

St Barnabas Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	100521
Inspection date	19 April 2007
Inspector	Pamela Woodhouse
Setting Address	St Barnabas Church Hall, Mount Pleasant Drive, Queens Park, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH8 9JN
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Registered person	St Barnabas Pre-School Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Barnabas Playgroup opened in 1969 and operates from the hall of St Barnabas Church in the Queens Park area of Bournemouth. A maximum of 36 children may attend the setting at any one time.

The setting is open each week day from 09:00 until 12:30 and 13:30 until 16:00 during term time except Wednesday afternoons. Children attend for a variety of sessions. A breakfast club for children attending pre-school that day is available from 08:00 to 09:00. There are currently 88 children aged from two to five on roll. Of these, 56 receive funding for early education. Children attend from the surrounding areas of Bournemouth.

The setting employs nine members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. All staff attend workshops and short courses. The setting receives support from Bournemouth Childcare and Family Support and are currently updating their Bournemouth Quality Standard assessment.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing an understanding of good hygiene practices and self-care skills. They are familiar with routines such as the need to wash their hands after toileting and before eating, knowing that this is to prevent germs from spreading. Their knowledge is reinforced through using resources such as puzzles which illustrate personal hygiene routines. For example, getting ready for bed and the subsequent discussion about their own routines. Children's good health is fostered by staff. They have appropriate first aid qualifications and are knowledgeable about routines and safe practices to ensure that children receive appropriate care and attention. For example, being trained to administer certain medications in an emergency situation.

Children are encouraged to try new foods and to develop an awareness of healthy eating through food related activities and discussions with staff. For example, they regularly cook, making fresh vegetable soup and use ingredients which they may not be familiar with, for instance, cinnamon in their biscuits. They have a varied snack menu of fresh vegetable crudités and fruit to reinforce the healthy eating message. Children have independent access to water throughout the session and a choice of healthy drinks at snack and lunch times.

Children are encouraged to exercise and have daily opportunities to use large and small equipment to develop their physical skills. They move around freely and safely both inside and out and have good spatial awareness, respecting their own space and that of others. Children confidently use equipment such as the climbing frame and trampet and competently pedal their trikes. They ably throw and catch balls and can control the speed and direction of their hoops as they roll them along the ground. These activities help to promote the development and control of their large muscles. Children have good hand-eye coordination because they have many opportunities to develop their small muscle skills using a range of tools which include scissors, dough utensils, pencils and brushes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment where there are suitable procedures to reduce their exposure to danger. For example, safety equipment is in place and a daily risk assessment of the premises is undertaken before they arrive. Children are protected because visitors to the premises cannot obtain unsolicited entrance due to the security procedures. A stringent system for their collection at the end of the session means that they are not released to people who have not been authorised by their parents. Children are developing responsibility for their own safety and that of others, for example, they are familiar with fire drill procedures and work together to help pick their toys up off the floor and carry them safely. They are developing a good awareness of road safety and stranger danger which they practise in the garden and when on outings. Their knowledge is strengthened through enjoyable games, stories and songs to support the theme.

Children have access to a wide range of good quality, clean, well maintained equipment and resources which promote their learning and development. These are rotated on a regular basis to maintain their interest. Toys are stored on low shelving units so that children can access them independently and encourages them to make their own decisions about what they choose to play with.

Children's welfare is supported very well because staff have a clear understanding about the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. Staff routinely attend training to ensure that their knowledge is up-to-date and ensure that parents are informed of the policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the setting happily and confidently leave their parents and carers. They quickly settle down to their self-chosen activities and busily occupy themselves. They receive very good support from the staff who assist but do not intrude, consequently, children can decide for themselves how they want their play to progress. For example, making a trail with the dominoes. All children benefit from the stimulus and challenge of their activities which are adapted to suit their level of ability. The younger children benefit from the introduction of the Birth to three matters framework and the adaptation of some activities to enable them to achieve, for example, when making sponge prints. Observations and assessments of their development are made against the framework but are not used to plan for the children's individual progress. Children enthusiastically join in group activities and have a very good rapport with their peers and the adults who care for them.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a broad and balanced range of activities which promote children's learning. They observe what children do and use these observations to assess their progress, however, they do not use the assessments to effectively plan for the next steps in their individual learning. Children's thinking skills are promoted through effective questioning. For example, asking what might happen when adding a heavy circle of octagons to a very tall tower. Children are able to explain that the circle is too big and heavy which will cause the tower to collapse. They decide not to use this and continue to see how tall they can make the tower before it collapses.

The children are motivated to learn and show good levels of concentration. They play cooperatively with their peers and are developing good self care skills such as putting on and fastening their coats. They listen to what is being said and show interest in the contributions of others such as sharing news during group time. Children are competent speakers and have a good command of language. They communicate effectively and are able to make their needs known and understood. Children are able to recall and thoroughly enjoy listening to stories in the comfortable library corner. They enthusiastically join in with the refrain and make appropriate sounds to bring the story to life, for example, to differentiate between the animals in the story. Children are developing their early writing skills and some are able to write their own names without adult input. Most children can recognise their own names when they find their name card at the snack and lunch table and some are beginning to point to simple words when telling themselves a story.

Children show interest in number and enjoy comparing size and weight when using the compare bears. They competently add one more and take one away and are able to sort into sets using mathematical language such as more and less, bigger and smaller. Children have many opportunities to count in their everyday play such as playing with dominoes and counting the number of children present. They recognise simple shapes, for example, when constructing with the magnetic shapes. Children are developing an interest in the wider world. They visit

the library where they are able to listen to a story and participate in world book week, choosing and buying a book to take home. They write letters and take these to the post office to buy stamps and post their letters and receive visits from people in the community. For example, the health visitor talks to them about hygiene and healthy eating. These activities enable children to have real experiences of the community in which they live. Children are beginning to develop an interest in the natural world, planting bulbs and sowing seeds, observing their growth. They investigate bugs in the garden and some children share their knowledge. For example, they confidently explain how ants make hills by piling leaves and garden debris. Children use simple technology in the role play area to support their learning and also use the computer with the aid of staff.

Children enjoy role play and this is supported with a range of appropriate resources and props to enable them to use their imagination to act out familiar roles such as being the doctor or vet. They are encouraged to express their own ideas in their play and when using creative materials such as paint, dough and collage. They have opportunities to play with water and compost and investigate different textures such as jelly and shaving foam. They have a good repertoire of songs which they sing with great enthusiasm and enjoy presenting short concerts for their parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made to feel welcome and special. Staff make sure that they establish good relationships with them at the outset by encouraging a gradual settling-in period at the child's own pace. This ensures that they are familiar with the pre-school routines, other children and staff before they leave the security of their parents/carers presence. Children's individuality is respected and valued. Their needs are well known because staff use the settling-in time to gather information and learn about their preferences and any specific needs that they may have. Children have access to a varied range of resources including dressing-up clothes, books and small world figures to help raise their awareness of diversity in the community.

Children behave very well and are respectful of their peers and the adults who care for them with whom they have formed good relationships. They play cooperatively, sharing and taking turns, for example, sharing a story book in the library corner, where they take turns to turn the page and tell the story. Children wait patiently for their turn on the trampet and to use the computer and know not to jump the queue thereby establishing a sense of fairness. Staff are good role models to the children, showing each other respect and calmly dealing with situations. They regularly praise and offer encouragement to the children, asking them politely for assistance, for example, at tidying away time. Children enjoy being helpful and assisting with small tasks, working on their own, in pairs and small groups to carry these out, for example, putting the train track away and carrying the box between them to the shelf.

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

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the positive relationship staff have established with their parents. Daily informal discussions help to ensure that they are appraised of their children's progress and that they are kept up-to-date through newsletters, notice boards and verbally about activities within the setting. They have access to the policies and procedures and clear information is displayed should parents have any concerns about the provision. Parents are encouraged to assist their children's learning, reinforcing aspects of activities and topics, such as colours, number and sounds. They are asked to make sure this is

enjoyable and do not put the children under pressure. There are informal opportunities to meet with their children's key worker during term time and also during opening evenings. This gives them the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in more depth and see their achievement records. Parents comment that they are made to feel very welcome and that staff are friendly and flexible.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the provision. Most staff have appropriate early years qualifications and all attend training on a regular basis to learn new skills and update their practices. Stringent procedures are in place for the effective recruitment of staff and a comprehensive induction and probationary period ensures that new staff are suited to their roles before they are offered permanent employment. A comprehensive range of policies which promote children's care and welfare are implemented effectively and all required documentation is maintained and readily available for inspection.

High adult to child ratios and the effective deployment of staff means that children receive good support and attention. The sessions run smoothly because staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities, organising available space and activities to ensure that children are in the main constructively occupied. However, time is not used effectively during the period when children are preparing for snack and lunch. They sing songs whilst waiting until everyone has been to the toilet and washed their hands but this is a fill-in rather than planned activity. Consequently children are not fully engaged during this period.

Leadership and management is good. Children are well supported and are making good progress towards the early learning goals because there are good procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the educational provision. These include monitoring children's activities and the success of the play plans. Staff's training and development needs are identified through regular informal discussions, performance reviews and annual appraisals. All staff demonstrate a commitment to continual improvement and take collective responsibility for the success of the provision. They have regular management and staff meetings to discuss issues and plans on a more formal basis. The garden has been identified as an area for development so that children can spend more time outside in a learning environment. A new woodland walk has been installed during the first phase and is already being put to good use by the children.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care and nursery education inspections the provider agreed to; ensure that the child protection policy and practice corresponds with the local authority area child protection procedures; develop the operational plan to reflect the organisation of the setting; provide information for new parents about the policies, procedures and organisation of the setting and; ensure that management and leadership roles are appropriately defined.

The provider has addressed these issues by; reviewing the child protection policy to take account of local safeguarding children procedures. This and all other policies are readily available to parents. As a result, children's welfare is appropriately protected and parents have sufficient information about the procedures practiced. The operational plan accurately reflects the organisation of the setting and resources used. Consequently the children's environment and

their activities run smoothly. Leadership and management roles are clearly defined which means that staff are effectively deployed and their individual skills used effectively.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- review the organisation of time in relation to children's preparation for snack and lunch to ensure that this is managed more effectively (also applies to Nursery education).

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):

- develop children's assessments to plan for the next step in their learning (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