



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 226383

DfES Number: 580524

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/11/2004
Inspector Name Janet Banham

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Community Centre Playgroup
Setting Address Station Road
 Stoney Stanton
 Leicestershire
 LE9 4LU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Rita Sheehan

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

The Community Centre Playgroup was established in 1972 and is attached to the Manorfield Primary School in the centre of Stoney Stanton.

The playgroup has use of a large hall, an adjacent smaller room and associated facilities, and shares a secure outside play area with the school. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The provision is open each weekday morning in term time from 08:30 to 11:30 and on Monday and Wednesday afternoons for older pre-school children between 12:30 and 15:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 45 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup serves families from the village and surrounding rural area.

The playgroup is privately owned and the proprietor heads a qualified staff team of six.

How good is the Day Care?

Community Centre Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children.

They and their families are warmly welcomed into a bright environment where space is used to good effect so that children can move around equipment safely and explore play both individually and in small groups. Staff establish close relationships with the children and the keyworker system enhances their knowledge of individual children's social and emotional welfare. The management of children's behaviour is satisfactory, although some members of staff are not pro-active in handling disruption and show a lack of understanding of the setting's policy of managing children's behaviour.

The playgroup provides a good range of toys and activities but there are few opportunities for children to routinely have a free choice of resources to create

independently and staff do not always support children's play and learning.

Safety awareness is very good. Health and hygiene practices are satisfactory although not consistently promoted during handwashing and mealtime practices.

Staff form very good relationships with families who are appreciative of the comfortable environment and care given to their children. An informative prospectus is provided for new parents and they are updated on information about the group on a daily basis and through newsletters and the notice board.

Most statutory recording is in place but some require reviewing to comply with the National Standards and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Following the last inspection, the playgroup was asked to provide a clear child protection policy and procedure which complies with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and ensure there is a trained member of staff with responsibility for child protection issues. The proprietor has undertaken lead responsibility and has prepared a clear policy for the protection of children and families. A statement of procedures for the protection of staff has yet to be included and is a recommendation of this report.

What is being done well?

- The fostering of warm and comfortable relationships with the children and families which enable staff to care for the children in partnership with their carers and to respond to individual needs.
- The quality of risk assessments. Rotating the responsibility for practice ensures all staff are aware of the procedures and elements of risk.
- The provision of a bright and welcoming environment where space is used to good effect allowing children a choice of activities where they can play alone or in small groups.
- The commitment of the proprietor to improving practice.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to routinely have a greater choice of materials and equipment to enable them to develop their imagination and create freely
- the deployment of staff to support children's play and learning and be pro-active in the management of children's behaviour
- the health of children by reviewing handwashing practices and management of meal times
- documentation, by the inclusion of a Lost and Uncollected Children policy in the Operational Plan and a statement in the Child Protection policy covering

the procedure to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since 1 April 2004 Ofsted has not received any complaints about this provider.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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	Ensure the Operational Plan contains the procedures to be followed in the case of a lost or uncollected child.
3	Ensure children routinely have free choice from a range of resources and that staff are deployed appropriately to support children's play and learning.
7	Ensure children's health is safeguarded by reviewing hand washing and mealtime practices.
13	Ensure the Child Protection policy contains a statement of the procedure to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Most staff have a sound understanding of the early learning goals but some are insecure, resulting in weaknesses in teaching. Apart from focussed activities, children's learning is not being developed by these members of staff. There is limited use of open ended questioning to develop knowledge and understanding. Generally staff use appropriate methods to help children learn, teaching in small groups. However, the more able and older children are insufficiently challenged in their learning and personal development and consequently are not reaching their full potential.

Planning is clear and used well by staff but it is not evaluated nor used to evidence where children are in their learning.

Management of the children and their behaviour is generally good although inappropriate deployment of staff sometimes means disruption is not effectively dealt with.

Time and resources are used generally well but occasionally consideration is not given to the way activities are presented.

Leadership and management of the group is generally good and in some areas very good. Staff's strengths and weaknesses are assessed but monitoring of the quality of teaching is weak. Training is well supported and many opportunities are taken to improve practice.

The partnership with parents is very good. The informative prospectus explains the curriculum and regular newsletters and well appointed notice board gives them current information on plans and topics. They are invited to contribute personal skills into the learning programme and share knowledge of their children. Staff and carers spend much time sharing information about the children each day. Currently however carers do not receive any formal written information as to their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- The promotion of the use of books and imaginative story telling.
- The development of the children's sense of community and time.
- The establishment of warm relationships with parents and carers, the welcome afforded to them and the time given each day for sharing information about the children.

- The commitment of the proprietor to continued improvements in practice and support of training.

What needs to be improved?

- planning, so that aims and objectives of the learning outcomes are clear, are evaluative and used in the assessment to formally evidence where children are in their learning and how they are to be moved on
- the challenges set for all children
- staff's understanding of how to use activities and routines to enhance children's personal development and learning skills.
- routine opportunities for children to use their imagination freely to design and create; to use technical equipment; develop mark making and writing skills and use number.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

They were asked to increase the range of activities and resources for children to develop their skills in handling tools. On clarification, the playgroup was specifically asked to offer proper woodworking tools and workbench. The staff were unhappy with this, considered the implications of presentation and management and ultimately compromised by providing good quality play tools and workbench which contribute well to the development of children's handling of small tools.

The playgroup was further asked to have a policy and written information available in relation to special needs education. This has been put into place with the current SENCO requirements.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children feel secure. They separate well from their carers and are keen to play. They respond to experiences, sit well and contribute at group times. They show a sense of pride in achievement, but are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility such as at snack time. They are learning about emotions and to respect peers and adults. Behaviour is generally good, disruptions usually being the result of lack of challenges in play.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Most children communicate well and are beginning to develop their vocabulary. They listen and respond but are not further challenged to extend language or think imaginatively by some staff. Older and more able children can write and make marks although there is little variety in the materials offered. Phonic recognition of letters is used both formally and informally. Children use books well and their attention is captured at story time with the creative use of additional props.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are familiar with counting during focussed activities and are beginning to understand calculation through singing songs and rhymes. There are lost opportunities for spontaneous use of counting and number as appropriate activities are unsupported by staff. Older children are consolidating number, shape and size in their pre-school sessions. Evidence indicates children have opportunities for looking at pattern and shape.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing a good sense of time and place through discussions and visits in the locality, and by welcoming visitors to playgroup. They investigate change and growth and the natural world. There are opportunities to begin to understand other races and cultures and some positive images in their play. Construction is offered routinely. However, the choice of communication and technical equipment is limited and does not offer sufficient challenge to the more able and older children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and safely and with control around each other and the equipment. They are coordinated demonstrating a good use of their bodies in musical movement and exercises, and when using small tools. They have opportunities to crawl, climb and balance and use wheeled toys. Topics enable children to understand their bodies and the importance of healthy eating. However, hygiene awareness is not being enhanced through inconsistencies in the management of handwashing and mealtimes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing a sense of colour and older children use colour language spontaneously in play. They have opportunities to explore various methods of using paint. Playdoh is used to make patterns and food. The choice of drawing materials is limited and unattractive, and there are few opportunities for children to design and create freely using a variety of equipment. Music is offered regularly and effectively. Children sing and use instruments and dance to various rhythms.

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

- Ensure short term plans show the aims and objectives of the learning outcomes, are evaluative and formally evidence where children are in their learning and how they are to be moved on.
- Ensure the deployment of staff and the use of equipment maximises teaching opportunities and ensures challenges are set for all children.
- Create routine opportunities for all children to use their imagination freely to design and create; to use technical equipment; develop mark making and writing skills, and use number.

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.