

# Marion Scott Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY233730
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Barbara Christine Wearing
<b>Setting Address</b>	C/O Didsbury Baptist Church, Beaver Road, Manchester, M20 6SX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 448 7058
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Marion Scott Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Marion Scott Playgroup is registered to provide care for 20 children aged from two to five years.

The group has been operating for 30 years, initially providing part-time provision and now providing full and part-time places. The children have access to two classrooms and a hall way. They also use a large hall upstairs, an enclosed outdoor play area and have weekly use of the playground of a neighbouring school.

The playgroup operates term time only from 09.00 to 15.00 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and from 09.00 to 12.00 on a Tuesday.

There are currently 36 children on roll who attend on a full or part-time basis. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff. Of these, four have a National Vocational Qualification in childcare Level 3 and the other member of staff is working towards this.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from the spread of infection and cross contamination as staff follow appropriate cleaning and hygiene routines. Tables are cleaned before and after mealtimes and snacks, and floors are swept after lunch and at the end of the day. The effective sick child and administration of medication policy ensure that children are well taken care of if they are ill.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy snacks provided by the playgroup and parents are encouraged to provide their children with a healthy packed lunch and drink. As requested by staff some parents have provided children with their own water bottles that children can access throughout the day. However, children who have not brought in water bottles do not have access to fresh drinking water at all times. Mealtimes are relaxed, sociable occasions during which children and staff chat freely. Staff work closely with parents and each other and are, therefore, aware of and cater for children's individual health and dietary needs and requirements on a daily basis.

Children learn about keeping themselves healthy and develop some independence in their personal hygiene routines. They are supported in washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating and learn that the 'magic spray' gets rid of germs. They learn about dental hygiene when a parent who is a dentist visits the playgroup to chat to the children and learn about healthy eating as they talk to staff about food and their values during play and meal and snack times.

Children enjoy a good variety of daily opportunities for physical exercise in the large hall area upstairs and in the enclosed outdoor grassed area at the playgroup. They also benefit from weekly opportunities to play in the neighbouring school playground. They, therefore, develop good gross motor skills and coordination as they climb, jump, slide, balance and crawl over and through.

Staff are affectionate, attentive and responsive to children's needs, thereby, fostering their emotional well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The playgroup provides children with a safe, secure, welcoming and relaxed environment. Children move confidently, independently and safely between the two main play rooms which are organised into consistent learning areas. They are closely supervised by staff when going to the toilet, going upstairs to the hall or to play outside. The group rooms and outside play area provide children with ample space to play and explore the range of safe and well maintained resources and activities made available to them. Equipment, such as steps that help children reach the toilets and small pouring jugs that enable them to pour their own drinks at snack time help children to develop independence.

Risks to children are minimised as staff closely supervise children at all times and follow procedures, such as fire evacuation and daily risk assessments of all areas used by the playgroup. However, the fire evacuation procedure is not always clearly on display. The building and outside play areas are secure. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are aware of boundaries which keep them safe and learn about stranger danger and road safety through stories, trips

out and related topics and activities. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident within the playgroup as the majority of staff have a current First Aid certificate, the setting has a well stocked first aid box and clear procedure for recording accidents that occur within the playgroup. However, the majority of existing injuries are not recorded, thereby, compromising staff's ability to safeguard children or identify concerns regarding their welfare.

Children are protected from harm as they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Staff attend regular training with regard to safeguarding children. They have a sound understanding of their child protection procedures and are fully aware of their role within it. However, these have not been up-dated to reflect recent changes.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, enthusiastic and highly involved in their chosen activities. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their key children. All staff observe children and discuss and evaluate these observations at regular meetings. Next steps for children are agreed and short term plans reflect how these will be met and areas for further assessment. Plans and staff's skilful interactions with children reflect their clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Staff interact closely with children, providing support and encouragement. Children confidently approach staff for support, to show them their work and to share in their achievements. Staff enthusiastically join in with and extend children's play activities. Children clamour around a member of staff in the role play area, bringing her food, making her sandwiches and chatting about their likes and dislikes. Staff encourage children to explore using their senses. When playing with shaving foam on tables they ask children what it smells and feels like. Children state that it smells of 'oranges' and that it feels 'squidgy' and that their hands feel smooth after playing with it. Children enjoy free painting at the easel, they paint with brushes and using their fingers and hands. Children develop a love of books. They spend time in the well resourced and comfortable book area looking at books on their own and with a friend, pointing at and naming objects. Staff join the children and they ask her to read the book which she does. Children also look at books on a one to one basis with adults who ask questions that develop their vocabulary and thinking. They name body parts, colours, point out the moon and state that they can see the moon from their garden. Staff take time to listen to children and laugh with them as they recall experiences from home. A young child enthuses and laughs as she tells a member of staff that snow fell on her daddy's head.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy the freedom to explore the activities provided within the various play areas. They become highly involved in their play and make good use of the resources available. Staff have a clear understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage which is reflected in their planning. They are developing a good assessment process whereby a child's key person ensures that each child's progress is observed regularly within each early learning area and that their next steps are identified. These are discussed at weekly team meetings and used to inform short term planning. Staff adapt some activities skilfully to provide challenges for all children. For example, when children play with the shaving foam staff ask younger children what patterns and shapes they can draw and asks older and more able children if they can write their names, or draw a square. However, some, more able

children are not presented with sufficient challenges through planned, practical activities or spontaneous opportunities.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They seek out friends to share games and begin to learn turn taking and negotiation skills. This is demonstrated as one child asks 'when he's finished with that, can I have a go?'. Children are encouraged to think about emotions through their theme of 'feelings'. They talk about their likes and dislikes, what makes them scared, happy or sad.

Children develop good communication skills. They benefit from many opportunities to chat to each other and adults. They talk to extend and plan their play in the various areas of the room. Children who paint next to each other at the easel talk about their pictures, stating 'look it's turning pink' as they mix colours and 'I'm making dots like this' as they paint with their finger tips. During large group times children enthusiastically share news and answer questions, however, they are not encouraged to take turns in sharing their ideas or to listen to each other. This limits their opportunities to develop their listening skills and prevents staff from adapting questions for more or less able and confident children. Children learn to link sounds to letters and to recognise letters at large group times and during planned and spontaneous activities. Staff take some opportunities to reinforce this learning throughout the day. However, resources to encourage children to write for a purpose are not consistently accessible in different areas of the playgroup. Children take pleasure in looking at books throughout the day. They enjoy listening to stories and re-call them accurately to other staff during snack time.

Children have many opportunities to count and become confident with number. Some children recognise numerals. On occasion staff ask children questions, such as 'how many do we need' to encourage them to calculate. However, these opportunities are not always fully explored and there are few practical opportunities to challenge more able children in relation to calculating. Children frequently use mathematical language during play. They arrange balls outside by size, stating which is the biggest, medium sized and smallest, referring to them as the daddy, mummy and big sister. When filling buckets with sand children state that they need a bigger one. Children have various opportunities to make patterns and are able to recognise and draw basic shapes.

Children become thoroughly engrossed as they explore sand, play dough and shaving foam. They are delighted as they discover a worm outside and staff share their enthusiasm. However, there are few consistently available resources for children to use to further explore and examine and to learn about the natural world and living things. Children are skilled in designing and building using conventional construction sets, using their imagination and following pictures and diagrams. Resources are sometimes made available for children to design, construct and join using various media, such as paper clips, glue, sticky tape, scissors, cartons and boxes. Children develop skills in the areas of communication and information technology as they access a variety of electronic toys and games. They have weekly access to a computer.

Children develop good large muscle skills and greatly enjoy the variety of opportunities for physical play indoors and out. The skills to be developed during these activities are not incorporated in the daily plans. Children demonstrate excellent fine motor skills and hand eye coordination as they use spades and funnels to fill up buckets with sand, use scissors and put on the various dressing up outfits.

Children have highly developed imaginations and staff are skilled in supporting and encouraging children to extend their play in this area. Children use their imagination during role play, as

they set the table and prepare dinner or dress up to 'go out in the car' or 'take the dog for a walk'. They become engrossed in small world play with the toy garage and with plastic dinosaurs. Children's individual creativity is valued. Staff spend time with them talking about their art work. A child draws a very intricate picture of a pirate ship, including details of the plank, the captain and the sails, relating his drawing to pirate stories. Children enjoy various opportunities to explore different materials, such as collage, paint, chalks and play dough.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident and develop a high self-esteem and positive self-image. Staff recognise their strengths and individual personalities. They have a good understanding of children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs and religious and cultural beliefs as they work closely with parents. They ensure that these are reflected and well catered for within the provision. Children learn about the diversity of our society through a wide selection of resources and posters that portray positive, non-stereotyped images and as they acknowledge various celebrations and festivals. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work closely together with regard to behaviour management. They give children consistent and clear boundaries and they generally play well within these. Staff give children lots of praise for positive behaviour, distract children effectively and ensure that they are busy and stimulated throughout the majority of the session. If children display inappropriate behaviour this is discussed with parents and as a staff team to ensure a consistent approach. Children learn to co-operate with each other and as part of a group and go to staff for support if needed. Staff recognise the importance of raising children's self-esteem and confidence. Children are given opportunities to develop their independence, for example, as they are able to freely choose their activities during the day.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Information regarding the setting is shared in a variety of ways. Parents read and sign the playgroup's policies and procedures and further information, such as the registration certificate, staff's qualifications and photographs are clearly displayed on a notice board. Information regarding events within the playgroup, current themes and plans are shared via a regular newsletter, notices and the display board. Information regarding children's progress and development is shared verbally and also as staff share children's 'learning journeys' with parents twice a year. These have recently been developed and show children's progress within the 'Birth to three matters' framework and along the early learning goals. Children enjoy bringing in items from home that relate to the current theme. A display in one of the group rooms shows the Foundation Stage curriculum and the 'Birth to three matters' framework and includes photographs of children at play. Parents are invited to the playgroup's Annual General Meeting. When asked regarding their views of the setting, parent's feedback is positive. They particularly appreciate that there is a consistent team of friendly and approachable staff and have recommended the playgroup to other parents.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from high levels of staff involvement with established and qualified staff. Staff work closely as a team and communicate well, ensuring continuity of care and the smooth running of the playgroup. Children enjoy a good balance of free play sessions, group time, time

indoors and outdoors. However, the daily routine involves many changes, this interrupts children's play.

Children are safeguarded as the setting has a rigorous recruitment procedure and a system in place for vetting staff. These include Criminal Record Bureau checks and references. Documents and records are clear and contain all necessary information. Most policies and procedures are in place, are shared with staff and parents and work in practice. However, these are not reviewed on a regular basis and, therefore, some require updating.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff are aware of their roles and are supported by the manager who works alongside them and holds regular meetings to discuss planning, developments and children's progress. Staff attend a good selection of training on a regular basis and use this training to plan developments within the playgroup. They work closely with their Sure Start Development Workers and Early Years Advisors. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

At the previous inspection the playgroup agreed to ensure that children's records are stored securely. The playgroup now stores children's records in a locked cupboard, thereby, making them more secure and maintaining confidentiality. They also agreed to further develop the child protection and lost and uncollected child procedures. These have been developed and include all necessary information, thereby, further safeguarding children's welfare. However, the child protection procedure requires updating to reflect the recent changes in relation to safeguarding children.

With regard to nursery education the playgroup has made some progress in reviewing group times to ensure that children's interests are maintained, however, a further recommendation has been made in relation to this. The setting has made very good progress in providing daily opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills. Children now benefit from a wide variety of activities and resources that develop their gross motor skills.

### **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 satisfactory.

## 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):

- develop accident records to include existing injuries
- regularly review and up-date policies and procedures and ensure that fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed at all times
- review the daily routine to extend children's free play sessions and accommodate group times for children of similar ages and abilities (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure that all children have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

### **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):

- provide children with a wider choice of consistently available resources, thereby, increasing their opportunities to write for a purpose, explore and investigate the natural world, and design and construct using a range of materials
- devise and adapt activities and experiences and take more spontaneous opportunities to further challenge more able children.

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)