

# St Mary Magdalene Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135391
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Malini Parmar
<b>Setting Address</b>	Windmill Hill, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 7AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8363 3953
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sandra Pearce
<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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Mary Magdalene Playgroup opened in 1993. It operates from the large hall, within the Magdalene Church Hall. The playgroup serves the local area.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 25 children from two years to five years. There are currently 46 children from two and a half to five on roll. This includes 30 children in receipt of the funding for nursery education.

The group opens five days a week during school term times all year round. Sessions run from 09:30 – 15:15, 09:00 – 12:00 or 12:45 – 15:15. Full day care is available everyday apart from Wednesday when the session finishes at 12:00.

There are five staff that work with the children. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health is not adequately promoted as there are insufficient members of staff with current first aid qualifications to ensure children needing emergency attention receive swift and appropriate support. Although verbal consent is sought before medication is administered to children, a record of medicines administered is not kept. This is regulation.

Children are cared for in a clean environment in which sufficient steps are taken to promote their hygiene. Children follow clear hygiene routine as they know they need to wash their hands, before eating and after using the toilet, to "stop the germs". Staff take positive steps to prevent the spread of infections, such as using clean table cloths at meal times.

Children benefit from, and clearly enjoy, the "melting butter" on their warm toast for morning snack. Meals conform to parental wishes and special dietary needs as they are supplied by parents. Staff engage in useful conversations with children at lunch times to support their understanding of balanced meals. As a result, children learn how their "cheesy" sandwich will help them grow strong. Children can access a drink whenever they need to ensure they remain hydrated.

Attention to promoting health through physical exercise is a significant feature of the group. Children are able to expend their energy in the outdoor area, where they learn to gain greater control over their movements as they hop like "kangaroos", run, and skip. They strengthen their coordination as they play group games such as football, and bounce on the castle. They clearly enjoy showing their skills as they hop and jump through the "hop scotch" hoops.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled in a warm and friendly environment. They make independent choices about their play from the sufficient resources available.

Children's safety is promoted by staff who diligently monitor the access to the provision, and maintain a record of visitors. Children are supervised closely by staff, they are familiar with the routine and receive sound support to learn how to keep themselves safe. As a result, they know and understand that they must tell staff before using the toilet. Attention to fire safety is given appropriate priority, equipment is checked annually and emergency evacuation practiced regularly. Although risks are assessed to prevent accidental injury, systems to ensure all risks are reduced are currently developing.

Children's welfare is adequately promoted, core staff are aware of protecting children from harm and there is a procedure in place for staff to follow. However, staff are less secure in their knowledge of what would happen in the event an allegation of abuse is made against them, as this aspect is not fully clear within the policy.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children benefit from the warm interaction and positive relationships they share with staff. Children are mostly well occupied and engage in a variety of activities that are organised for them. They benefit from being able to freely access the toys and are beginning to make some decisions about what they would like to do next. Younger children develop their communication skills as they take part in the interactive story times and group action songs. They clearly enjoy role play in the castle and benefit from staff supporting them to match colours in a game of dominoes.

### **Nursery Education.**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and, in the main, children are successfully engaged in a range of interesting practical activities. They benefit from the consistent support they receive from staff who extend children's learning and thinking by generally asking open ended questions. Core staff have a sound knowledge of how children learn. Staff meet regularly to plan and evaluate a range of practical opportunities around the theme. The process of planning and assessment is developing to ensure observations are consistently used to identify learning priorities and these inform future plans.

Children invite one another to play and build firm friendships. They receive skilful support to learn to share and take turns through group games. They confidently approach staff for support and strengthen their skills of concentration as they persevere to complete puzzles and write letters. Children speak confidently, sharing their thoughts and ideas with adults and friends alike. They enjoy books and listen to stories with interest and care. They learn to recognise their names through the routine and learn the sounds of letters in words through a popular scheme. Their learning is reinforced as they build large "sound" puzzles and delight as they successfully name "s and j". They particularly enjoy mark making, they delight as they make lists in their "diaries" and write letters for their "mummy", which they are keen to post. They receive useful opportunities to practise counting through the routine, and ably count the number of children attending. Children skilfully repeat much of the mathematical language they hear used to successfully describe shape, sizes and quantity. As a result, they know there are more girls than boys and they will have to jump through the "two red circles". They match, sort and sequence as they learn to identify "six blue dots" is more than "five red dots" on their dominoes. Children have daily opportunities to build with a range of construction equipment and thoroughly enjoy making buildings for their "small robots". Children learn about time as they talk about themselves and remember past events in their lives. They ably sequence numbers to represent the time on the clock puzzle and learn to identify the day, date and weather through the routine. Children use a range of materials to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. They strengthen their fine motor movements as they manipulate small objects. Children engage in much creative play, they use the castle to mimic their observations of the world, as they are chased by the dragon. Children learn about sounds as they tap "loudly" then "softy" on the drum.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive useful chances to learn about differences and develop a positive view of the wider world. A range of festivities are celebrated throughout the year and children regularly use a sufficient range of toys and resources which promote positive images. All children are

valued and share their thoughts and feelings openly. Children with English as an additional language receive helpful support from staff. This enables all children to feel valued and consequently children receive greater chances of strengthening their self worth.

Children generally behave well, and respond positively to the staff's expectations of them. They receive sound levels of praise and encouragement which boost their self esteem. Most staff offer sound support to enable children to learn to manage their own behaviour, through the explanations offered. However, children do not always respond positively to some methods as they are not supported by clear explanations from staff.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children's details are documented upon entry and sound arrangements are in place to settle children into the routine. Parents receive clear information about the group's policies and procedures and a prospectus helps them to become familiar with the setting. Pertinent information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis. Thereafter, notices and newsletters help keep parents informed about how their child spent their day. Parents of children receiving funding for nursery education receive adequate information about the six areas of learning and are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning on a weekly basis. However, opportunities to ensure parents can participate fully are not yet fully in place, because the system to share children's individual learning priorities is not yet secure. Parents have access to the regulator's number should they wish to raise a concern. However, the policy is yet to be fully updated to ensure it accurately reflects the changes in regulation.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children benefit from some useful aspects in the organisation of care which helps them to develop an understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Staff work closely to ensure the smooth delivery of the day. However, the setting has failed to comply with the conditions of registration in relation to the number of children they may care for at any one time. As a result, they are in breach of their conditions of registration. Weaknesses in the organisation result in the failure to ensure that there is evidence to show at least half the staff team hold a suitable qualification in childcare.

Children benefit from the developing systems to ensure the required records to meet their needs are fully in place. The setting is currently reviewing the policies and procedures for the safe and efficient management of the group. This is to ensure they have the full complement, such as a procedure to follow in the event a child becomes lost, this is regulation. Also to ensure they contain the required detail. Induction training and regular support meetings are developing to ensure staff are familiar with them. However, in practice, children's welfare is not fully safeguarded because staff are not fully secure in their knowledge of some of the setting's procedures, in particular child protection.

Leadership and Management of the setting in relation to the education of three and four year olds is satisfactory. Children gain from a stable staff team who work well together. Children's experiences are promoted because there is a strong commitment to improvement within the staff team and staff attend regular training. The manager works alongside the team and has some knowledge of the weaknesses within the educational programme, and a plan for improvement has now been identified. The systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of education are being developed and therefore are not yet rigorous.

The provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to address the following recommendations. To ensure good use is made of staff, space and other resources. To ensure staff spend more time playing with children. To organise the toys so that younger children can select them easily and to ensure the environment enables children to enjoy quiet activities. The group also agreed to ensure that drink times provide children with positive experiences.

The group have made sufficient progress in addressing these recommendations, the organisation of space and resources has improved to enable all children to select toys and activities more easily. In addition an area to rest and relax or for quiet activities is also now available and used by children. Staff are generally effectively deployed and spend their time talking and playing with the children to extend their experiences. Meal time routines ensure staff sit with the children to make this time more positive for them.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to address the following key issues for action. To provide chances for children to strengthen their independence and self select equipment. To ensure children experience more activities which allow them to explore and discover how things work. To improve the planning and assessment systems and ensure staff have a more secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and ask more open ended questions.

The group have made sufficient progress in addressing these key issues. Children are offered chances to self select their equipment at every session as part of the routine. They experience more opportunities to engage in activities which enable them to explore and investigate; children particularly enjoy using magnifying glasses. The planning and assessment systems have evolved to support children's learning. However, this continues to be an area for development to ensure a more secure process of identifying children's learning priorities and using these to plan for the future. Staff regularly use open ended questions to raise and extend children's thinking and knowledge and enable them to problem solve.

### **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

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children
- make sure enough staff are trained in first aid to ensure that at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is on the premises or on outings at any one time
- ensure all records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are in place and contain the required detail
- develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare

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

### **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):

- continue to develop the planning and assessment systems to ensure children's next steps in learning are identified and these are used to inform future plans.
- develop a rigorous system to monitor and review the setting's strengths and weaknesses and that of the educational programme.

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