

# Church House Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	311345
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Helen Blackburn
<b>Setting Address</b>	Church Lane, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 9HX
<b>Telephone number</b>	07722013198
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Church House Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Church House Pre-School is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. The group registered in 1970 and operates from a room within Saint Mary's Parish Centre. It is situated in a residential area of Mirfield. A maximum of 20 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00, term time only. The children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 20 children on roll from two years to five years; of these, eight children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local and wider catchment area. The group currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties, disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a clean environment. The staff maintain this through carrying out regular cleaning routines and by promoting personal hygiene practices. This contributes to minimising the spread of infection and protects children's health. Through practical routines, the children are learning about the importance of personal hygiene. They know to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack. Through activities that involve discussions about personal care and health, children learn about germs and illness.

Staff appropriately manage illness within the setting to minimise cross-infection. The group policy asks parents to keep ill children at home to protect the health of others. Due to the short sessions, staff have few incidents of needing to administer medications. Although this is infrequent, there are basic records in place if the need arose.

The children have good opportunities to be active and exercise, which supports them in leading a healthy lifestyle. They regularly play outdoors and access fresh air. The children enjoy being outdoors and they play with an appropriate range of equipment to support their physical development. This includes bikes, balls, climbing and crawling equipment, hoops, mark making, cutting and threading. In addition, the curriculum programme includes activities to develop children's balance and coordination, such as moving their bodies in different ways, small obstacle courses, running and jumping. The staff recognise they need to extend the resources as the children become older and more able, to provide sufficient challenge for them.

The group understand the importance of promoting healthy eating to support children's healthy growth and development. The parents are responsible for snacks. They support the group policy in encouraging children to eat healthily. For example, parents provide a selection of fresh fruit, vegetables, and toast. The staff ensure all snacks meet individual children's dietary needs. Children's free access to drinking water is developing as the new children remember to bring their water bottles each morning. The curriculum planning also raises children's awareness of making healthy choices. For example, themes include talking about how healthy foods help them to grow. Snack time is a relaxing and social experience for children. They sit in small groups and have the opportunity to interact with their peers. The organisation of snack time is smooth and short; this ensures it does not interrupt children's play for long periods.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment for children is safe and secure with appropriate precautions in place to maintain this. These include staff vigilantly checking areas used by the children and some risk assessment records. However, these records are a little disorganised whilst staff develop the storage area. The children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves safe. The staff reinforce how to use equipment safely, such as the slide and scissors. They take part in regular fire evacuations so that they know what is expected of them in an emergency.

The children access a good range of resources that are safe and maintained in good condition. They are organised so that children have some opportunities to choose what they want to play with. Through the addition of new self-selection units independent choices for children are developing. Staff use the space well to promote children's welfare and ongoing renovation

work ensures the environment continues to be improved and maintained to satisfactory standards. The group share the premises with other community organisations. They work hard to overcome issues of setting up and clearing away equipment at each session, so that it does not affect children's play.

The staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues to protect children from harm. They are aware of their responsibilities and follow appropriate procedures if they have concerns about a child. For example, they know how to report and monitor concerns. The group is aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and they have up to date information regarding this to ensure they protect children. The staff understand the importance of keeping up to date with child protection issues and are exploring possible training options to help with this. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure staff are suitable to care for children. This includes sufficient recruitment and vetting procedures.

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

The provision is good.

The environment for children is welcoming and through the friendly approach of staff, there is a relaxing atmosphere. This results in the children being happy and settled. There is a varied range of children's work displayed around the setting that contributes to this welcoming feel and provides a sense of belonging for children.

The children have good relationships with others. The staff are working hard to settle new children to ensure they feel secure in their new environment. For example, they provide familiar activities and ensure they are there to reassure children if they get upset. Children benefit from staff being involved in their play. Staff are able to use this time to get to know the children and to support and challenge their development. The children respond well to this and eagerly ask staff to join in their games, for example, football. The children play well together and cooperate well during play. For instance, a group of children enthusiastically play at pirates in the pirate ship. In addition, there is a good selection of activities and resources that encourage sharing and taking turns. This includes bikes with three seats and art activities that encourage children to create pictures together. The children enjoy their time at the group and are interested and involved in their play. They especially enjoy playing outdoors and imaginative play, such as trains and farms.

The staff have a good understanding of child development and how young children learn and this helps them to plan a stimulating range of activities for children. They plan play well to take into account children's needs and interests. Through their observations they record and monitor children's development and progress. By identifying children's next steps, they can plan good activities to effectively support children's individual needs. Principally staff use the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' for planning and recording progress. They understand about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they ensure activities take into account the younger and older children's abilities well. However, the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in regard to monitoring and recording younger children's progress is less established.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and use this to plan a varied curriculum that supports children's development. For example, they provide continuous provision and planned activities that incorporate all areas of learning and reflect the stepping stones. The plans are

flexible to reflect children's interests and ideas. For example, leading on from a book a child brought to pre-school, children made treasure maps.

Through the staff being involved in children's play and having good relationships with them, staff support and challenge children's learning well. They ask children a good range of open-ended questions, such as 'what', 'how' and 'why'. This encourages the children to use their initiative and develop their own ideas.

As a result of the varied curriculum, staff interaction and teaching, the children are making good progress towards the stepping stones, given their capabilities and starting points. The children are happy, interested and motivated learners who eagerly join in activities. They are able to contribute their own ideas and make decisions about what they want to do. For example, they choose from a selection of activities provided, both indoors and outdoors. In addition, their positive relationships with others contribute well to promoting their personal, social and emotional development.

The children's mathematical, communication, language and literacy skills are developing well. The children speak with confidence and engage in conversations with others. Through a good selection of mark making activities, the children are developing their early writing skills well. For example, children use notepads to devise shopping lists and write letters in the lentils. The children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, which supports their early reading and concentration skills. There is a good range of practical and fun activities that contribute to children developing a good understanding of mathematical concepts. They use a varied range of mathematical language during play, such as 'full', 'big' and 'small'. The children count well and through activities, such as parking their bikes in numbered parking bays, they recognise numbers.

The children are curious, inquisitive learners; they ask questions and show a great interest in what they are doing. They enjoy learning about living things, for example, they plant and grow flowers and thoroughly enjoyed pond dipping, looking for small bugs. Through using programmable toys and equipment, the children learn about technology. For example, through equipment that switches on and off, the children are learning about how things work. The addition of the new computer will enhance children's skills in this area. These activities support children's development in knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children make good progress in their creative development. They use their imaginations well to express and share their ideas and thoughts. For example, children eagerly assemble the train track and become involved in using their imagination to go on journeys. They also enjoy playing in a wide range of imaginative roles, such as in the home corner, café and post office. The children explore a good range of media, texture, musical instruments and art activities to develop their creativity. They enjoy painting, dough, sand, water and creating three-dimensional models, such as the large pirate ship.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff have a positive approach to managing children's behaviour, for example, they praise their achievements. The children respond well to this and this results in them behaving appropriately for their ages and stages of development. The children know what the staff expect of them through the clear guidelines and boundaries in place. Staff deal with minor disagreements well by calmly explaining why certain behaviour is unacceptable. For example,

they explain to children that throwing sand may hurt someone's eyes. These strategies help children to learn about right and wrong. In addition, the group has a written policy that supports the practices in place.

Children's work is valued and displayed around the setting. The children have their own coat peg and on arrival find their name to put on the apple tree. This contributes to children having a sense of belonging at the group. The children are developing an awareness of their local community and the world in which they live. This contributes to them having a positive self-image and a respect for others. They enjoy activities that involve celebrations of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year. They access some resources that include posters, books, dolls and jigsaws that provide positive images of others. This helps the children to learn about diversity.

The children make their own choices in play and this encourages them to become independent learners. Through additional self-selection units, these opportunities for children continue to develop. The staff recognise children's individual needs and meet these well, for example, they support younger children's toilet training needs and understand that they may need to rest. This includes the staff providing satisfactory support for children with learning difficulties, disabilities or for children who speak English as an additional language. For example, they liaise with parents, other professionals and devise individual plans to meet children's needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There are sound relationships between the staff and parents and they work sufficiently well together to meet children's needs. They regularly share and exchange information regarding the child's day and routines. The parents are encouraged to become an active part of the group, through representation on the committee, helping out at the group and through questionnaires where they can share their ideas.

Through notice boards, policies, procedures and a welcome prospectus, the parents know what service children receive. In addition, they get information leaflets about the education funding and through the curriculum planning and newsletters, they know about the group's education programme. This includes ways in which they can continue their child's learning at home. On starting the setting, parents share some information on what their child can do and this helps staff to plan around children's individual needs. The staff understand the importance of parents contributing to their child's progress records. However, parents' ready access to their child's records is restricted and this limits ways in which they can be involved.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff work well together, they organise themselves well and make good use of their time to meet children's needs. They have established systems to overcome the issues of using shared facilities, such as ensuring resources are set up ready for children's arrival. They organise the room to promote children's learning in all areas. They deploy themselves well to supervise children and to ensure they adhere to adult to child ratios.

There are sufficient documents in place to meet regulation requirements and to promote the safe management of the setting. These provide adequate detail to outline the service provided for children. However, at present access to some documents is disorganised due to alterations in the storage area, such as staff files and children's development books. Records and detail

maintained on the children is up to date and ensures staff are able to promote their welfare and meet their needs.

The leadership and management of the group is satisfactory. The staff are open to ideas and suggestions and they explore ways to enhance the service they offer. They demonstrate their commitment to improve by accessing training, embarking on a quality assurance scheme and the development of a computer area for children. Staff identify their training needs through discussion. However, formal appraisal systems to enable staff to reflect on their practice and consider what they offer children are lacking. This also relates to induction programmes, which are also informal. There are clear guidelines for parents helping at the group so that they know what their responsibilities are.

There are some systems for monitoring the setting through training, parental questionnaires, evaluating plans, discussions and meetings. These systems continue to develop as staff utilise them more effectively to consider how to enhance the provision for children. 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, the provider agreed to improve some safety aspects, review the organisation of some activities and develop some documentation. A safety gate now restricts children's access to the storage area so that they can play safely. Through some reorganisation and purchase of new equipment, the book area is inviting to children and they regularly access outdoor play to support their development in these areas. All documentation is up to date and procedures ensure staff promote the welfare and safety of children. For example, policies now include what to do if a child is lost, accident records contain all the relevant information, the complaint procedure includes information regarding the regulatory body and records of visitors are now in place.

In regard to the nursery education, the provider agreed to develop the curriculum programme to ensure all areas of learning were covered. Through more detailed planning and increased opportunities, the children practise linking sounds to letters and mark making. For example, they access mark making materials and enjoy activities that involve phonics and letters. This supports children's early reading and writing skills. There are now displays around the setting that involve number, such as numbers on bikes, parking bays and walls to encourage children to count and use number in their play. Through the purchase of programmable toys and equipment, the children are learning how things work and explore items that join and fix together. Plans incorporate children's physical development and this includes moving to music in different ways to support children to be healthy and exercise. For example, children enjoy ring games, dancing and putting on shows. This also includes children having increased opportunities to explore musical instruments to develop their creativity.

### **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 records regarding the monitoring and recording of younger children's progress and development
- develop staff induction programmes and appraisal systems.

#### **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 parents' access to their child's developmental record to enable them to become more involved in their child's progress (this also applies to care).

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)