



## St Barnabas Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122594
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 February 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Pauline Kehoe
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Barnabas Play Group is a privately owned sessional group that has been registered since 1986. It operates from St. Barnabas Church Hall in East Molesey. The hall is situated in a quiet residential road, close to the High Street and several local schools. Children attend from families living in and around East and West Molesey, which are residential areas on the border of Kingston-upon-Thames in Surrey.

The group operates daily, term time from 09.15 - 12.15. It caters for children aged from two to four years. The group is registered to provide care for 34 children. At present there are 48 children on roll of whom 29 are funded. The group has experience of caring for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

A total of eight staff work with the children, four of whom hold a relevant childcare qualification. Two staff are currently training for a childcare qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about personal hygiene through routines encouraged by the staff. For example, they all wash their hands before having a snack. However, not all of the children wash their hands after they independently use the toilet, to minimise potential spread of infection. The group has a suitable policy for the exclusion of sick children, based upon information obtained from the health protection agency. This ensures that children who are unwell do not pass their illnesses to others.

Written parental consent to administer medication or treatment to children is in place. Children have access to appropriate first aid if they have an accident because the majority of staff have training in this area.

Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play when the weather permits. They move around confidently on the bikes and scooters, changing speed and direction to avoid each other. Staff help the children learn how to use the scooters and they spend time together developing the skill. Children enjoy chasing after the hoops rolled across the grass by staff. When the weather is inclement the children have a music and movement session, when they jump and move according to the instructions from the tape. They use a range of small equipment, such as paintbrushes and scissors with increasing control.

Children have a drink provided during the session, but do not have the opportunity to pour for themselves or help themselves to one at other times when they might be thirsty. The group provides healthy options for snacks, such as portions of fresh fruit and raisins.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The hall provides space for children to move around freely between the different activity areas. Displays of posters, artwork and toys create a welcoming environment for children. Toys and equipment are regularly checked for safety, any that are broken are discarded. Staff check all areas used by children and take steps to minimise potential hazards. For example, covers are used on electrical sockets and a doorbell entry system keeps children secure. However, the risk assessment does not cover children wearing unsuitable jewellery that presents a hazard. Fire drills are held every term, but not frequently enough for all staff and children to experience so that they know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely.

Staff develop children's understanding of some safety issues. For example, they say to children "sit properly on the chair, because we don't want you to fall off". However, at other times children run around the busy hall and slide across the floor on their knees, which is hazardous

for themselves and others. Staff do not consistently reinforce the "no running" rule at these times.

Staff understand the possible indicators of abuse and to approach the designated member of staff with any concerns. These aspects promote the welfare of the children in their care. However, not all staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to take if that member of staff is absent, to ensure that children are fully safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a choice of activities that promote all areas of play and learning, although sand, paint and doh are not always presented every day. Children are generally interested in the activities. They help themselves to other resources to support their play. For example, they select cars from the plastic storage boxes. Children play in small groups with staff support at the planned activities, or freely with their peers. Staff record observations of children's abilities during the planned activities. However, these are not effectively transferred into the children's profiles to give an overall picture of their abilities. Some of the youngest children do not have any entries in their Birth to three matters profiles.

During focused activities, such as circle time, the children form one large group, or they are divided into two groups according to their ages. Some of the children become distracted at these times and do not fully participate, or concentrate well on the activity presented.

Children enjoy warm, friendly relationships with staff and approach them freely for help and support. They are happy and confident at the group.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff ask children open ended questions, such as "how did you do that, what is it?" to help them organise their thoughts and extend their knowledge. Staff plan a range of activities to cover all areas of learning and present these during the first half of the session. However, staff do not always use everyday experiences and children's chosen play activities as opportunities for learning. Staff record their observations of children's abilities from the activity on record sheets and indicate the next stage in children's learning. The activities are repeated for several sessions or longer, so that all children experience the identified area of learning. However, this can lead to a repetitive cycle with limited variety for children who attend every day.

Children are confident and have good relationships with staff and their peers. They are beginning to stand up for their own rights. For example, one child says "no, I talking" when he is interrupted by another. They help with tidying up the toys and take themselves to the toilet independently. However, at times staff do not fully promote the children's independence. For example, children do not pour drinks for themselves at snack time and some older children have their coats put on for them before outside play. Children use complex sentences to communicate and enjoy joining in with rhyming activities. They listen to stories and help themselves to books, which they hold the correct way up and turn the pages. They recently made a book in which they

drew pictures, wrote their names and traced over letters to tell the story about "the slow amaryllis".

Children use number names in everyday situations. For example, a child talks about five spoonfuls of sand and holds up the correct number of fingers to represent this. Children construct using shapes and learn to estimate during planned activities. However, staff do not regularly introduce or consolidate counting and calculating into everyday activities, within the context of the children's play or routine.

Children use a variety of tools when playing with sand and doh. They learn how to operate simple equipment, such as a cassette player, and find out about the natural world through activities such as planting and observing bulbs. They explore the effects of mixing paint colours and make collages. Children play imaginatively with their peers and use or make props from resources to support their play.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the diversity within our society through resources and themed activities. For example, toys and books depict different cultures and recently children tried some Chinese food as part of the New Year festival.

Staff obtain and record information from parents about children's needs and preferences, so that appropriate care is provided from the start. This is especially important in helping young children develop a sense of belonging. The group has experience of caring for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children learn to treat others with respect and consideration because staff are positive role models for behaviour. Children are praised for their achievements and encouraged to take responsibility, for example, by helping to tidy away the toys. Unwanted behaviour is dealt with appropriately, for example, by removing children from the situation so that others are not affected. When this happens, staff are careful to treat children gently and not damage their self-esteem. Sometimes the noise level becomes high and staff have to raise their voices to be heard, which does not promote a calm atmosphere.

Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive a prospectus that includes information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and a general outline of the group's policies and procedures. The parents of new children are welcome to stay during sessions until their children are confident. General information about children is exchanged with staff at drop off and collection time. Annual parents' evenings are held, when parents view the records of their children's progress and discuss any issues arising. These measures support a positive relationship with parents and the exchange of information promotes continuity of care for the children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most staff have been in post for at least two years and their required checks are in place, indicating that they are suitable to work with children. However, the group has not developed a suitable recruitment procedure for new staff in line with current requirements. All staff are encouraged to attend ongoing training to keep up to date with current childcare practice. A key person system is in place, to coordinate information about children's needs and progress. Contingency arrangements are in place to cover staff absence, so that sufficient staff ratios are maintained. Regular meetings are held, so that all staff keep up to date with relevant information within the group.

The large hall is organised to offer a variety of activity areas including a book corner with bean bags and cushions. However, the large area is not reduced by room dividers, to provide children with opportunities to play and work in smaller groups and develop concentration.

Regulatory requirements are met and documentation relating to the safety, health and welfare of the children is in place. The group provides a range of policies and procedures to underpin and inform practice. The certificate of registration is displayed for parents' information. The group meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff have designated responsibility areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their training needs are established through ongoing appraisals. The owner involves staff in making decisions, but is aware that sometimes she needs to direct issues herself. She assesses the group through a self-evaluation document to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Sometimes the system used to record children's steps towards the early learning goals is not implemented, so that the setting does not always have a clear evaluation of children's progress.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection, Ofsted requested that the provider should ensure children have access to an expanded range of toys and resources that reflect positive images for children of disability. The group has provided small world toys to reflect disability, which improves the quality of care for the children.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that fire drills are held with sufficient frequency and improve staff's understanding of the procedures to safeguard children
- implement a robust recruitment and checking programme for new staff and improve organisation of space, so that children are cared for in smaller groups.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the system for recording observations of children's abilities and ensure that the system for planning and providing activities provides sufficient variety (also applies to care).

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)