

St Lukes Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310484
Inspection date	03 March 2008
Inspector	Elizabeth Margaret Grocott

Setting Address	71 Liverpool Road, Crosby, Liverpool, Merseyside, L23 5SE
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Registered person	Jacqueline Crosbie
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Luke' s Playgroup was registered in 1999 and is privately owned and managed. It operates from a church hall, near to Crosby Village, in Liverpool. There is a grassed area for outdoor play.

The setting is open from 09.20 to 11.50 each weekday, in term time only. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children aged from two to under five years. There are currently 46 children on roll.

There are eight staff who work with children, of whom three have appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the early years team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean, well-maintained premises. Staff and children follow effective hygiene procedures that reduce the risk of spreading infection. Policies and procedures protect

children when they are ill and ensure that parents are kept informed at all times. Children are supported to take care of their own personal needs. They are beginning to understand why it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet and before handling food.

Staff ask parents for details on children's needs, which are recorded, ensuring that children are only offered what parents have requested. Snacks offered each day consist of biscuits and a drink of juice, milk or water. This does not promote healthy eating at the setting. A jug of water and some cups are available throughout the session should a child need a drink. This helps children to form good habits for the future.

Children enjoy some opportunities to be active, which helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. They use the climbing frame and slide at each session and on some occasions have music and movement. However, the garden available for play all year round is only used in the summer months.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children settle well in the warm, welcoming playgroup. Staff greet all children by name and encourage them to engage in play, which is supported by adults. This helps to increase children's confidence. Toys and resources are set out prior to the children arriving, enabling them to choose freely. This increases their decision making skills. The resources are maintained well.

Children's welfare is generally maintained appropriately, as staff ensure that areas they access are free from hazards, such as using socket covers in areas where low-level sockets are in place. However, children's safety is compromised at times, as a full risk assessment of all playgroup areas has not been undertaken. Daily checks are made, but a worn mat underneath the slide, curls up at the edges and presents a tripping hazard, as a child falls. Security is good as staff monitor the main entrance and exit at times of arrival and departure. Outside of these times the door remains locked. Staff and children regularly practise evacuating the building so that they are familiar with the procedures should an emergency occur.

Some policies which protect children are incorrect or missing. Children are not sufficiently protected in the event of not being collected, as detailed arrangements are not in place. This is a breach of regulations. Although staff are familiar with possible indicators of abuse or neglect, the member of staff with lead responsibility in this area is not familiar with the correct procedures to follow. The child protection policy has not been updated in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. This puts children at risk.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and content in the playgroup environment. They settle quickly on arrival and have secure relationships with staff and their peers. Children take part in a range of pre-planned and child-initiated activities, such as dressing up, gluing and sticking, colouring, small world play and pastry play. However, opportunities for sensory play are limited as sand and water are only available in the smaller room which is open on certain days for older, more able children. Children enjoy craft and make Mother's Day cards as well as celebrating Chinese New Year.

Although staff plan a variety of activities and varied experiences for the children in their care, they are not yet using supportive guidance such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework to best support the changing needs of all children. Staff do not formally observe or assess the progress that children make. For example, older, more able children are directed to colour in a pre-drawn flower in a pre-stuck pot. The children's names are already written at the top of page. This does not maximise children's learning through play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Good staff to child ratios enables them to spend individual time with children, getting to know their likes and dislikes and supporting their emotional needs. Children's self-esteem is raised as staff use praise regularly for their achievements. Children begin to learn about the similarities and differences between people. For example, through taking part in a basic range of activities, such as celebrating Chinese New Year. However, their understanding of diversity in society is not maximised, because of the limitation in positive images displayed and the resources provided.

Although the setting has not identified any children who have learning difficulties or disabilities, the policy document is not consistent with current legislation or guidance. The designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for the setting has not attended any training. She does not have sufficient understanding of the code of practice. This means children and families are not fully supported.

Children behave well. They are familiar with the routines and boundaries of the playgroup. They learn to work harmoniously with others, for example, a small group of children play a game together with a member of staff. They take turns to guess whose card matches and when they have a disagreement they are helped to understand turn taking.

The staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's individual needs, for example, children who require special diets. Parents have satisfactory opportunities to share what they know about their child through regular discussions with staff. However, the complaint policy has not been updated in line with the change in legislation and no system has been provided to log any complaints. This is a breach of regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The environment is organised, staff know their roles and responsibilities and implement routines to give children a range of experiences. Children benefit from well deployed staff, who consistently interact with them and give encouragement, which helps them feel secure and confident. However, arrangements for ensuring sufficient qualified staff work with the children are inadequate. Whilst an acceptable number of adults work with the children to maintain the required ratios, not all of these hold relevant early years qualifications for their post. This was an action at the last inspection and has still not been met.

Although relevant policies and procedures are generally in place, these are not sufficiently accurate, meet current regulatory requirements, or used effectively in the playgroup. This does not effectively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection provider was asked to formalise the operational plan to include all aspects of how the setting is organised. She was also asked to revise all policies and procedures and to prepare a written statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost. Risk assessments and daily checklists were also an area of weakness.

Since the last inspection, a policy has been written regarding the procedure to follow should a child go missing. This promotes children's safety. Daily checks are undertaken. However, a full risk assessment has not been undertaken. This remains an area for improvement. The provider has done some work on the operational plan, but it still has weaknesses and does not provide all the required information. The policies and procedures have not been updated, and as some legislation has changed, do not meet current regulations. This remains an area for improvement.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- develop and make available to parents, a written statement on special needs which is consistent with current legislation and guidance; ensure that this is understood and implemented by all staff
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
- develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and ensure that all regulatory policies and procedures meet regulatory requirements and are implemented. Write a procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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