



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 226252

DfES Number: 517022

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	06/02/2003
Inspector Name	Gillian Bryce

SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name	Birstall Acorns Under 5's Playgroup
Setting Address	C/o Highcliffe Community Centre Birstall Leicestershire LE4 3DL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Jacqueline Bryan
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	
Address	

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
Birstall Acorns Under 5's playgroup was established in 1983. It operates from the Community Centre attached to a school situated on the edge of Birstall village. Children attend from the local community. The group is registered to provide 25 places for children aged between three and five years old. There are currently 47 children on roll. This includes 20 funded three-year-olds and 12 funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. Parents are involved on a daily rota system. A Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is available for support. The group operates five days each week during school term times. Sessions last from 9:00am to 11:30am and 12:30pm to 3:10pm one afternoon and 12:40pm to 3:10pm three afternoons. Four staff work with the children. Three have Early Years Qualifications and one is attending further training. The setting is familiar with working with children with Special Educational Needs, and with children who have English as an additional language. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff form caring and supportive relationships with the children. Behaviour management strategies are excellent. The setting offers a varied and interesting programme of activities ensuring all Early Learning Goals and stepping stones are covered throughout the year. Planning ensures there is a good balance between child initiated and adult directed activities, however planning does not sufficiently make clear children's individual learning needs or sufficiently extend more able children. The playgroup has a good working knowledge and understanding of supporting children with special educational needs. The setting has a home liaison book which records details of children's activities. There is also an Early Learning Goals record book that contains records of achievements at play group and invites a written record from home, however there is limited information to support parent's understanding of the ELG's. There is a management committee run by parents and a parent's rota of attendance at playgroup. Many parents contribute to the rota. Parents are also heavily involved in fund raising. The management committee is very supportive of the playgroup and their needs in terms of training and resources. There is good liaison between the management committee and the leader of the setting. Effective leadership ensures the setting provides good quality education to children by promoting staff training, having clearly defined job descriptions, and good resources for equipment and toys. The leader demonstrates very good understanding of the Early Years Curriculum and has in place good long, medium, and short term planning. The setting has a development programme in place which recognises its strengths and weaknesses.

What is being done well?

Teaching for personal, social and emotional development; and mathematical development is very good. Leadership of the setting is very good, providing staff with good resources to improve their teaching skills and their understanding of planning for the early learning goals. Curriculum planning ensures all learning goals are covered; and provides a good balance between adult led and child initiated activity. Staff form good, caring relationships with children, and have good behavioural management strategies in place. Partnership with parents is good; parents are provided with good verbal and written information.

What needs to be improved?

The use of assessment to ensure the individual needs of all children are met. Working with parents to provide clearer information of the Early Learning Goals and stepping stones.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup has made good progress since the last inspection. Planning systems show what children are expected to learn from daily activities provided. Plans include differentiation for 3 year olds, 4 year olds, and the mixed age group class. There is insufficient planning taking account of the individual needs of children. Staff are recording their observations of children's learning and beginning to link these to curriculum plans.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children display independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They play well together and are forming good relationships with their peers and staff. They are learning to share, take turns and work as part of a group. Children understand the difference between right and wrong. Children are developing personal independence in managing their own personal hygiene. They have a developing awareness of cultural and religious differences.	
COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children make their meaning clear to others and have emerging self confidence to speak to others about their wants and interests. Some children have confidence in talking to people who are not well known to them. Children listen to, and join in with stories and songs; they listen with increasing attention and recall events. Children draw and paint and give meaning to marks. Older and more able children can write their names. There are missed opportunities to link sounds to letters.	
MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children show an interest in numbers and counting with many children counting beyond 10. Older children recognise some numerals, and represent numbers by using fingers. Children show interest in number problems, with older children displaying emerging confidence in solving number problems. Children recognise shapes, and older children use language such as 'circle', 'smaller' and 'bigger'. Older and more able children recognise the language of addition and subtraction.	
KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children show interest in why and how things work. They use tools for construction and join construction pieces together such as lego and soft bricks to build and balance. Children know how to operate ICT equipment such as remote control robots, and simple programmes on the computer. Children show an increasing understanding of the world they live in; people important to them, and of the cultures and beliefs of others.	
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children move with confidence in a range of ways such as crawling and jumping. They can sit, stand up and balance. Children are aware of other children's personal space when playing. Children are developing awareness of good hygiene practice. They operate equipment such as play buggies, by pushing and pulling. Older children show control in climbing and sliding. Children throw and some, catch. They have good hand-eye co-ordination and use one-handed tools and construction	

materials well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children differentiate colour and explore what happens when colours are mixed. They enjoy singing and sing songs from memory. Children enjoy role play and imaginative play based on their own experiences. They are aware of the different sounds musical instruments make. There are missed opportunities in exploring texture, such as the texture of feathers.
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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
Continue to develop partnership with parents, providing parents with clearer understanding of the Early Learning Goals and stepping stones, to facilitate home learning and documentation in the early learning goals booklet. Continue to develop planning to ensure the individual needs of children are being met, and to extend learning of more able children.