

Queensway Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309436
Inspection date	12 July 2007
Inspector	Ann Bamford
Setting Address	Methodist Church, Queensway, Poulton le Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 7ST
Telephone number	01253 884 937
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Registered person	Poulton Playgroup and Toddler Association
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?

Queensway pre school is a member of the Poulton Pre School and Toddler Association.

The group operates from the church hall attached to the Methodist church, which is in the centre of Poulton. The Pre School is run by a committee of parents and carers and is financed by fees, fundraising events and the nursery education grant. It is registered to provide full day care for 25 children between the ages of two and five years.

Children have use of three playrooms with planned use of a large hall and an outdoor play area. Toilet and kitchen facilities are in the main part of the church.

Care is offered around specific nursery education sessions. The setting operates from 09.15 to 15.15 on a Monday, and from 09.15 until 12.45 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during local school term times. The setting offers parents either a nursery education session or care during the full time of operation in line with individual needs.

The setting has a manager and seven staff most of whom are qualified to Level 3 in childcare and education. The manager works alongside her staff during all sessions. The pre-school is a

member of the pre school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority early years team.

At the time of inspection there were 34 children on roll of whom 28 were in receipt of nursery education funding. There were no children on roll who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The setting supports children for whom English is an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting is clean and has effective processes in place to ensure that this remains so. Children are involved in some routines to maintain hygiene. Some children are beginning to develop skills in keeping themselves and the environment clean as they usually wash their hands immediately prior to eating and tidy up before snack time. However, children are at risk of cross infection as staff do not consistently encourage children to wash hands following use of the toilet, or blow their noses. In addition children use sun hats from a pool of hats meaning that several children may use one hat before it is washed.

Children's continued good health is maintained as the setting works effectively to find out about children's individual health needs from parents. The individual plans for helping children with allergies or specific conditions are supportive of children's individual needs. There are policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff have appropriate and current training on first aid and administration of specific medication. Staff knowledge of health issues, such as childhood epilepsy and other illnesses, contribute to the setting's overall commitment to assisting children's enjoyment of good health.

Children are nourished effectively as the staff make good use of snack time to encourage children to eat healthily. Children have access to fruit daily. They are developing a good awareness of healthy bodies as they talk about germs and how both good food and exercise affects their bodies.

Children's physical development is satisfactory. Most enjoy physical activity as they balance, hop and kick using ropes, climbing equipment, and footballs. Younger children enjoy climbing and manoeuvring but older children are not sufficiently challenged by the equipment and are unable to use it to develop their skills. No children have access to pedal toys. This inhibits their development of this skill. Children have regular use of the outdoor environment which enhances the meeting of children's needs in relation to exercise. Staff plan use of the playground effectively to ensure all children have regular access to fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe in the setting. There are well used procedures in place to ensure that this remains so. However, recent changes to the lock on the side entrance to the pre school means that children can unlock a door which leads directly onto a main road. This compromises their safety

Staff in the setting are knowledgeable about reducing risks. They improve children's safety by moving trip hazards and tidying away unused toys and equipment during the session. They

ensure children are safe outdoors by checking the area before children go out to play. The setting has developed good policies and procedures for keeping children safe in an environment which is partly used by the general public.

Children are developing an understanding of keeping themselves and others safe in the event of a fire as they take part in regular fire drills. Staff regularly involve children in tidying away toys and equipment in order to enhance their understanding of how to keep the play area safe.

Children's continued safety is maintained as staff implement the setting's policy on who collects children with vigilance and care. Their creative approach to ensuring children are collected safely at the end of the session enhances children's safety.

Children are protected by staff's knowledge and understanding of their role in safeguarding children. They are confident to act in the event of a concern about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to resources and activities which promote their development. Staff make effective use of "Birth to three matters" and the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance when planning activities for children. Children are cared for in a way which encourages them to be confident and settled in the pre school. Staff know individual children well and engage children in play as they talk laugh and share activities, such as a bug hunt together.

Children become competent learners as staff join them in activities and encourage them to persist with a jigsaw or add to a painting. Staff move in alongside children and use gentle encouragement to aid children's persistence in completing tasks

Children are developing an awareness of what is right and wrong as staff gently explain how another child may feel when conflict arises. Apologies are encouraged from one child to another. Children enjoy time spent playing together with staff. Staff listen to them, and usually challenge them to take the next step, such as to add further bricks to a building or use a different colour when painting.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff hold an understanding of the Foundation Stage and make observations on what children can do. Practitioners understand children's needs and provide a wide range of activities for the group. Adults have an understanding of how children learn. Children do make individual progress as a result of staff assistance, for example, to develop mark making skills in a seaside beach café area as staff show them how to use the pad and pen.

The setting uses the Foundation Stage curriculum, to plan what children will be doing. Staff make observations on what children can do and use these observations to plan the next steps in children's individual development. These are securely linked to the stepping stones. Observations made about what children can do inform planning for the whole pre school group, this is recorded in weekly plans. There has been occasions during the past year where, due to staffing difficulties, the planning for individual children has been inconsistent. However, the setting is now consistently planning next steps for individual children. This improves the rate at which individual children develop skills.

Children are becoming confident communicators and readily ask questions of visitors. Many children are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks. However, not all children enjoy stories. The book area is uninviting and uncomfortable to use. This affects children's enjoyment and sustained interest in books and stories.

Children's creativity is developing well as they make collages on the theme of 'the sea' for the notice board and produce textured collage artwork. Children use imagination with assistance from an adult as they use the shop and beach cafe, initially to sell pizza then developing it into a baby feeding area and walking around with them in prams and blankets. Children join in songs at circle time and some children know the full song.

Children are developing the concept of numbers as they join in songs at story time and complete written tasks. They are able to count the number of objects in pictures correctly. They show increasing confidence with numbers as they independently count the number of mini beasts they found on the bug hunt and recall how many flies or crawlers they have collected. Children show natural curiosity and begin to use tools, such as scissors, for a purpose. They delight in showing visitors their recently completed work on bugs. Children can use the computer and other equipment, such as telephones competently. One-to-one attention from staff enhances children's use of the computer ensures children use the mouse and key board correctly. This enhances their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Older children are developing friendships. They seek out their friends and engage in imaginative play together. Children are developing skills to play collaboratively as they join in imaginative games or await their turn on the climbing frame.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the pre school; they separate well from parents or carers. The setting uses information provided by parents to offer care. Staff know about children's individual circumstances, for example, family structure and use conversations about home to welcome children.

Children have access to a range of opportunities which encourages their understanding of diversity, for example, playing with multicultural dolls and clothes, kitchen utensils, books and jigsaws. Planned activities are provided, such as Chinese New Year celebrations, which look at a variety of aspects of the culture, such as the celebration itself.

There is a policy for meeting needs arising from learning difficulties and disabilities. There is a system in place where needs are assessed prior to admission. The setting works with parents and where needed, can assist parents to seek further advice from other professionals, such as health visitors. Staff have good knowledge and experience of planning to meet children's individual needs. The setting has begun to consider the needs of children who have English as an additional language, however, the development of support for this area is slow and this affects the rate at which some children make progress in spoken English.

Children behave generally well. They are developing strategies for making friendships, taking turns and settling disputes as staff are competent role models who talk about being kind to each other and feelings. However, the long structured snack and story times prevents some children from behaving positively through the whole time as they are sat quietly for a lengthy period of time. Children lack opportunities to perform self help skills as staff butter the toast,

serve and distribute drinks. This impedes children's development of independence skills. In addition, some children become restless and argumentative. Children are given individual support to succeed in situations that they find difficult, such as arrival times. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the setting. They are given well presented and clear information about how care is offered to their children in a variety of ways, for example, the brochure, the parents' board and in newsletters. The information on the six areas of early learning is good. The setting has begun to provide parents with information about how they can help their children at home, for example, information on how children develop their mark making skills. Parents are asked for specific information of what their child can do when they enter the setting and they are currently involved in planning any next steps for children. This improves the parental partnership in their child's learning.

Parents speak highly of the commitment of the staff in the setting. They tell of their pleasure at the commitment of staff to knowing each individual child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting organises the environment and resources effectively in order to provide care and education for children. However the pre school has recently undergone a very difficult period and this has had an impact in terms of consistency. There are recruitment procedures in place to ensure that safe, suitable practitioners work with the children. Documentation relating to this is usually stored on the premises and is available for inspection. However, this was not all available at the time of inspection as there is inconsistency in where records relating to staff are stored.

Children's constant safety in the setting is afforded by the use of a well implemented recruitment and selection policy. There are checks undertaken on staff to ensure suitability to work with children and that adults hold appropriate knowledge and training to care effectively. The mainly qualified staff team make use of opportunities for training which develop children's care and learning. For example, staff have attended induction training and training in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum, first aid and safeguarding children. Training is planned to ensure that any requiring updating, such as first aid, is done in a timely fashion. Staff are deployed according to their skills and experience. Records in the setting generally support safe care of children. However, at the time of inspection many of the policies and procedures were in need of updating to reflect the current committee and staff group. All required records were current and available for inspection. There are procedures in place for sharing records with parents.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the pre school. Staff with individual responsibilities, such as safeguarding children, are able to define their role and its responsibilities when asked. Staff are supported through both formal staff meetings and appraisal meetings. The setting is starting to be able to assess its own strengths and weaknesses as staff have taken part in the completion of the setting's self-evaluation plan. Staff in the setting take responsibility for developing practice and are starting to make effective use of staff meetings to review plans for what the children do as a group. All staff have key worker responsibilities.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the setting review the procedure for use of the kettle during child contact time. It was also recommended that the setting reviewed the deployment of staff during story and news time, the induction pack, the dating of photographic evidence and confidentiality on accident records.

Since that time staff have undertaken a review of practice and they no longer use the kettle when children are present in the setting. The staff induction pack has been re-written and all new staff now undertake the revised induction process. The setting did undertake a review of story and news time, introducing smaller groups for this activity and using additional staff to support this. Although the setting did develop story and news time and improved the quality of experience for children story and snack time are still an area where further attention is needed and this is outlined in the positive contribution area of the report. Since the last inspection the setting has reviewed the accident records, they have changed the recording system to include a separate page for each entry thus affording confidentiality. All photographic records are now dated.

In the Nursery Education inspection report it was recommended that the setting improve planning to ensure children have regular opportunities for outdoor play, and development of individual children's profiles. Since that time the setting has developed outdoor play and includes planning for outdoor play which includes specific desired outcomes and includes differentiation in order to meet children's individual needs. Children's individual profiles have been developed and now all children have a profile which includes baseline information on what the child can do on entry, specific next steps linked to stepping stones and a record of achievement which includes children's work over the year.

Each of these actions has improved the quality of care and education for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 1, Suitable person and National Standard 2, Organisation. An Ofsted Early Years childcare inspector visited the provision on 29 January 2007. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration. 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 consistency of good hygiene practice to prevent the spread of infection
- improve the promotion of the good health of children and give them opportunities to develop skills in climbing and peddling (this applies to nursery education also)
- review the procedure for ensuring children cannot leave the side door of the setting unsupervised
- continue to develop deployment of staff in order that children have opportunity to select their own activities, develop independence skills and manage their own behaviour effectively
- review the policies and procedures to ensure that they relate to how the setting currently operates and ensure record in relation to suitable staffing are available for inspection

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):

- improve opportunities for children to sit comfortably and read books
- continue to develop support strategies for children who have English as an additional language

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