



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

THE INSPECTION OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN BEFORE
COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

**NURSERY REPORT ON:
Castleton Baptist Church Playgroup**

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Dr Julia Coop

Date of inspection: 20th-21st March 2006

Contract number T/112/05

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REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF NURSERY SETTINGS IN THE NON-MAINTAINED SECTOR

Name of nursery: Castleton Baptist Church Playgroup

Address Marshfield Primary School
Marshfield Road
Castleton
Cardiff, South Wales
Post code CF3 2UW

Telephone 01633 680047

Person responsible for day-to-day management:
Mrs Jane Bradley

Position: Supervisor

About the inspection

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

Very good (Grade 1) many good features, some of them outstanding;

Good (Grade 2) good features and no major shortcomings;

Satisfactory (Grade 3) good features outweigh shortcomings;

Unsatisfactory (Grade 4) some satisfactory work, but shortcomings in important areas;

Poor (Grade 5) many shortcomings

1.0 CONTEXT OF THE SETTING

Castleton Baptist Church Playgroup was established in 1988. It has been registered for Educational Provision for 3 to 4 year olds since 1998. It moved to its present accommodation in September 2005. It is open for 36 weeks of the year. It holds 2 sessions per day and is registered for 26 children per session. The playgroup is popular and over-subscribed. Children attend for up to 4 sessions per week. A number of children under three attend the playgroup in the afternoons. A total of nineteen 3 year olds and twenty six 4 year olds are in receipt of funding.

The playgroup operates in a newly built, self-contained, building in the grounds of Marshfield Primary School. Most children move on to the school's reception class in the autumn term following their fourth birthday. The accommodation is bright and attractive with a good range of resources and furniture. The children have access to a quiet room and an interesting outdoor learning environment. The outside area is large and children are safe and secure. However, a steep hill in the middle restricts space for physical development and makes supervision problematic.

The majority of children speak English as their first language. There are a few children from minority ethnic groups but they are not new to speaking English. No children have a special educational need, but the playgroup offers appropriate support for children with particular needs. There is wheelchair access and disabled facilities. Children come from the local area and have a range of socio-economic backgrounds. They enter the playgroup with broadly average skills.

The playgroup has its own team of six staff. Four staff work during each session. Two work fulltime. Four members of staff have appropriate childcare and education qualifications. The playgroup has good links with the Early Years Development and Childcare partnership and the Newport Local Education Authority. It has been inspected by Care Standards Inspectorate Wales in its previous premises, where it fully met the required standards. It is awaiting a further inspection. It was last inspected by Estyn in September 1999. The playgroup has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and has Wales PPA Accreditation.

2.0 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children's learning

The quality and standards of educational provision, taken overall, are appropriate and successfully promote the desirable outcomes for children's learning.

2.2 Standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Six areas of Learning	Judgement for 3-4 year old children	Judgement for 4-5 year old children
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	2	2
Personal and Social Development	2	2
Mathematical Development	2	2
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	2	2
Physical Development	2	2
Creative Development	2	2

2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

Quality of Education	Judgement for 3-4 year old children	Judgement for 4-5 year old children
Quality of planning for children's learning.	2	2
Quality of teaching.	2	2
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers.	2	2
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community.	2	2

2.4 The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

Leadership and management have good features and no major shortcomings. Staff work well as a team. There are good partnerships with external agencies and Marshfield Primary School.

2.5 The quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with no major shortcomings.

2.6 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report

The setting has made good progress in implementing the key issues from the last report.

3.0 THE STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN IN THE SIX AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds and 4-5 year olds.

3.1 Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Good features

All children speak in sentences. Most 4 year olds and some 3 year old children communicate their ideas well and give very good answers in response to questions from adults. The most able can ask some interesting questions in return. All children talk as they play with each other. The few children new to speaking English make very good progress and quickly increase their skills. All children enjoy listening to stories and recognise a number of familiar stories. They know that books can give information or tell stories and all children know the difference between pictures and words. All children like making marks on paper or in chalk when playing outside. Most 4 year- olds and more able 3 year-old children recognise their written name. The most able children form some letters correctly and read back their writing.

Shortcomings

Few children, particularly the most able, choose to look at books and use oral storytelling techniques. There are a good range of interesting books available but they are situated in the quiet room where children rarely venture without an adult.

3.2 Personal and Social Development

Good features

All children are happy, settled and know the routines. All children play happily together, take turns sensibly and are confident to select activities of their own. They respond well to adult direction and enjoy helping to tidy up or give out the snacks. All the children use the toilet independently and wash their hands afterwards. More able 3 year-olds and many 4 year-olds concentrate for long periods and usually finish a task before moving onto another one. More able 4 year-olds use Welsh to greet adults or to respond to the register. All children move around the room and outside area sensibly and confidently and seek adult support when necessary. All children show concern for living things and older children like helping their younger friends.

Shortcomings

Many children have a limited awareness of Welsh phrases and vocabulary because many adults lack confidence to develop children's bilingual skills.

3.3 Mathematical Development

Good features

All children enjoy counting activities. Most 3 year-olds can count up to 10 and happily count their toys when playing. Many 4 year-olds and the more able 3-year olds can count accurately to 20 and some can count accurately beyond this. They recognise written numerals up to 10 and can match the correct number of items to it.

All children delight in telling the adults how to put the 'number snails 1-10' back into the correct sequence. All children recognise colours and can sort and match objects using colour. The most able children can sort using two criteria such as colour and size. Most 3 and 4 year-old children recognise simple shapes such as a triangle. 4 year-olds and more able 3 year-olds can identify the characteristics of simple shapes, such as having three sides. More able 3 year-olds and most 4 year olds can complete a pattern. All children respond to adult questions using words such as 'bigger and smaller' or can compare sets of objects using the terms 'more than, less than'.

Shortcomings

Activities for some more able children are too limiting. There are few opportunities for children to extend their learning, for example, by recording numbers as they play or using money.

3.4 Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Good features

All children delight in discussing the weather and know it is cold in winter and warm in summer. They know that flowers grow in the spring time. The more able children know that the grass seeds on the hill outside need water and sunlight to grow. They know they mustn't tread on the seeds as they will damage the 'baby grass'. All like looking at the spring flowers and talk about the different colours. The most able 3 year-olds and many 4 year-olds know the different stages in the life cycle of the butterfly. Most 4 year olds show perseverance when they try to solve problems, such as how to build houses out of different shapes. All children talk about members of their family and are happily preparing for Mothers Day. They know there are many other special people who help them, such as the policeman and nurse. Many more able 4 year old children are beginning to recognise that life in the past was different and know that people long ago lived in caves not houses. All children appreciate their own Welsh cultural traditions and know about cultures of the world such as when they celebrate Chinese New Year and other festivals. Most 4 year olds can recall the story of Rama and Sita.

Shortcomings

Children have access to a computer but few, particularly the more able, choose to use it to develop their skills, as it is situated away from the main activities in the quite room.

3.5 Physical Development

Good features

All the children move around the playgroup and outside area sensibly. They move with good control and an awareness of each other. The most able children can hop with control when playing 'Hop Scotch'. All children can control bikes and wheeled toys and avoid each other when travelling around the hill.

All children handle pencils, small tools and paintbrushes well and achieve the effects they want. They take great care when selecting tiny coloured grains of rice, pieces of fabric and glitter and place them carefully onto their Mothers' Day gifts. More able 4 year olds can cut out carefully using scissors and can punch holes with a hole-punch.

Shortcomings

The large hill in the middle of the outside area restricts the space available for physical development.

3.6 Creative Development

Good features

Children love to paint, cut and stick and have many opportunities to use a variety of different materials and to make choices when model making. They use bold colours in their work. They are proud of their efforts and like to take their work home. They like making dough sandwiches and models out of building bricks. They sing lots of simple songs and rhymes. Most 4 year olds sing tunefully and with expression. Children particularly enjoy playing different musical instruments and making up 'seed and gardener' dances to the music. All children delight in acting in role and dressing up.

Shortcomings

There are few opportunities for children to comment about the work they or others produce.

4.0 THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds and for 4-5 year olds.

4.1 The quality of planning for children's learning

Good features

The long and short term planning is good and based on a good understanding of how young children learn best. The playgroup uses information from parents to help planning. There is a good balance of teacher led and child centred activities across the six areas of learning and relevant themes are used to engage the children's interest. There is good promotion of racial equality through a variety of multi-cultural resources and activities planned around different Faith festivals. The needs of children who may have a particular language difficulty are well met through the use of a specialist teaching programme.

Shortcomings

Planning does not always identify activities to extend the learning of the more able children.

Staff make the best use they can of the outside learning environment but the large hill makes it difficult to plan learning activities, that the new Foundation Phase suggests.

4.2 The quality of teaching

Good features

There is a good team spirit. Staff work well together and have a good knowledge of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning. Relationships between adults and children are caring and supportive, routines are well established and this successfully helps children to learn. Adults know individual children well and interact purposefully with the children. They ask relevant questions to support learning. There are good expectations of behaviour and adults encourage all children to make sensible choices. Resources are used well to make learning interesting and relevant through topics and to promote effectively equality of opportunity and respect for diversity.

Shortcomings

There is limited use of incidental Welsh in daily routines and encounters to develop children's bilingual Welsh skills.

4.3 The quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reports to parents and carers

Good features

Staff keep careful records of the children's progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They observe children daily and plan specific assessment activities. The results of these activities are recorded to help target interventions in learning. Samples of children's work are kept and appropriately commented upon and dated.

Parents receive an end of year record of achievement and formal consultations meetings are regularly planned.

Shortcomings

Parent reports are not linked to the desirable learning outcomes.

4.4 The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community

Good features

Relationships between parents, carers and community are good. Parents' views are formally sought through questionnaires. Regular newsletters, notices on the board, home-link coffee mornings and parent mornings, keep carers and parents fully informed. Documents give parents good advice about how they can support learning at home.

The playgroup has, in a short time, developed good links with the school. There are close links with the reception class where most children will transfer. Resources can be borrowed and facilities, such as the school playground, are readily available to enhance learning.

Visits into the local area, such as to a Farm, woods, supermarket or park are used well to support learning. In addition, the supervisor is adept at using the skills of parents to enhance learning. As a result an Italian mum has helped the children to cook Pasta, a grandmother from Malawi came to talk to the children and a soldier dad set up an assault course. All these additional experiences enhance the curriculum well and help develop children's confidence and personal skills.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings

5.0 THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

Good features

Leadership and management are effective. The manager has a clear vision and aims for the playgroup. She works closely with the Church Committee who oversees the financial management. Links with external consultants are used well to improve the quality of the provision. The work of staff is monitored carefully and staff training is well thought out to meet individual needs as well as to improve the quality of education provided. The playgroup has gained the Basic Skills award.

Shortcomings

The playgroup has not yet established a comprehensive self-evaluation system.

6.0 SPIRITUAL, MORAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for 3-5 year-olds

The quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Good features

The playgroup promotes children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development well through daily events, interesting resources and relevant themes. At all times children are encouraged to be polite, friendly, self confident and caring children. They learn about different cultures through a wide range of activities and resources.

As a result, they are well prepared for life in multicultural Wales. Children know something of the Welsh culture.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings

7.0 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for inspection identified in the last inspection report.

Good features

Staff are deployed more carefully

Staff have a good knowledge of the desirable learning outcomes and complete a comprehensive baseline assessment.

There are more opportunities for children to make marks and reading resources are good.

New accommodation means that there is more space to develop children's physical and creative skills and their independence

Shortcomings

Assessment information is more detailed. Through questioning staff now extend children's learning more successfully, but assessment information is not always used to inform the planning of activities to extend learning for the more able children.

8.0 THE KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The setting needs to:

- use assessment information more carefully to inform the planning of activities to extend the learning of more able children in particular;
- develop a self evaluation system so it can be used to raise standards and quality of provision;
- continue to develop staff expertise and confidence in promoting bilingualism; and

- ensure parents reports are linked to the desirable learning outcomes.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to Estyn. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.