

Moston Methodist Church

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	500147
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Inspector	Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher
Setting Address	Moston Methodist Church, Moston Lane, Manchester, Lancashire, M40 9PA
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Registered person	Diane Birchall
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?

Moston Methodist Church playgroup has been registered since 1990. It is run by committee and operates from the main hall within the Methodist Church, in the Moston area of Manchester. It is close to shops, parks and the library.

The children have access to the main hall, lounge, two side rooms and toilet facilities. There are safe and secure grounds available for outdoor play.

The group operates, Monday to Friday, from 09.30 to 12.00 during term time only. Currently there are 36 children on roll; this includes 16 children in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are five staff employed to care for the children, four of whom have a recognised early years qualification. The group gain support from the Sure Start Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow sensible hygiene routines to protect children from infection. For example, they clean surfaces with anti-bacterial sprays and wash their hands before handling food. Children develop a good awareness of personal hygiene. They use child steps to access toilets and wash basins independently, washing their hands, using soap, and under running water. They dispose of their used paper towels in the bin. The older children understand 'that they need to wash away germs that can make us sick'. Children are protected from illness because staff follow an effective sick child and exclusion policy. Accidents, incidents and any medication administered is recorded conscientiously by staff and acknowledged with parental signatures, thus protecting children's well-being.

Children benefit from regular outdoor activities; they run and play in the fresh air, which contributes towards their health. They are provided with a good selection of play equipment which enables them to be physically active and acquire and practise skills. For example, they climb up the slide steps, bounce on the trampoline, crawl through the caterpillar tunnel or balance skilfully across it's back. They throw and kick balls, bowl over skittles and manoeuvre wheeled vehicles competently around obstacles and into small spaces. Children develop strength, co-ordination and pleasure in activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Children keep themselves refreshed and hydrated throughout the session. They frequently help themselves to a drink from the water jug. Children are becoming aware of healthy food options during snack time. They make their choices from the trolley, picking oranges, apples, bananas and small packets of raisins and choose water or milk to drink. These healthy choices are rewarded with stickers. However, staff's actions deliver mixed messages to children. They confuse this early awareness of healthy options by systematically rewarding the children, for 'sitting nicely' at the end of each session, with the choice of a sweet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcome in premises that are adequately maintained, have natural light and are kept at a suitable temperature. They benefit from ample space to enable them to move around safely and freely and engage in a variety of activities and play experiences which promote their overall development. The play areas are well organised and display photographs of the children and samples of their work. A wide range of good quality, age appropriate toys, equipment and resources are arranged at child height enabling children to initiate and extend their play independently and safely.

Risk assessments are undertaken daily, by staff who effectively address any issues discovered, thus minimising hazards to the children who play in a safe environment. Fire detection equipment and evacuation procedures are in place. However, the staff do not practise the procedures with the children, posing a risk to their safety in the event of an emergency. The children are cared for in a secure environment. Doors are kept locked during the sessions to ensure children cannot leave the building or unwanted persons cannot enter. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe within the setting. For example, they know to sit properly on chairs and not to run indoors because they may hurt themselves.

Staff have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms that raise professional concerns about a child's safety and a basic understanding of the procedures to follow should they have such concerns. They are less confident about procedures to follow in the event of an allegation against a staff member and the settings policy does not make reference to such procedures. Consequently, children's welfare is not fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff establish positive relationships with children who are happy and settled in the group. Children arrive confidently and eagerly participate in activities of their own choosing. Children benefit from consistent staff and close, caring relationships are developing, increasing children's sense of trust and helping them to identify a sense of self. Staff regularly observe children and these are used generally to inform the planning. However, they do not identify next steps to effectively plan children's individual learning. This hinders their potential to develop. Good emphasis is placed upon children making choices, following their interests and initiating their own ideas. Much of the session is child initiated play with staff effectively deploying themselves amongst the children to support their efforts. They give children good attention. Children engage in imaginative play, becoming totally involved in acting out grown up roles in the role play area, such as ironing, cooking and caring for the dolls. As they play together they express their thoughts and begin to make simple connections, such as cooking the food before they eat it and covering the doll with a blanket 'to keep her warm'.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A well established team demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and work well together to motivate and support children. Staff plan activities for children using information obtained through systematic observation. These help them to know what children do but do not yet identify children's knowledge and understanding or link to learning areas or the stepping stones. As a result, children have gaps in their learning opportunities. Staff interact consistently with children but this is not always focused because clear learning intentions are not identified to help individual children strengthen their understanding and make progress in all aspects of the six learning areas. Staff have developed a well laid out learning environment with plentiful, easily accessible resources which is stimulating the children's curiosity and desire to be involved.

Children are making steady progress overall although some aspects of the learning areas are insufficiently addressed. They speak confidently and clearly and make their needs known to the staff, enjoy looking at books and using the writing materials. They identify simple shapes when building and independently group and order items by colour or type. For example, lining up pencils in a row and sorting the fish resources for the water play. Children have some opportunities to explore and discover for themselves. They engage in sensory activities and undertake simple experiments, such as finding which items can float and mixing paint colours. Children enjoy designing and building. They devise elaborate layouts, with the tracks, for their trains and cars and use a wide selection of recycled items and commercial kits to build models of all sizes. Children are learning a small repertoire of rhymes and songs through daily singing sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly greeted by staff who are interested in what they have to say. This helps children feel secure and increases their sense of belonging. Children receive praise and simple rewards, such as stickers, for their efforts and achievements boosting their confidence in their abilities and building positive self-image. High priority is given to children's ability to make choices, develop independence and extend their own play. This results in children who are decisive and attend competently to many of their own personal needs with the confidence to ask for help when required. Children are developing positive attitudes towards others because their surroundings, play materials and activities positively reflect our diverse society.

Staff have a secure knowledge of how to promote positive behaviour. They use consistent strategies, such as rewarding and praising children for good behaviour and intervene appropriately in situations that are unacceptable. For example, when children squabble over resources or run around inside. This helps children to understand responsible behaviour and as a result children are generally well behaved. Staff act as good role models and are calm and polite with each other and the children. They gently remind children to use please and thank you when necessary. Children learn about right and wrong and develop respect and consideration for each other and their environment. All children help to tidy away toys and older children are eager to share their skills and help younger ones. For example, fixing tracks together, putting on aprons and outdoor clothes or assisting to pour the water. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with the parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Staff share information about children's progress verbally, through the work they take home and via the children's 'Learning Journey' files. They have made a display of photographs and posters, relating to the learning areas and early learning goals, to help parents develop their understanding of what their children may learn from the activities and play on offer. A special parent notice board contains relevant information. For example, the registration certificate, complaints procedure and information on, and an invitation to become involved in, the play group committee. A simple brochure for parents provides them with information relating to the policies and procedures of the group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Organisation is generally good resulting in positive outcomes for children. Staff deployment and group size contribute towards children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take part in the setting. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. Children benefit from a routine that includes vigorous play and quiet, restful times and a healthy snack. The clear routines and smooth running of the group help children feel secure.

The group's system to check the suitability, qualifications and experience of the adults who work with the children day to day, relies too much on the church procedures and is insufficiently rigorous to ensure children's welfare is fully safeguarded. However, staff have a sufficient understanding of their roles and responsibilities to generally safeguard children's safety, welfare and well-being. Documentation and records which contribute towards children's safety, welfare and well-being, such as registers, parental consents, staff and children's details and policies and procedures are in place, and generally well organised and consistently maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager is a good role model and conscientious with a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. She stimulates and manages her team by working alongside them. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are in place, these however are not sufficient to identify gaps in the curriculum and missed opportunities in teaching and children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group agreed to ensure drinking water was available at all times and introduce a system to observe children's developmental progress to inform the planning of activities. This is the first time the nursery educational programme has been inspected.

Staff ensure cups and a regularly replenished jug of fresh drinking water are available on a low table throughout the session. Children access this when they are thirsty and as a result keep themselves refreshed and hydrated. The manager and staff have worked together and introduced systems for observing children during their play and activities. They use these to plan activities for the sessions. The system introduced is helping staff to recognise what children are able to do but are not yet being linked to development areas, next steps or learning intentions. Therefore children are not always challenged at the appropriate level or given the opportunity to take their learning forward.

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):

- review the healthy eating practice to provide a consistent message for children
- practise emergency evacuation procedures, with the children, on a regular basis
- further develop safeguarding arrangements by improving staff's understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of professional abuse, adding these procedures to

the safeguarding policy and ensuring a copy of the 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - summary' is available for reference, if required

- improve the systems and records for ensuring and maintaining the suitability of adults who work with the children.

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):

- continue to review and develop the systems used to identify children's individual learning and progress; for example, evaluations and identification of next step learning to focus planned activities and staff interaction (this also applies to care)
- further develop the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning to ensure a balanced curriculum across the six learning areas and highlight any gaps in the provision.

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