



## **Birstall Methodist Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226253
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 January 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Birstall Methodist Church
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Birstall Methodist Pre-School opened in September 1970. It operates from two rooms in the Methodist Church Hall in the centre of Birstall in Leicestershire. The pre-school serves the town and surrounding area. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 12:45 until 15:15 on Monday and Friday.

The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children from two to under five years of age, at any one time. There are currently 50 children on roll from two and a half years to under five years. This includes 11 under threes, 28 funded three-year-olds and 11 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

Six staff work with the children and with the exception of one all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted as the pre-school staff adhere to appropriate hygiene routines. Children have an understanding about washing and drying their hands after using the toilet, however children's health is compromised as hygiene routines are not maintained before eating snacks. Children stay healthy because staff adhere to regular cleaning of the premises and equipment and there are procedures in place if children are unwell. Children are protected because the contents of the first aid box is fully stocked and staff are first aid trained and can administer treatment in the event of an accident. Medication recording is appropriate, accidents are clearly recorded and consent for emergency medical treatment has been requested, ensuring that parents are fully informed about their child's care.

Children are able to have regular drinks at any time throughout the session in order to meet their individual needs. Although snacks are provided by parents, staff monitor to see that these are healthy options. Children benefit from a social atmosphere and staff make sure that they do not share snacks in order to comply with any special dietary requirements. Children learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle from general discussion about which foods are good for them. Although children do not sleep in the setting, they are able to rest in the comfortable book area.

Children have daily opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle as they take part in indoor activities as well as outdoor play. They have fun whilst developing their large muscle skills, body control and hand-eye co-ordination. For example, by using pedal toys, climbing and balancing apparatus, using the trampoline, catching and aiming balls in a net. In addition children are encouraged to move imaginatively during organised music and movement sessions and learn about what happens to their bodies when they are active as staff talk to them about whether they are tired, hot and their heart beating. Children demonstrate spatial awareness as they find their own space to sit at group time.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They are happy and well settled and they are able to move around independently. All parents and children are made very welcome and the resources are attractively arranged so that children are encouraged to self-select safely. Their safety is well maintained because staff have a good awareness of safety issues and are deployed to ensure all areas of the provision are well supervised. Staff position themselves well at arrival and departure times and ensure that children are seated until their parent or carer arrives.

Staff follow procedures which help to minimise risks and keep children safe. For example, parents are asked to inform them if anyone different is to collect their child and a password system is in place. This is to ensure that children only leave the pre-school with known adults. Written and visual risk assessments are in place to reduce potential accidents. However, children are not fully protected as electric sockets are not always covered within the building. Children learn to keep themselves safe by practising fire drills and confidently discuss what they are doing and why. Children's learning is further enhanced as the fire brigade and the lollipop lady visit the pre-school and talk about fire and road safety. Parental consent is gained for all outings, including walks to the shops and the library and the setting maintains higher adult to child ratios on these occasions.

Children use a good range of toys and equipment that promote their developmental needs well. Resources are well organised to create an accessible and stimulating setting for children. Children benefit because the resources and play materials are cleaned and checked regularly for safety and hygiene. Children are protected by the sound knowledge and understanding staff have of child protection procedures and by the policy in place. Staff have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in child protection matters and know what procedures to put into place when necessary.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled because they have good relationships with staff who support them well and are attentive to their needs. They enjoy their time at the setting and settle well because they and their parents are warmly welcomed by staff. Children of all ages and developmental stages are interested in and enjoy their play. Children begin to develop independence as they choose freely from a broad range of purposeful activities and express their ideas during play. For instance, children enjoy using the role play equipment where they sweep the floor and pretend to do the ironing. Children under the age of three follow the same curriculum as older children funded for nursery education, although currently assessments of their development are not made using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Activities are provided which are appropriate to the ages and abilities of all the children.

The children arrive happy and eager to learn. Staff are skilled and experienced and enjoy the company of the children in their care. They spend time talking to and playing with them. Early communication skills are supported through adult and child interaction. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in the wide range of activities. For instance, children enjoy pretending to be at the hairdressers and being at the doctors surgery. They acquire new knowledge and skills constantly through first hand experiences they are offered, for example, planting cress and growing sunflowers.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use their sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to plan a balanced range of activities that provide realistic and fun challenges for all children. Children's progress is effectively promoted because staff are well aware of learning objectives. Staff use interesting methods to develop children's memory and

learning skills. For example, staff encourage the children to predict and remember. Staff have developed effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Activities organised for the children are evaluated by the managers and staff team on a weekly basis. Children are helped to extend their thinking whilst they play because the staff are skilful in asking questions to make them think. For example, 'What's the rule about taking activities out from tray?' and 'What don't we do with the sand?'. Staff use opportunities for small group work to develop children's learning such as learning different colours and shapes. Staff act as positive role models and manage children's behaviour positively. Therefore, children behave well and are learning to play well together. The children are beginning to show good levels of interest and concentrate and persevere to complete tasks such as making cakes from play dough and hang the washing on the line.

Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well. They confidently make contributions to large and small group discussions and learn new words such as 'slithers' and 'squidgy'. They happily listen to each other at group time when they talk about what they have brought in from home and what they have done at the weekend. They confidently discuss their family members. For instance, child talks about her mother having a new baby, the name of their brother and whether they ride with stabilizers on their bikes. The children enjoy listening to stories and the staff use voice moderations to capture the children's attention during group story times. Children are learning to listen and to sit quietly in order to listen to a story about the 'Monkey Puzzle', 'Chicken Licken' and make the different sounds of animals. They enjoy talking, reflecting and successfully anticipate outcomes. They were able to predict in the stories who they were going to meet and what was going to happen next. Children use speech to discuss experiences and feelings by talking about how old they are and who they met at the shops. Children are learning to recognise letters and their name through the effective use of laminated name cards which they use to self register into the setting and again at snack time. Staff give some children prompts to help them recognise their names and to reinforce their understanding of the sounds that make up their name. The graphics area provides good support for children to develop their pre-writing skills and mark making which they access independently. Most children count to five and beyond very well using correct number names with daily opportunities used to reinforce this. For example, children count the number of legs on the spider and the monkeys in the book. In addition there are laminated numbers and puzzles which help children to identify numbers. Children learn to problem solve as they are learning to recognise shapes, compare size by looking at the lengths of play dough sausages and how tall their sunflower has grown. Children regularly take part in number games helping them to develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts and language. For example, rhymes such as 'five green speckled frogs' and 'five little monkeys' and they use language such as more, less, big and little, frequently in activities.

Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world when they participate in activities relating to growth. They learn to plant cress and grow sunflowers and watch them change. They acknowledge different seasons, topics and activities. These include leaf printing, looking at different shapes and the life cycle of a butterfly. Children develop a strong sense of the community as they enjoy visits from the fire brigade, the lollipop lady and the health visitor. Children use technology as they use the computer and develop their mouse and keyboard skills.

The children also have great fun in using cameras to take pictures, lap tops, mobile phones, CD player, and weighing scales to develop their learning of everyday technology. Children have good opportunities of developing their opportunities to use their imagination as they take part in role play based on first hand experiences such as a the home corner, hairdresser and the doctors surgery. They have an interesting and stimulating time as they make pretend dens from large cardboard boxes and stack them high to make houses. The children have access to differing textures such as water, sand, play dough, and dried food. The children are beginning to talk freely and tell staff about their ideas, for example, making cakes from the play dough, making transformers from lego and pretending to make food in the home corner. Children participate in a variety of songs, music and nursery rhymes daily with musical instruments also being available.

Children's physical development is catered for through a range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children are able to move confidently around each other as they engage in music and movement. They learn to balance as they use the balancing apparatus, join in obstacle course, climb, kick and catch balls and ride wheeled toys to develop their physical skills. Children are beginning to develop their finer manipulative skills and co-ordination by using a range of resources and tools which include scissors, nails and hammer, threading beads, and concentrate in throwing balls in a net. Children use a variety of different materials and choose methods of joining which include glue, staplers, and sticky tape to make collage pictures and models. Staff have developed good systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements. The staff know the children well and there is a range of child-led and adult-initiated activities. Consequently, children remain occupied and make good progress in all areas of their learning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly welcomed and feel a sense of belonging as they take part in the life of the setting. They move freely between activities, know where things belong and are comfortable with routines. Children form relationships with staff and their peers and they settle quickly because staff are sensitive to their needs. Children are respected as individuals and staff are pro-active in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to identify and support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is because the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator is experienced and confident in her role. She completes detailed observations and give professionals a picture of children's development. Children who speak English as an additional language are fully involved in the setting as staff work closely with parents to meet their individual needs. Children learn to value diversity because toys and resources that promote equality of opportunity are integrated within their play environment. For example, multi-cultural posters decorate the walls, and books, role play items and puzzles positively represent different race, cultures and disabilities. Children listen to music, make dragons, dress up and listen to stories about different festivals. Children engage in activities that develop their awareness of the local community as they visit the local shops and library. Visitors are also welcomed into the group to widen children's learning with the fire brigade and the lollipop lady being particular favourites.

Children are well behaved because they feel secure and are well occupied. Staff act as good role models to the children. For example, they treat one another with courtesy and respect and listen to each other carefully in group situations. Children are polite as they respond to the praise and consistent guidelines set by staff. For example, staff talk to the children about good sitting and good listening. They are encouraged to share, take turns, play nicely and they are learning the difference between right and wrong. Children play together harmoniously, for example, taking turns in the water tray and aiming balls in the net. Staff use praise well, rewarding children with comments such as 'that's lovely', or 'well done' which increases their self-esteem and confidence. There is a written policy in place to manage children's behaviour, however their welfare is not fully protected as there is no clear statement on bullying. Children arrive keen to learn, and they co-operate with others in their play such as a group of children building the train track and playing in the role play area. All children are included in the activities and routines. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There is an effective partnership with parents and staff operate an 'open door' policy and welcome parents into the setting. Policies, procedures and other relevant information are available to parents. Parents receive written information about the setting before their child starts. However, parents do not always contribute to their child's learning as their starting points are not always sought. Parents are provided with information about the setting and its education provision. There are links between staff and parents that encourage daily communication and help continuity of care for the child. Parents are invited to attend for settling-in visits to enable their child to settle smoothly. Children benefit because parents receive regular information about current topics through newsletters and details on the notice board. However, parents are not sufficiently informed of the progress that their child is making towards the six areas of learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff ensure their skills and knowledge are updated by regularly attending relevant training courses. All the staff with the exception of one, hold an appropriate childcare qualification. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by suitable staff. There are written policies and procedures in place for the safe and efficient management of the setting. For example, there are written procedures to support health and safety, special needs and for lost or uncollected children. Staff are encouraged to undertake regular training and take on new initiatives to develop their knowledge and practice. These include first aid training and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Necessary documentation such as registers, accidents and incident records are quickly and accurately completed, however children's welfare is not fully guarded as some records relating to them are not kept in a confidential manner. The staff work well together as a team and they are sensitive to the children and support them during activities. Children gain from the organisation of staffing deployment and good adult to child ratios.

The leadership and management is good. The managers and deputies understand their responsibilities and have clear aims for the continued improvement of the quality of care and education for children. The managers supervise the staff well and provide an effective induction

for students and new staff. This covers aspects such as receiving necessary information, policies and procedures. Regular staff meetings and appraisals are in place which ensure that children are well protected and are cared for by staff who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. There are systems for assessment of children's progress and this is used to help plan their next steps. The managers oversee sessions in order to evaluate the provision for nursery education. This is to ensure that children secure their understanding of intended learning outcomes. They also monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting through staff meetings.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was required to devise the complaints procedure to include the telephone number and address of the regulator and make available to parents. They were asked to obtain emergency medical treatment and record any medication they administer. They were to ensure that children were not able to leave the premises unsupervised. They were required to complete a risk assessment and make the heating pipes safe or inaccessible. They were asked to ensure that the child protection statement included procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. The provision needed to provide evidence of public liability insurance when in operation. They were required to consider ways of providing a healthy snack for children. They were asked to develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate will be on the premises at any one time. The setting was required to make all policies available to parents.

Since the last inspection the setting has been pro-active in ensuring that all actions and recommendations have been addressed. Regular assessment have been carried out to identify and hazards. The heating pipes have been made safe and boxed in and there are effective procedures in place to ensure that children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised. All policies are available for parents and the complaints procedure includes the telephone number and address of the regulator and the child protection statement includes procedures regarding allegations being made against a member of staff. There is written documentation in place for recording medication and the setting has obtained consent from parents for any emergency medical treatment. The children now bring in their own healthy snacks from home with staff monitoring this. The setting now has four members of staff who hold a first aid certificate so there is always someone on the premises who is able to take appropriate action in case of an emergency. All these aspects have been implemented which have improved the health, safety and overall well-being of 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.



## 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 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):

- ensure that good hygiene practices are maintained with regard to hand washing in order to prevent the spread of infection
- ensure that all low level sockets which are accessible to children are protected
- make sure that the behaviour policy includes a statement on bullying
- ensure that records relating to individual children are kept in a confidential manner.

#### 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):

- establish effective channels of communication with parents to discuss children's starting points and their progress

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