



Kingswood Methodist Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106997
Inspection date	28 June 2005
Inspector	Valerie Anne Curotto
Setting Address	Kingswood Methodist Church, Grantham Road, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 1JR
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Registered person	Kingswood Methodist Church 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?

Kingswood Methodist Church Playgroup is based in the main church hall, which is located on the Bristol-South Gloucestershire border. It serves children in the local community and is managed by a parent-based committee. Sessional care is provided for up to 24 children, aged between 3 and 5 years. Sessions run four mornings a week (not Thursdays and occasional Wednesdays), between 09.30 and 12.00 hours. A pre-school session operates on a Thursday afternoon from 12.30 until

15.00 in the spring and summer terms. Children have access to the main hall and a smaller room for group activities, such as music and story time. Children are escorted by staff to toilets in the lobby area.

A team of four staff offer a 1:6 adult to child ratio and parent helpers are welcomed at each session. The playleader and deputy are appropriately qualified. There are 16 children on roll and 11 of these receive nursery education funding. Staff have experience in supporting children with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The setting receives support from the local authority. It is also affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy using a range of attractive equipment within the main hall which promotes their physical development. Staff vary equipment appropriately each session to include different aspects of children's development and enable them to practise various skills, such as crawling, climbing, throwing and catching. Children enthusiastically use items such as small balls and hoops, an obstacle course and parachute in a combination of individual and group activities.

Children are provided with appropriate drinks and snacks and are encouraged to try healthy options such as fruit. They learn routines for keeping their bodies healthy, such as handwashing, although opportunities for them to develop independence in self care are limited. Suitable information about children's individual health and dietary needs is gathered by staff to promote their well-being and relevant information, such as accident records are shared appropriately with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Access to the building is monitored effectively by staff to keep children safe. The room is laid out well each day to provide clear pathways for children to move around unobstructed. Children develop spatial awareness by walking around safely between the various activity tables and floor activities. Staff clear away other equipment towards the end of the session to ensure sufficient space is made available for children's physical play. Children learn to use the climbing frame appropriately under staff supervision. They negotiate space well and consider others when using sit and ride toys.

The operational plan contains appropriate policies and safety procedures to support children's safety. Children take part in termly fire drills to increase their awareness of procedures and fire fighting equipment is routinely serviced. A risk assessment, though not comprehensive, is in place and reviewed annually to help minimise risks to children. Some staff are yet to develop their knowledge and understanding of child

protection issues, to further safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are secure and confident in their surroundings. They separate from their parents happily on arrival and form positive relationships with each other and staff. They are familiar with routines and expectations of their behaviour. They listen attentively at story time and are able to recall events as they happened. Children eagerly share information about themselves with staff and learn to take turns patiently at 'show and tell'.

Staff understand children's needs and provide a suitable range of activities and experiences for them. Children benefit from regular physical activity in the main hall and enjoy group activities such as singing and using musical instruments in a smaller room. Children confidently choose from the range of activities put out by staff during free play, although opportunities to use their initiative to access and combine resources are limited. As a result, not all activities successfully maintain their interest and a minority become restless.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children have a generally positive attitude to learning. They enjoy regular opportunities to count large numbers by rote at circle time and can accurately count and sort; grouping five dinosaurs of different colours. They draw imaginative pictures to represent what they hear outside, when asked by staff. They competently roll and cut playdough and draw round stencils. They are enthusiastic and interested, although not all activities provide sufficient challenge. Opportunities for children to express themselves freely during creative activities are limited.

The range of activities offered to children is broad enough to promote positive learning outcomes for all areas of learning. Staff provide a series of well planned topics which link resources effectively; children enthusiastically recall a recent outing to a country park when examining the texture and smell of sheep's wool. Staff have sufficient knowledge of the early learning goals to support children's activities but learning intentions are not always sufficiently detailed to support children in all aspects of learning, such as calculating and exploring media and materials. Strategies to facilitate children's learning, particularly in the structured 'pre-school' session, are not extensive. Some adult directed activities do not provide sufficient meaning for children to engage them consistently and allow children to develop their own thinking.

Staff undertake informal observations of children in addition to more formal termly assessments to monitor their progress. However a comprehensive format is lacking to ensure all aspects of children's learning receive sufficient attention. Assessments are therefore unable to guide planning effectively and as a result, learning intentions are often too general to provide challenge for individual children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children appear secure within the friendly and welcoming atmosphere. This is supported by appropriate settling-in procedures and positive interaction with warm and caring staff. Children and their contributions to the setting are valued. They share items from home each day at 'show and tell' and their individual record books contain attractively presented worksheets, photographs and termly assessments.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are generally well behaved and respond to staff instruction. They learn to show consideration for the needs of others through thoughtfully planned topic work and involvement in sponsored events. Children with special needs are included and welcomed into the group. Available resources support children's understanding of cultural diversity and disability. They taste foods connected with different celebrations and cultures in topic work, such as pancakes and noodles. They can sign 'good morning' in Makaton. Children learn about life cycles in nature by studying butterflies, building their own living (indoor) garden and reflecting on how they have grown during a visit from a parent and young baby.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Information about the setting is attractively displayed in the entrance, including half termly topics and some activities. Positive informal links with parents promote discussion about individual children's needs on a daily basis. While children's assessments are shared with parents each term, arrangements to involve them in their children's learning are not extensive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The experienced staff team work well together, sharing responsibilities and meeting regularly to discuss the provision. The parent-based committee organises fundraising and supports social events for children and their families. A new playleader was appointed in 2004 and, with the team, is committed to the development of the setting and provision of an inclusive environment for children. At present there is limited monitoring and evaluation to identify the setting's own strengths and weaknesses. As a result, no systems are yet in place to support staff in the evaluation of the setting's nursery education. Staff continue to access appropriate training to develop their skills and the provision for children.

The setting is well resourced and staff put out equipment each session from various storage rooms off the main hall. This ensures that resources are varied appropriately to provide interest for children, although children's independent access is limited. The need to set up and clear away equipment each session does at times take staff away from more effectively supporting children, but duty parents are used to limit this. Available space is used effectively to provide an appropriate range of activities for children. Sessions are structured well to provide children with sufficient time for free and structured play. Documentation, including staff records are well organised and

maintained in a secure cabinet. The operational plan continues to be developed to support children's care and reflect practice within the setting. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has made progress towards the three key issues raised at the last inspection of funded education in October 2002. Since then a long term plan has been developed, relating to the early learning goals, which staff use as a guide at team planning meetings. Staff continue to provide a sufficient range of activities for children, with some imaginative themes and ideas. However learning outcomes are not always clear which limits challenge for some children. However a new format for assessing their progress is being pursued. Staff interaction with children is positive and encourages conversation, although support regarding learning outcomes is not consistent. Two staff members have recently undertaken foundation stage training to develop their knowledge and understanding of this area.

At the last inspection of care in July 2004, three recommendations were made. Staff deployment at transition times has been improved as at least one staff member provides support to children in the book corner at tidy up time. Children now take more interest in the books, sharing them with each other and staff, reducing potentially disruptive behaviour. Consistency amongst staff regarding management of children's behaviour has been improved through additional training for some staff and ongoing reviews at team meetings. However, not all staff have received child protection training to increase their awareness of issues relating to children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- continue to develop the operational plan to more fully support practice within the setting; in particular, the use of risk assessments, the deployment of staff and the organisation of resources to promote children's access
- continue to assess and develop training needs of staff, including child protection and the use of observations and assessments

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 opportunities for children to have more independent choice of materials and to explore self-expression in creative activities
- develop the use of observations and assessments to impact more effectively on planning; to ensure all aspects of learning have sufficient emphasis and that appropriate challenges can be set for individual children

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