



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221814

DfES Number: 540829

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/04/2004  
Inspector Name Lorraine Hunt

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Saplings Pre School Playgroup  
Setting Address Beechwood Avenue  
Bottisham  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB5 9BE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Saplings Pre School Playgroup 300366

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Saplings Pre School Playgroup  
Address Beechwood Avenue  
Bottisham  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB5 9BE

## 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

Saplings Pre-School Playgroup opened in its present location in 1995. It operates from a purpose-built building in the Bottisham Primary School grounds and has its own secure boundary. The group serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 17 funded 3 year olds on roll who are all in their first term of funding. The children move on to the adjacent local authority nursery class for the year before their entry into school. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language but has none currently attending.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 to 11.45 each morning except Wednesday when a session is run for 2 year olds and their carers. Afternoon sessions operate on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 13.00 to 15.30 and Wednesdays from 12.45 to 15.15.

1 full-time and 3 part-time staff work with the children. Two of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 and 1 staff member is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor and area SENCO from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

Saplings Pre-school Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children aged two to five years.

Staff work well together to provide children with a broad range of planned activities which promote children's development. They deploy themselves effectively to support and extend children's learning in one-to-one and small group situations, however, snack time is not efficiently organised to maintain the children's attention. Most policies and procedures are in place although some need reviewing and updating. Record keeping systems help staff to meet children's individual needs and

keep children safe.

Space is used well to offer children a stimulating environment where they have access to a good range of resources, some of which reflect equality. Children experience warm and caring relationships with staff and are happy and settled. Praise and encouragement is used effectively by staff to reinforce good behaviour and so promote children's confidence and self-esteem. Rules are applied fairly and consistently so children know what is expected of them.

Staff have a generally good awareness of safety although door security and an assessment of possible hazards in the kitchen area is needed to ensure that all risks to children are minimized. Good health and hygiene practices are given appropriate attention and staff help children learn about keeping healthy through the daily routines.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are very supportive of the staff and feel able to approach them at any time. Staff and parents exchange information daily about children's routines and activities to ensure children's needs are met.

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to accurately record the attendance of all staff and adults present at each session, to obtain written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice /treatment, to update the child protection policy with details about the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff and to collate an operational plan.

Attendance is now recorded appropriately and parents complete a written consent form for seeking medical advice/treatment when they register their child at the group. This ensures that appropriate care can be given.

The child protection policy is now complete and an operational plan is undergoing further review to ensure that documentation reflects the ethos, practice and organization of the setting.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The weekly session for 2 year olds, accompanied by their carers, gives carers and children a very good opportunity to get to know the staff and the premises. This helps children's transition into the playgroup at two and a half.
- An adult: child ratio of at least 1:4 is maintained through the use of a parent rota. As a result children are well supported in their play and learning and staff are able to spend time meeting children's individual needs.
- Children are provided with a varied range of fruit at snacktime, which they are able to choose from. This encourages children to eat healthily, try new foods and become more independent.
- Parents are very positive about the setting and the staff. They particularly appreciate the approachability of the staff and the way staff meet the

individual needs of the children and work with parents to ensure children are happy and settled.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the organization of snacktime
- the arrangements for door security and a review of safety in the kitchen area
- the updating of policies and procedures, to include policies for lost and uncollected children and an outings procedure

#### **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 must take the following actions by the date shown**

Std	Action	Date
6	ensure that the security arrangements for managing access to the premises are used and review the safety arrangements of the kitchen area.	12/07/2004
14	Ensure that there are policies regarding lost and uncollected children and outings are in place and that all policies and procedures are reviewed and made available to parents.	12/07/2004

##### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	review the organisation of snack time to ensure that the time is managed effectively and children's attention remains focused

## 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 Saplings Pre-School Playgroup is of good quality overall. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a good working knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they use to plan activities based around a range of interesting topics and the six areas of learning. Keyworkers complete detailed observations which are used to identify next steps and inform assessments. However, key activity plans do not always use practical activities which build upon what children already know or indicate how the activity will offer appropriate challenges to all children.

Staff have good relationships with children and know them well. They are caring towards them and interested in what they say. They work alongside children to help them become confident and provide many opportunities for them to develop basic skills and to learn through play.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff work well together and relationships within the team are positive. Staff meet weekly to plan the curriculum which covers all six areas of learning and to discuss pertinent issues. The committee and staff have recently produced an Action Plan as a result of a self-evaluation exercise, giving focus to the group.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are kept informed about topics and daily activities through regular newsletters, the daily whiteboard in the entrance hall and through being involved as a parent helper. Parents can talk informally to staff on a daily basis about their child and relationships between staff and parents is good. Written reports are provided when children transfer to the adjacent local authority nursery class. Parents do not contribute to their child's assessment.

### What is being done well?

- Children enjoy their time at the setting and are happy, settled and motivated to learn. This enables them to make progress in all areas of learning.
- Staff form very good relationships with the children. They support children as and when necessary, give them time to practise new skills and praise and encourage their efforts and achievements. This promotes children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff act as good role models to children. They make a point of thanking parent helpers by name at final group time so that children learn to value others and they provide an environment that promotes positive behaviour.
- Children are provided with good opportunities to enjoy rhymes and rhythmic

activities through books, games, songs and movement. This gives young children an excellent opportunity to explore letter and word sounds.

- Children enjoy sharing books and listen attentively to stories, joining in enthusiastically with familiar refrains. They handle books with care. Children particularly enjoy music sessions which are led by a staff member playing her guitar.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the planning, so that key activity plans focus on meaningful, practical activities which build upon what children already know and offer appropriate challenges to all individuals.
- the opportunities for children to explore matching, sorting by function and shape, ordering and comparing groups of numbers through practical activities.

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

Not applicable

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested, motivated to learn and respond with excitement to new and routine activities. They form very good relationships with staff and are learning to share, take turns and co-operate in their play. They are beginning to show a sense of responsibility; they put books away when they have finished with them and help to tidy up outdoor toys at the end of the session. Children's behaviour is good; clear boundaries are set and consistently applied by staff.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's spoken language is developing well. They talk with adults and each other and listen well at group times. Children show a great interest in books. They join in enthusiastically with repeated refrains in stories and rhymes. They are beginning to understand that print carries meaning but poor labelling means that children do not become familiar with key words. Children are beginning to mark make but resources are not always available to support this in role play situations.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can count confidently to 10 and use numbers in their play. Staff effectively introduce counting and basic mathematical language through play and group routines. They learn about size through practical activities such as construction and playdough, when they compare sizes of "sausages" they have made. However there are limited opportunities for children to match, sort by function and shape, order and compare groups of objects in practical, meaningful situations.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good opportunities to explore materials and textures such as sand, water, gloop, oats and cooked spaghetti. They develop skills of building and construction using a range of resources. They develop a sense of time and place through planned topics and enjoy looking at photos of themselves and staff as babies and talking about significant events. There are limited opportunities for children to learn about other cultures or use information technology on a regular basis.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy using a range of resources, tools and equipment, which they do with developing control, safety and appropriate staff support. They move confidently during outdoor play, showing an awareness of space and demonstrating good co-ordination to avoid collision with others. They have opportunities for climbing and balancing and pedalled toys and scooters are used confidently. There are fewer opportunities to play with equipment such as balls, bats, hoops and beanbags.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore texture, colour and form in 2 and 3 dimensions and through a variety of media. They have daily access to free painting and use their imagination and creativity when doing activities such as conker rolling, string painting and fruit/vegetable printing. They enjoy role play and are learning to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Children have good opportunities to explore music, sounds and rhythm.

**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**

- continue to develop the planning so that key activity plans focus on meaningful, practical activities which build upon what children already know and offer appropriate challenges to all individuals.
- improve the programme for mathematical development by providing children with practical opportunities to explore matching, sorting by function and shape, ordering and comparing groups of numbers.

*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.*