

Poynton Methodist Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 305257 |
| Inspection date | 21 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Zoe Smith |
| Setting Address | Civic Hall, Park Lane, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 1RB |
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| Registered person | Poynton Methodist Church |
| 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 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?

Poynton Methodist Church Playgroup has been registered since 1982. The group is based in Poynton Methodist Church in the Poynton district of Cheshire. It is open from 09.15 to 12.00 every weekday and 12.30 to 15.00 on Wednesdays during school term-times. The group has use of a large playroom, two smaller rooms and an enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is registered to provide sessional day care for a maximum of 30 children aged between two and five years. There are currently 39 children on roll; of these, 25 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is run by a committee. An appropriately qualified person is employed to manage the group on a day to day basis. The manager is assisted by a team of five staff, of whom most hold recognised childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from an Early Years Development Worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children participate in a range of physical play activities inside and outside and are developing good control and coordination over their bodies. They exert lots of energy during music and movement sessions and they have regular opportunities to practise balancing on beams. Outside, children enjoy racing each other as they energetically pedal the tricycles, and they skilfully aim and throw the ball through the basketball net. These activities provide lots of fresh air and exercise and are supportive of a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy a varied and nutritious diet that includes toast or a savoury snack, fresh fruit and raw vegetables. They sit together in small groups to enjoy each other's company and happily eat their toast, apples, bananas and oranges. Fresh drinking water is not readily available for children to help themselves to, in order to quench their thirst and keep them hydrated.

Generally, children's good health is adequately promoted through sensible hygiene practices and routines that help to keep them well. The premises are warm and clean. Children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, supported by staff who make sure they wash and dry them properly. However, procedures to administer medication are not sufficiently robust to eliminate the possibility of error. Medication is seldom administered at the group, however, when it is, prior written parental consent to administer this is not obtained, which is a breach of regulations. Furthermore, parents do not sign the record book to acknowledge the entry. There is always a member of staff on duty who has up to date training in administering first aid and clear records of all accidents at the setting are maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in an environment that is well maintained and is made welcoming and interesting through displays of educational posters and examples of the children's artwork. Some sensible safety precautions are in place to help keep children safe. Covers are fitted to exposed plug sockets, cleaning fluids are stored out of reach and children are not allowed in the kitchen. Staff are well deployed and diligent in their supervision of the children. However, the premises are not secure. Precautions are sufficient to prevent children leaving unattended but access could easily be gained by persons who do not have permission via the wooden fencing on the corridor, or via the doors to the children's rooms that are left open. The group does not have sole use of the premises and the failure to adequately manage access to registered rooms is leaving children and adults vulnerable. Appropriate fire precautions and procedures are in place. Fire fighting equipment is provided and checked at specified intervals, and periodic fire drills are conducted.

Children choose what to play with from a wide range of good quality, age-appropriate toys and equipment. Practice, discussions and activities are helping children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. The community police officer and road safety officer regularly visit to talk to the children about safety. Children practise how to cross the road safely using the play zebra crossing, traffic lights and the cars they made from cardboard boxes. Operational procedures help to keep children safe on outings. They know to hold the walking rope, and staff stand at the front and back of the 'crocodile' and conduct regular headcounts. Children are not adequately safeguarded because staff do not have a clear understanding of child protection procedures, and written procedures are not readily available on the premises for

guidance. Furthermore, procedures are in different formats; one procedure gives incorrect information on the agency to contact if there are concerns about a child's well-being and they do not include procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Play and activities are planned using a thematic approach and a session is appropriately structured to stimulate the children's interest and development. They explore and freely choose from a variety of age-appropriate activities, toys and equipment. Children have opportunities to develop their imaginations through make believe play. They become engrossed when they play with the small world imaginative toys, taking the play figures on outings to the park to play on the swings or ride the bicycle. Construction is popular with the children, they work together to design and build vehicles which they call 'money cars'. Children enjoy messy and creative play activities. They enthusiastically roll out the dough and cut shapes out and happily draw pictures with crayons and chalk on the board. Children enjoy completing large floor jigsaws; with a little help and a lot of encouragement they carefully match and manipulate the pieces into the correct place. Positive adult and child interactions are supportive of early communication skills. Children love listening to stories, joining in action rhymes and singing songs. This is helping them to listen, respond to language and learn new words, colours and numbers.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A variety of activities and play opportunities is provided to cover the six areas of learning to ensure children can make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Children receive lots of attention from staff and skilful questioning techniques support and help them to consolidate their learning. Development records are not up to date and do not provide an accurate record of children's learning and progress. The activity plans do not place sufficient emphasis on planning for the next steps in children's learning and therefore, teaching does not always build on what children already know. Children are busy, interested and enjoy their play and activities. They enjoy the challenge of completing worksheets and are pleased with their achievements. However, the frequent use of worksheets reduces opportunities for children to consolidate their learning through first-hand experiences.

Children have positive relationships with their peers and staff. They take turns, negotiate and cooperate with each other whilst playing with the construction and small world imaginative toys. They have some opportunities to develop self-help skills when they attend to their own personal care and when they put on their coat. However, staff serve and clear away their morning snack, therefore, some opportunities for children to practise and develop their independence and self-help skills are missed.

Children's spoken language is developing well and they are becoming confident speakers. They initiate conversations, join in singing sessions and contribute to group discussions. Children have an understanding that print carries meaning. They find the teddy bear with their name on and hang it up when they arrive in the morning. They enjoy clapping out the syllables of their name and naming lots of different objects that begin with the same letter. In the dough, they cut out letters to spell their name. A love of books is fostered at the group. Children look forward to regular trips to the story session at the library, they listen intently at group story time and often look at books on their own or with one other child in the book corner, snuggling up to listen to stories read to them by a member of staff.

Children show an awareness of and take an interest in number. They fill up either side of the weighing scales with play figures, leaves, stones or pasta, talking about what is the heaviest and counting how many stones they need to take off to make the scales balance. Children can count confidently and solve simple mathematical puzzles; at snack time they spontaneously count how many boys and girls there are at the table. They enjoy completing number and counting jigsaws and matching wooden shapes to make pictures. Children have opportunities to sequence and make patterns with the wooden threading beads.

Children have access to some information and communication technology equipment, such as cameras, calculators and electronic keyboards. They discuss and talk about the consistency and texture of food, describing how the jelly is cold, soft, smells like strawberries and wobbles. Children learn about wildlife and nature on their regular nature walks, they help to make a wormery and discuss how worms are good for the soil and are a favourite food for birds. Children have opportunities to use magnifying glasses and explore how magnets attract metal objects.

Children express themselves by using a variety of media, such as 3D construction, imaginative resources, creative materials and musical instruments. They enjoy playing with a range of messy and creative activities, such as sand, paint, cutting and sticking, dough and crayoning. Children enjoy finding out what happens when they mix different colours of paint.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have access to a range of resources that provides positive images of diversity, such as posters, books, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. Children participate in activities that help them learn about their own customs and religious and cultural beliefs, and those of others. They celebrate all the main Christian festivals, make lamps and Rangoli patterns to find out about Diwali and dragons to celebrate Chinese New Year. These activities are helping children to learn about the wider world and to respect and value difference.

All children are welcomed at the group, where there is a proactive approach to meeting the additional needs of children. Staff calmly and positively promote desirable behaviour and act as good role models. They support and encourage children to play fairly, share and take turns. Children respond to the consistent praise and encouragement they receive and behave well; they work hard to achieve the stickers that are awarded for their efforts and achievements. For example, all the children behaved well on their outing to the library and were rewarded with a sticker. Children are learning to care for their environment and nature. They enjoy going on nature walks and have made bird feeders to put in their gardens to feed the birds during the winter.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents often provide help at the group, they are made to feel welcome and are spoken to in a professional and friendly manner by staff. Parents speak highly about the group, the warm and welcoming environment, the supportive staff and how their children are happy and enjoy attending. Noticeboards, newsletters and daily discussions keep parents up to date about events at the group and their child's day. Mostly appropriate steps are taken to ensure parents are kept informed about relevant policies and procedures. However, the parents' information brochure has not been updated with current information about the complaints, or safeguarding children procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are happy and content in the friendly and organised environment. They quickly settle and become involved in their play and activities. Children receive lots of support, encouragement and attention from the well deployed and caring staff. The group has a very stable staff team which provides continuity of care for the children. Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out on new members of staff. However, recruitment, selection and induction procedures are not sufficiently robust because additional checks, such as references, are not obtained. Attendance on short training courses on specific subjects, such as writing individual action plans and disability discrimination, is helping staff to develop their skills and practice.

The leadership and management are satisfactory, the manager and staff work together and are clear about their specific roles. The manager works at the setting every day and plays an active role in the care and education of the children. Daily discussions provide opportunities for planning and sharing relevant information. Some documents, policies and procedures have been formalised in draft, but they are in several formats and are not readily available to inform and underpin staff practice. The hours of staff's and children's attendance are not recorded. Furthermore, the individual details of all the children and their families are not in place; this is a breach of regulations and impacts negatively on the group's ability to ensure the welfare of individual children.

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 three recommendations were made in respect of documentation, policies and procedures. Limited progress has been made in resolving the identified issues and several documents, policies and procedures still lack the required information; updated policies are in a draft format and are not readily available on the premises. This results in the necessary information not being available for staff to refer to and leaves children vulnerable to potential procedural errors. Therefore actions have been raised on this inspection to ensure National Standards are met.

At the last nursery education inspection three key issues for the development of the nursery curriculum were agreed. These were in respect of the planning of activities, monitoring and assessing children's development, and opportunities for children to develop their imaginative and creative skills when participating in focused creative activities. Progress has been made in ensuring activities develop children's imagination and creative skills. Limited progress has been made in developing the planning of activities and monitoring and assessing children's development. Therefore, the nursery curriculum and the next steps in children's learning are not well planned. Further recommendations have been agreed on this inspection.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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

- ensure parents give prior written permission to administer any medication
- ensure the premises are secure and devise an effective system for managing access to them and ensure that it is used
- develop staff's awareness of their safeguarding children responsibilities and ensure that the child protection procedure complies with that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and is readily available on the premises
- ensure there is a record of the name, home address and date of birth of each child who is looked after on the premises.

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):

- develop assessment, planning and teaching to ensure activities build on what children already know, challenge children and facilitate the next steps in their learning
- review the use of worksheets and extend opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experiences
- extend opportunities for children to practise their self-help skills and develop their independence.

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