

Moss Side Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309394
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Sara Haigh
Setting Address	Moss Side Community Centre, Dunkirk Lane, Leyland, Lancashire, PR26 7SN
Telephone number	01772 456 687
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Registered person	Moss Side Village Playgroup
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 satisfactory. 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?

Moss Side Playgroup has been in operation for 30 years and is managed by a committee. The group operates from the community centre which is located central to Moss Side Village, near Leyland in Lancashire.

The facility operates from the hall, entrance area and an adjoining room and has access to an outdoor play area. The playgroup offers sessional day care Monday to Friday term time only. Nursery education funded children access the sessions on Monday and Wednesday 09.00 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 3.30 and Friday mornings 09.00 to 11.45. Children over the age of two years access the sessions on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 09.00 to 12.00.

The setting is registered to care for 30 children aged two to five years and there are currently 21 on roll, 11 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully supported within the setting. There are three full time members of staff and one part time. The setting receives advice and support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected because staff follow effective hygiene procedures to ensure that areas used by the children are adequately cleaned. Staff follow an effective cleaning rota and routinely remind children to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before snack time. There are clear procedures for dealing with accidents and the setting has a fully stocked first aid box. However, the certificate for the qualified first aider has expired. This is a breach of National Standard 7. A renewal course has been booked to ensure children receive appropriate care and attention in the event of an accident or emergency. Children are well taken care of in the case of illness as the setting follows a clear sick child policy and administration of medication policy.

Children enjoy healthy snacks, which include fresh fruit, vegetables, breadsticks and yoghurts to promote their growth and development. Children's independence is fostered as they are encouraged to pour their own drinks of milk or water and to satisfy their appetites by asking for more. There is a jug of fresh water available to the children to keep them hydrated and refreshed throughout the sessions. However, there are not sufficient cups provided for more than a couple children to access. Staff consult parents about children's dietary requirements and ensure they are all aware of these, so children remain healthy.

Children enjoy a range of activities which contribute to their good health. They play outside daily and use a range of equipment with increasing skill and control. For example, they bounce on the mini trampoline, roll hoops and pedal tricycles. Children develop their confidence and coordination as they use the large apparatus in the adjacent park's play area, closely watched by staff to ensure their safety.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, child friendly environment, which gives them a sense of belonging. They are warmly greeted by staff and their work is attractively displayed around the setting. Staff make the most of the provision by organising space and resources effectively to allow children to make choices and play in safety and comfort.

Children move freely around the provision, and are well supervised by staff who make sure children are always within their sight. Children are developing confidence in trying new challenges, such as learning to use scissors correctly, because staff support them by staying close and teaching them to use equipment safely. Children select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment.

Staff have a sound awareness of safety. Risk assessments are carried out to identify potential hazards. However, electrical equipment has not had regular maintenance checks. Children are kept safe due to effective security measures, the entry system is secure and visitors are recorded. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe, for example, when staff remind them to walk in the setting especially when the 'wet floor' sign is out, and when discussing fireworks and bonfire night.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put the policy into practice. All the required documentation is in place ensuring children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending the playgroup and they enthusiastically take part in what is planned for them. There are warm and affectionate relationships between the staff and children, as a result the children are happy and settling well. Children benefit from the key worker system, which enables them to receive consistent care from adults who know them well. This helps children to feel safe and secure and build relationships with other children in the group. Staff support children throughout the session, working alongside them and engaging with the children in a variety of activities and experiences. The setting benefits from regular visitors, such as the local community police officer, dentist, fire brigade and lollipop person, and the children enjoy attending monthly trips to the local church.

Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong and the staff set good examples to the children, such as reminding them about sharing and good manners. Children are forming relationships with each other. For example, they hold hands at circle time and give their friends a hug goodbye.

Staff plan an interesting range of activities based on half-termly topics. They are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, planning documents do not demonstrate how it is incorporated alongside the Foundation Stage when planning activities. Each staff member plans an adult directed activity for each week and is responsible for planning activities and resources for one of the three rooms on a rota basis. Staff use a variety of teaching methods including small groups and individual one to one support. Children confidently make choices about their play, selecting activities and resources from the broad range available. Resources are stored at children's height, which helps them move towards independence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of individual children and have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. Staff provide a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning ensuring children make good progress through the stepping stones. Children are motivated to learn through well-planned experiences and activities, which capture their enthusiasm and sustain their interest. Staff make activities fun and interesting, their enthusiasm and involvement engages children quickly. Staff have a clear and effective assessment procedure that includes spontaneous observations of the children and observations of them taking part in structured adult led activities. The observations are used to track children's progress and achievements and form their individual folders. However, the systems are not fully developed to show recorded links between children's assessments and plans. As a result, children's next steps are not clearly cross referenced to written short term plans and to ensure all staff know what individual children are expected to learn. Summative records of achievement are provided by the local school which ensures children's needs and abilities are instantly recognised when they transfer to school.

Staff use their knowledge to interact with the children skilfully, questioning them effectively to present them with appropriate challenges. Staff place strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children settle well and develop relationships

with staff and are developing relationships with each other. Children are becoming familiar with the daily routine, they are beginning to anticipate what happens next, such as tidy up time, circle time and outdoor play time.

Children's language skills are developing as they gain confidence to communicate in various situations, such as answering to their name at register time. They enjoy listening to stories and re-telling familiar books as they are provided with excellent activities to bring books alive. For example, children take play people through trays of long, wavy grass, stumble and trip through a shredded paper forest, and squelch through mud before going into a bear cave den to shine two torches for bear eyes.

Children are starting to recognise their names as they have various opportunities to do so, for example, when they self-register on arrival, put their name cards on display for particular jobs during the session and find their names on the behaviour star chart. They have free access to a well stocked writing area and are learning that marks have meaning as paper, pencils and clipboards are incorporated into many other activities around the setting. The environment is rich with both typed and hand written labels and captions. Children are learning to identify familiar initial sounds and staff use sound discrimination games with musical instruments to develop children's auditory skills. Children learn about numbers and develop counting skills as they count how many children are present. Staff encourage children to solve number problems, asking them how many people are present if the adults are counted too. Children learn about simple shapes as they copy patterns with beads and ink stamps. Staff gently guide children as they ask 'what shape comes next?' and reinforce the shape names.

Children develop their exploration and investigation skills as they find bear figures hidden in blocks of ice, sieve and scoop flour into paper cases and care for goldfish and stick insects. They design and make fireworks and blow paint through straws to create fireworks in the sky pictures. Children's individual creativity is valued as they explore clay and make their own sculptures, adding pipe cleaners, ribbon and straws. Children express their imagination well as they act out real experiences in the well equipped role play areas. They are able to perform simple technological functions, such as programmable toys, taking photographs with the digital camera and using old mobile phones. Children have some opportunities to develop their computer skills but they are unable to access it independently. Children enjoy opportunities to engage in planned and free choice outdoor activities. The covered entrance area enables children to experience inside activities outside, such as jigsaws and musical instruments. Children freely fetch umbrellas when it starts to rain, they make patterns on the floor as they squirt water and shake flour. Staff encourage children to explore the outside area, making crayon rubbings of different surfaces and textures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and develop a positive self-image as staff treat them with care and respect. Parents and children develop a strong sense of belonging and feel at ease in the setting, as they are welcomed by friendly, familiar staff and their art work is attractively displayed. Staff value children, they give them praise and encouragement, respect them as individuals and enjoy each other's company. Children are aware of the daily routine and have opportunities to take responsibilities within this, such as cutting up the fruit at snack time and accompanying a staff member to buy the milk from the neighbouring shop. The planning, resources and activities promote children's awareness of other cultures and the world around them. Children write letters to a friend living in France. They learn about other religious festivals and celebrations

throughout the year, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Staff promote equality of opportunity as they ensure all children are able to access and engage in the range of activities on offer and use language that does not conform to stereotypes. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff work with parents and other professionals to ensure children's needs are identified early and consequently met so that they are fully included in the life of the setting. The setting makes good links with the local school to ensure children experience a smooth transition. Children behave very well. They enjoy collecting star stickers on a chart for positive behaviour. Staff provide clear and consistent boundaries to help children know what is expected of them and use distraction, praise and encouragement appropriately to promote good behaviour.

The partnership with parents and carers in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Parents share information regarding their child while settling and on a day to day basis. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress and achievements through daily verbal feedback and a meeting before they transfer to school. The setting makes links with home through regular newsletters and caring for the playgroup toy bear at weekends. Children are encouraged to bring items from home to support topic work. Parents speak highly of the provision. They are pleased that their children are excited to attend and they value the approachable staff who provide a wide range of activities for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an experienced and consistent staff team who have worked together for some time. Children and families benefit from this continuity. The staff team work hard, communicate well with each other and have a high regard for children's well-being. The whole staff team share a clear sense of purpose and vision for the future. Staff are well organised and are given designated responsibility for tasks within the setting. Therefore, children have ample opportunity to explore the resources available to them and are able to practise and consolidate their skills. Children benefit from high levels of staff interaction during child initiated and adult led activities and ratios of adults to children are always well met. Space and resources are well organised allowing children choice and independence.

Documentation is well organised and the majority of policies and procedures form a satisfactory operational plan to support staff and promote positive outcomes for children. However, the organisation of the accident record contradicts the setting's confidentiality policy. The registration system does not show the hours of attendance for both children and staff. This is a breach of regulations and National Standard 2.

The quality of leadership and management of the playgroup is satisfactory and contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are aware of their roles and attend training to further develop their childcare practice, knowledge and skills. Staff work as a team to monitor the nursery provision on an ongoing basis and they have a sound understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage'. The setting has regular visits from the local authority teacher. Areas for improvement have been identified and all staff are committed to the improvement of care and education for all 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 group agreed to ensure the information booklet is updated with regards to the registering authority and to ensure the written record of medicines is signed by parents. Both of these recommendations have been addressed, documentation is up to date and records are completed correctly contributing to the efficient and safe management of the provision. A recommendation was also raised to ensure that electrical checks are in place for portable equipment. Some electrical equipment has since been replaced since the last inspection but the provider could not demonstrate the safety of appliances as electrical checks have not been completed. With regards to nursery education, the group were asked to consider improving the further development of the partnership with parents to enable them to be more closely involved in providing their children's pre-school education. All staff have been on relevant training and parents receive termly newsletters giving them information on supporting topic work. Children are given opportunities to take home a bear for the weekend and parents can record events and activities in a shared diary. Staff share information regarding children's achievements and progress through daily informal conversations and an end of year meeting before children transfer to school. These improvements benefit children through a trusting and mutually supportive partnership where there is a satisfactory two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

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

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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 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):

- ensure there is at least one member of staff with a current first aid training certificate on the premises or on outings at any one time
- ensure all children can access fresh drinking water at all times
- ensure electrical appliances conform to safety requirements
- incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework into planning documents

- ensure the organisation of the accident record maintains confidentiality for children and parents and the registration system shows the hours of attendance for both children and staff.

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 observations, planning and assessments to ensure clear links are made and that children's next steps are identified and inform the planning (also applies to care)
- develop opportunities for children to independently access information and communication technology.

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