through planned topics. They demonstrate good hand eye coordination when using a wide range of tools and equipment such as puzzles, sewing, scissors and pencils.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to explore, experiment and be creative through a wide range activities provided. They mix colours as they paint and enjoy the process of their artwork as well as the finished result. They use their senses when making feely books and food tasting. They use and enjoy sound makers they have made and move with imagination to rhythm and music. They participate in adult directed role-play and devise their own very detailed imaginative play using available resources to good effect.

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 key issues to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- improve written planning to show how the outside play area and local environment can be included more in the curriculum as an 'outdoor classroom' to further support children's development and 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.