

St John's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 253190

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Inspector Ann Keen

Setting Address St John's Church, Oakdale Road, Carlton, Notts, NG4 1BP

Telephone number 0115 987 5888

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Registered person St John's Playgroup

Type of inspection Integrated

Type of care 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.

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 John's playgroup is a committee run group, which opened in 1965. It operates from the St John's Church in a residential area of mixed housing on the outskirts of Nottingham. The group has access to a kitchen, toilets and a secure outside play area. It serves the local area and is registered to provide 26 places for children aged between two years to five years. There are currently 23 children on roll, 15 of which are funded three and four-year-olds.

The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions last from 09:15 to 13:10 and include a lunch club. Five staff work regularly with the children, the supervisor has an NVQ level 3 qualification, two staff are working towards level 3, one has a level 2 qualification. Four staff hold a current first aid certificate. The setting receives support from the Nottinghamshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical development is well supported through the use of the wide range of resources available such as tunnels, tyres, balls and balancing logs. Children's co-ordination is enhanced through balancing and going in and out the apparatus. Children happily play on wheeled toys and enjoy using the large indoor climbing frame and slides to develop their muscles and extend their ideas for play. Activities like puzzles, making peg patterns and painting are used well to develop control and manipulative skills.

Children are protected against infection well because staff follow sensible hygiene practices. Children are learning to wash their hands appropriately and they use a hand dryer to avoid the spread of infection. Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment, therefore promoting good health care. Children are well nourished because healthy snacks such as melon and pizza are provided. Children who stay to lunch bring packed lunches from home. The playgroup provides water which children can access at any time and milk is also given to children at snack time ensuring they do not go thirsty. Children's welfare is promoted well because staff respond to accidents appropriately; sufficient staff hold current first-aid certificates, they record accidents carefully and keep a well-equipped first aid box in the kitchen.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure environment. Visitors have to ring the bell to gain entry and they are only allowed access by staff. Children are well protected from intruders whilst playing in the outside area as the fence is securely locked. Children play in a spacious, light and airy room with plenty of space in which to move and participate in activities. The equipment and resources are suitable and at child height. Children can choose the activities on offer enabling them easy access to resources, reducing the risk of accidents. All equipment is fit for purpose. This ensures that children are adequately protected from hazards. Children are appropriately safeguarded from harm as the facilities are regularly checked in conjunction with the church premises and generally risk assessments are carried out visually as equipment is put out. However, one of the slabs outside is not secured and poses a potential risk to children.

Adequate supervision also promotes children's safety as staff move to activities to help children when necessary. There is a clear child protection policy and staff are generally knowledgeable about their roles, including the procedures for informing appropriate authorities in the event of an allegation being made against them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's achievement is sound and they enjoy their time at the playgroup. The atmosphere is calm, so children are happy and content in this friendly environment. They settle quickly and respond well to staff, thus developing children's confidence. Staff value what they have to say and engage in meaningful conversations which promotes children's self esteem effectively. Children show involvement in their activities, which supports their learning and play. Children develop a sound range of skills and knowledge through the practical experiences provided for them. Staff are kind and praise children so children feel relaxed, confident and content to stay

in the setting. Children enjoy the activities in the outside play area; riding on tricycles, changing traffic lights and balancing on the logs. The outside area is used to good effect so children can develop their co-ordination and control.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning is organised around the six areas of learning to provide children with a broad and balanced programme of activities such as making sunglasses, playing on the climbing frame and investigating sand. The plans reflect the stepping stones towards the early learning goals showing clear understanding of the guidance for the Foundation Stage. This contributes to children's learning. Through the use of questioning the children are learning to think and extend their own ideas. Staff generally use suitable methods to help children learn; they provide children with the opportunity to participate in boisterous activities like climbing and sliding and quieter occupations such as looking at books. Children benefit from the wide range of resources provided, helping them with sound opportunities to explore, experiment and play. However, all staff do not use daily routines such as snack time to allow children to develop their independence in giving out snacks or helping themselves to food. They also miss opportunities to use mathematics in practical situations for children to see the practical application of mathematics like counting out cups, using language such as 'more' and 'less' and describing shapes.

Staff generally observe and record the children's progress well and they provide activities for the different age groups. However, the assessments are not used sufficiently to plan the next step in individual children's learning so the activities are not targeted sufficiently at individuals to move them forward in their learning. Staff are clear in their expectations for good behaviour and provide consistent support to help children understand boundaries and expectations.

Children are generally interested in the activities on offer, they participate enthusiastically developing their confidence well. Staff praise the children and encourage them, helping to develop children's self-esteem effectively. Children are well behaved and are learning to develop positive relationships with other children and staff. They are interested in books and are learning to listen, contributing towards developing their vocabulary and understanding how stories are organised. They are learning to represent their ideas in the form of mark making and create their own paintings. Children are learning to form recognisable letters and write their own names providing a sound basis for the early stages of reading and writing. They learn to count and sequence satisfactorily. By singing songs such as Five Currant Buns, children generally begin to understand the first stages of addition and subtraction. Children create their own shakers and sunglasses supporting their creative skills well. In addition, the children are provided with a sound basis to learn about their senses. Through using role play and small world scenarios, children learn to develop their imaginations sufficiently well, for example, they produce tracks from commercially produced materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The development of children's behaviour is given appropriate priority through positive encouragement and praise so children successfully learn the difference between right and wrong. The staff are aware that some children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and takes appropriate action. Staff are aware of the systems to ask for support when needed. Children are learning to appreciate the wider society through a commitment to equal opportunities. Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff find out about children's interests, allergies and information that staff need to know to make the children's stay safe and enjoyable. Generally, children's information is kept locked away but all details are not kept sufficiently confidential. Children's welfare is satisfactorily supported because parents provide staff with suitable information. Parents are provided with information about the playgroup to ensure they are adequately informed about children's activities. This includes plans, events and general information. They receive newsletters informing them about what the children are doing during the sessions. Each child takes their own items home so parents can see what they are doing. Parents have the opportunity to talk about their children's achievement and progress at an open session and whenever they ask. There is a satisfactory exchange of information to support the children's care. Parents are able to be involved in the playgroup if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is organised through sound procedures. An operational plan is in place which includes policies and documentation, reflecting the practice appropriately. These include a fire drill policy, health and safety, child protection and outings policies. Overall children's needs are met. Records and registers are well maintained and visitors details are clearly recorded. This helps to safeguard children. Staff organise the space sufficiently well to allow children to develop their own ideas and provide for their individual requirements. Staff are fully involved with the children at all times and suitable systems are in place to maintain good ratios of staff to children.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. It provides sound support for the children's achievement. The supervisor provides generally good leadership so that children are supported by well qualified staff. Children's learning is enhanced through the playgroup's ability to assess its own strengths and weaknesses. They have regular staff meetings and are developing an awareness of their needs and improvements required. The playgroup has systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. However, putting the system's in place is not always effective, consequently children do not always benefit from the planned improvement. Children's achievement is sound as the playgroup is committed to the improvement of care and education for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the care last inspection, the playgroup was required to take account of five recommendations. These related to the provision of healthy snacks, taking account of children's allergies and preferences. The second and third related to deployment of staff and children's access to specific areas. The fourth related to children's interest in activities. The fifth related to staff's knowledge of child protection issues.

Children's health is well protected as the playgroup is fully aware of children's allergies and food needs. They provide healthy snacks such as fruit and pizzas. Children's safety is safeguarded as staff are now fully aware of the relevant safety issues; the door is locked during the sessions, staff accompany children to wash their hands and children are supervised on the climbing frame. Staff generally have sufficient knowledge of children protection guidelines. Children's behaviour is good as staff generally manage children's behaviour well and divert their attention when they are restless.

Two recommendations were outlined at the last education inspection. They referred to planning for the more able children and informing parents about their children's learning.

The more able children now have some opportunities to extend their learning through extension activities in the planning. However, this is not always linked to individual children's learning and developing the next step in their progress. Staff provide an open session for parents to discuss their children's learning, strengthening the opportunities for information to be given to parents.

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 by 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):

- take positive steps to ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents with regard to surfaces in the outside play area.
- ensure staff are aware of the need to maintain children's confidentiality

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):

- use assessments effectively to plan for the next step in children's learning
- use routines to develop children's learning such as using mathematics in everyday routines and developing independence at snack time
- develop systems to monitor teaching particularly with regard to new staff.

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