

Barnt Green Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205125
Inspection date	07 November 2007
Inspector	Esther Gray

Setting Address	Barnt Green Baptist Church, Bittell Road, Barnt Green, Birmingham, West Midlands, B45 8LT
Telephone number	0121 447 8217
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Registered person	Committee
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barnt Green Playgroup opened in 1978. It operates from the main hall and a room in the Baptist church hall, Barnt Green, Worcestershire. A maximum of 24 children may attend group at any one time. It is open on Monday to Thursday between the hours of 09:15 until 11:45, term time only. There is a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 15 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs three full-time and two part-time staff, one is a qualified teacher employed part-time and two hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and teacher mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff are suitably trained to ensure they can attend to sick or injured children and they have obtained appropriate details of children's individual medical needs to provide appropriate care for all children. Children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly and attend to their own personal hygiene. As a result, children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. There is a regular programme of exercise sessions, both indoors and in the outdoor area. During the summer months the provision of education and care is transferred entirely to the outdoor area and staff use every opportunity to enable children to be outdoors. As a result, children enjoy many opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills with balls and ride-on toys outside in the fresh air. However, the understanding of benefits of fresh air and exercise to their health are not sufficiently reinforced. Consequently, they do not become sufficiently aware of the benefits of fresh air and exercise to their health and well-being.

Children are well nourished and learn about the importance of healthy eating by the variety of the many flavours, tastes and textures they experience during topics on healthy eating. They also enjoy regular planned cookery activities, making biscuits and baking potatoes, for example. During snack time they often enjoy fruit with their choice of milk and water, however, biscuits remain a mainstay for the daily snack time routine. Although, children are encouraged to serve one another at snack time and hand out drinks and biscuits they do not have independent access to a drink throughout the short sessions, nor do they pour drinks for the group at snack time. As a result, staff miss opportunities to encourage children to help themselves to eat healthily and become aware of the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The playgroup operates from the security of the main church building and there is good visibility through the foyer, where staff diligently ensure those members of the church community, who use other rooms, are monitored and never left unattended with children attending playgroup. Families are welcomed to the foyer. They move easily into the main rooms used for childcare, once they have hung up their outdoor clothes, where they settle quickly to well-organised and well laid out interesting activities. Children find, use, and return materials independently, extending their play by bringing materials from one area to another. The layout allows children to see and easily move through all the areas in the room. As a result, children are secure and well supervised in premises which are suitable for the purpose because the committee, manager and staff ensure that the environment gives children good access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promote children's development.

Children's safety is well promoted because the staff and committee take positive steps to promote safety. The committee take a proactive approach to monitoring how staff carry out the policies and procedures which protect children. Children are learning to keep themselves safe. During the season of fireworks, and leading up to and past bonfire night, the children talk about safety. They look at some real fireworks. Staff demonstrate attitudes of great care, as good role models. They teach children about how they must be especially cautious and that only adults can touch them, not lighting them, and not going to them even if they think they

are spent and dead. Children learn to tidy up their own space, and learn to manoeuvre safely around other children, ensuring they don't hurt others or themselves in their daily routines.

Children are well protected from harm because the committee and staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. The committee are clear about their responsibilities and children are encouraged to bond with staff who have worked with the children and families in the local community over many years. This enables them to feel confident enough to share any worries or concerns they may have with the staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. Play evolves naturally as children play happily with resources. For example, some children gather around a modelling table, using play dough or clay. As all the children in the group arrive unexpectedly to join in, space is made to accommodate all the children until some children then move off to complete their focussed art activity. For example, the art activity linked to bonfire night encourages children to paint with the colours associated with fire, such as yellow, brown, orange and red. They identify colours, choose which colour to use and explore the feel of the paint under their hands as staff encourage them to describe how this feels. As a result, children are developing self-esteem and confidence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a good knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. All areas of learning are covered well, as staff use their knowledge of the children's abilities and achievements to inform future activities. All staff are deployed effectively using staff talents to plan an exciting and interesting morning for children. Planning, observation and assessments are used to ensure good outcomes for children. The plans are written with a week of sessions in mind, to allow children who only attend part-time, to access all planned activities for the week. Some children can repeat activities if they have enjoyed them and there is time for children to complete activities, even in the fast pace of a sessional group. The staff have good relationships with children and encourage them to become involved and to persevere with tasks. Methods include open-ended questions, encouraging children to try, sensitive intervention in their play, extending activities, involving all children in activities. Staff listen, interacting appropriately and sensitively, for example, staff tell stories, engaging children spell-bound with a story retold without a book to refer to, engaging the children in telling part of the story themselves, interjecting with additional thoughts on parts of the story the adult may not have thought of. Those children that have identified learning difficulties are well supported by staff who know the children very well. There is sufficient challenge for all children including more and less able.

The timetable becomes almost unnoticeable as the flexibility of what is offered allows children to move at their own pace and yet all aspects of play are squeezed into the short sessions with ease. The session is well paced which ensures that children are fully engaged and do not become disruptive. Effective behaviour management ensures that children are developing an understanding of right and wrong, rules and boundaries and how to be considerate to others. Children have good opportunities to develop their attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their learning. They are motivated to learn through exciting and interesting activities. Children are beginning to develop increasing independence when dealing with their physical needs by being challenged to resolve simple problems independently, such as finding

a chair for themselves. They begin to take the initiative and to be self-sufficient in some aspects of their learning by choosing activities and accessing resources for themselves. Children affirm their own presence as part of the group. However, children do not take personal responsibility for all their own care needs. For example, in some daily routines, such as putting on their own coat and preparing their own snack, obtaining a tissue for themselves or going to the toilet unattended, staff do not ensure children also gain these skills as opportunities arise.

Children are developing their competencies well across the four aspects of communication, speaking, listening, reading and writing. There are lots of opportunities used across the six areas of learning to develop children's appreciation of language. For example, in sparking interest in 'firework night' children are encouraged to link letters and sounds. Rhymes are used effectively in musical sessions with words such as: 'bang', 'crackle', 'fizz' and 'whirr' and in rhymes, such as 'see them crowd across the sky, shooting up like rockets high'. In problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, children begin to see connections and relationships in numbers, shapes and measures. They match and sort, are using mathematical language such as 'more than', 'one more' and 'one less' to help them to solve problems across a wide range of practical activities, such as stories, rhymes, games, puzzles and in their imaginative play. For instance, children count how many children need a cup at snack time, how many cups they have and how many more then need to ensure all children can have a drink. They compare shapes in the room, identifying rectangles on the ceiling and triangles on fireworks.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. They have opportunities to observe, explore, question and be curious in a broad range of activities that form the foundation of later learning in history, geography, science and technology. Children develop imaginative role play in dressing up and in their use of the telephone kiosk, which is a reminder of the historical development of new technology, as there were not always mobile phones to be used wherever you went. Children are able to be creative, expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music, dance and imaginative play. Children experience music in daily singing sessions and in their independent access to musical instruments. Children choose their favourite rhymes and sing along tunefully, and sometimes not so tunefully, but having a really good time. They enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills both when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. Children help to prepare potatoes for baking and use tools in a range of cookery activities. They are developing a positive attitude towards physical exercise and fresh air, with much of the learning environment transferring outdoors during the summer months.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are sufficient, suitable resources and activities to help children learn about a diverse society through their play. Good arrangements are made to ensure all children are included. The setting has facilities for the disabled and plenty of space and wide doors to accommodate adults and children using wheelchairs. The staff differentiate the activities offered to children, using observations of children's ability to provide a suitable curriculum to aid any identified needs to be met. Children are able to feel a good sense of belonging, work harmoniously with others and make choices and decisions. Children's personalities and interests are valued. As a result, they are developing good self-esteem and respect for others.

Children understand responsible behaviour and learn about boundaries because staff create an environment in which children learn to play harmoniously with each other. When looking

around the setting it is often difficult to find the staff and pick them out, as they are involved and engaged in children's play in such a way that it is not noticeable that they are present. There is a quiet hum of business as children smoothly move from one activity to another of their own choosing, with staff anticipating their needs and using every opportunity to develop their play. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children in a setting where staff work closely with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. The parents form a strong committee, taking their own roles and responsibilities seriously, consulting the parent body and taking on board suggestions for improvement wherever possible. Although there have been no complaints made to the setting, the development of a complaints log system is underway to meet changes to regulations. Children take some work home and parents are made aware of the current topics that are being followed within the setting and are encouraged to be a part of what is going on in the setting, either through committee roles, as parent helpers or in requests to take part in activities. Consequently, communication with parents and carers is effective.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The committee have robust systems in place to ensure that all staff and committee are vetted and newly appointed officers are being checked for suitability. Children are protected from harm as the staff are aware of the importance of ensuring that all unvetted visitors are suitable and are not left unattended with children in the setting or whilst on outings. Policies and procedures protect children sufficiently and are effectively implemented to promote good outcomes for children. Records are available and retained for inspection. They are well organised and kept confidential.

The committee have a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. Children benefit from good, effective organisation of the setting. The committee are very proactive in supporting staff and have good systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of procedures which safeguard children. They are keen to encourage staff to undertake further training. Most staff have been on the staff roll for many years. With the appointment of a trained teacher, who attends the setting on a part-time basis, the staff responsible for childcare and education meet the requirement for fifty percent of staff to hold a relevant qualification. Although, full-time staff are very talented and experienced, they have not undertaken up-to-date training in childcare and education for some time. As a result, children do not benefit from improvements recommended in recent training events and do not benefit from shared ideas to develop opportunities to improve childcare and education using the most modern methods.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The qualified teacher oversees, advises and steers the planning, to ensure they more closely link to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. This ensures all aspects are covered. The development of the planned activities has made significant improvement to the way staff work. This is a very warm and caring environment, with close links to the community and church. The management and organisation of the setting is pro-active in ensuring the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Children are well cared for in a setting where the staff are dedicated to the delivery of good quality care and education. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to continue to develop the recording of children's progress and ensure all the required records for each child are in place and ensure staff have a good understanding of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the Foundation Stage and child protection. The provider was also asked to ensure children to have access to positive images of all aspects of equal opportunities and acknowledge and celebrate different festivals. They were also asked to ensure all electrical equipment is safe.

The employment of a qualified teacher to support the staff team has ensured that planning, recording and assessment have been developed and inform future plans to support children's progress well. This has also enhanced the pool of knowledge of the whole team, in particular, to aspects of the Foundation Stage and in developing play opportunities for children who have disabilities and/or difficulties. The plans include commonly recognised festivals of a variety of religious and cultural groups. A number of resources have been obtained to support staff in promoting children's awareness of diversity in the wider community. As a result, the development of the learning opportunities for children have been greatly improved and children benefit from a broader curriculum which supports all children equally. The electrical wiring, which was previously exposed under the stage, has been boxed in. Consequently, children are suitably safeguarded from electrical hazards.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

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 QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- encourage children further, to be confident, independent and develop their self-esteem; this refers to pouring their own drinks, hanging up their own coats, putting on their own aprons, accessing tissue
- encourage children to help themselves further, to stay healthy, be clean, eat healthily and become aware of the benefits of fresh air and exercise to their health and well-being

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 staff practice by accessing relevant training

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