



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 226344

DfES Number: 539451

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/03/2005  
Inspector Name Alison Putnar

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Scalford Playgroup  
Setting Address The Methodist Church Hall, New Street  
Scalford  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire  
LE14 4DP

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Scalford Playgroup 1024136

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Scalford Playgroup  
Address The Methodist Church Hall  
New Street, Scalford  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire  
LE14 4DP

## 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

Scalford Playgroup opened in 1970. It operates from a room in the Methodist Church in Scalford Village and serves the local and surrounding areas. The facility is registered to access the education grant funding for 3 and 4-year-olds.

There are currently 25 children from 2 to 5 years old on roll including 17 funded 3 and 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently no children with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The group operates on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 09:30 to 12:00 during term-time only. A total of 5 part-time and full-time staff work with the children. Of these 2 have early years qualifications, and 1 is working towards this. The setting are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receive support from a mentor/teacher from the Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Scalford Playgroup provides good quality education provision, where children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff build positive relationships with the children and are enthusiastic, fostering children's participation in their learning environment. They plan an interesting range of topics and varied activities. Senior staff have a wider understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and use this knowledge to identify clear learning intentions, helping children make progress through play. Staff are less confident in planning activities to promote mathematical development. Children's progress is observed and recorded, the information gained is not yet effectively used when planning future activities. Some activities do not provide sufficient challenge for more able children. Methods for managing children's behaviour are appropriate and children respond very well.

The leadership and management is generally good. Qualified staff act as positive role models and lead the sessions well. The staff team work hard, after a period of change, with some staff gaining recognised qualifications and implementing a varied education curriculum. There are not yet effective systems to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are equally and frequently covered. There is a commitment to improving the setting, staff take on board advice from relevant professionals and access appropriate training courses to improve their teaching.

The partnership with parents has significant weaknesses. Staff create a welcoming environment where parents are confident to spend time and informally discuss their children's needs and some aspects of development. Opportunities are not provided for parents to view and contribute to their children's development records. Some information is provided about the education provision and future topics but lacks detail of how parents can be involved in children's learning.

### What is being done well?

- The comfortable and supportive environment ensures that children's personal, social and emotional development is well promoted. Staff's genuine care, interest and high expectations of behaviour result in children being happy, well behaved and considerate of their friends needs.
- Younger children are making good progress in development as they freely explore the wide range of daily activities. Resources are well organised to enable children to make choices, they are able to revisit activities and take time to practise and develop their skills.
- Many interesting opportunities are provided for children to investigate and experiment as they freely select and choose from a good range of tools, equipment and resources for joining and assembling with craft materials. This

encourages their fine motor physical skills, their design and making skills and supports their creativity.

**What needs to be improved?**

- planning to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are equally and frequently covered. That activities have appropriate learning intentions for varying abilities and provide sufficient challenge for more able children
- grouping of children, at times, to enable staff to more easily pitch activities at appropriate levels; and ensure that large group times have purpose for all and that all children can contribute
- staff's use of information gained through children's assessments to inform future plans for activities; and systems for sharing these records with parents
- opportunities for children to develop a wider knowledge of, and confidence in, early mathematical concepts of calculation and shape through practical activities. For example, through using number songs and visual aids, or when calculating how many cups are needed for a group at snack-time.

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

Not Applicable.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are happy and settled, developing in confidence to freely choose from the good range of activities. They build strong relationships with staff and their peers, many play together in small groups and invite others to join in. Children behave very well in response to staff's appropriate handling and are aware of expectations for behaviour. They demonstrate some aspects of personal independence, for example, putting on coats. They less often practise independence at snack-time.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing a range of language skills during small group activities and when working individually with staff. The organisation of large group time means that conversation is often dominated by more confident children and not all have opportunities to join in. Many begin to recognise and attempt to write familiar letters, such as their first names, but more able ones are not encouraged to build on this. They listen well at story time, but rarely access the book area independently.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children benefit from regular support and opportunities to count, for example, counting those present at register time, some older ones confidently count above 10. They are beginning to recognise numerals when looking at the date. Children use positional language when joining in action songs and describe size correctly during play. They rarely refer to shape. Routines and practical activities are not effectively used to promote children's understanding of simple calculation.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are keen explorers. They build with construction sets and recyclable materials, freely selecting and experimenting with materials and tools to assemble and join boxes in various ways. Children enthusiastically talk about events in their own lives. Through topics they are beginning to show interest in the wider world, for example, learning about Chinese New Year, or looking at various uses of water around the world. Opportunities for exploring and using technology are infrequent.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move with control and co-ordination when joining in group games and musical movement activities. Opportunities for children to climb and balance are not equally promoted throughout the year. Sometimes, they are encouraged to think about the effects of exercise on their bodies, but, rarely learn about healthy practises, for example eating fruit at snack time. Children benefit from many good opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and skilfully use tools during craft.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children participate enthusiastically with craft activities, using their own ideas to form pictures and models. They build a repertoire of songs, joining in with actions and words. They listen to children's songs and use instruments during planned activities, but, do not have opportunities to freely explore instruments or experience a wide range of music types. Many act out familiar experiences with role-play resources, but older children are rarely inspired to explore their imagination further.

**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**

- build on the systems for planning activities and the grouping of children to ensure that over time all areas of the curriculum are equally covered; and that small and large group activities provide appropriate challenge for all children, enabling them to reach their full potential
- make more effective use of the information gained from children's assessments, identifying where children need support. Use the information when planning future activities to ensure all are purposeful and meet individual needs; and provide opportunities for parents to contribute and share what they know about their children
- plan a wider range of practical activities and make more use of daily routines to further promote children's understanding of mathematical concepts; particularly of early calculation and shape recognition.

*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.*