

# Holcombe Brook Methodist Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	316833
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	(Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder
<b>Setting Address</b>	Holcombe Brook Methodist Church, Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire, BL0 9QZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	07940 157 452 and 01204 883 539 (home)
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<b>Registered person</b>	Holcombe Brook Methodist Pre-School 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?

Holcombe Brook Methodist Pre-School Playgroup has been established for over 25 years and has been registered since 1992. It is managed by a voluntary management committee and operates from two basement rooms within Holcombe Brook Methodist Church which is located in Ramsbottom, a suburb of Bury. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 and on Mondays and Wednesdays there is a lunch club for over threes from 12.00 to 13.00, term time only. A maximum of 42 children may attend at any one time and currently there are 32 children on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community. The playgroup supports children with additional needs.

The playgroup employs six members of staff. Of these, three have relevant early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff promote appropriate hygiene practices. They follow health and hygiene guidelines. For example, there are cleaning routines in place for the toys and equipment and tables are wiped down after use with antibacterial spray. This contributes to children's health and safety and minimises the risk of cross-infection. Children understand the importance of good hygiene and personal care, such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating, as this forms an integral part of the daily routines. The arrangements to care for children in the case of accidents and to promote their welfare are sound, as three members of staff have completed first aid training and all the required documentation regarding children's individual needs are in place.

Children keep healthy through regular outdoor play, which provides them with opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They look forward to playing outdoors where they engage in a suitable range of physical activity. They enjoy pedalling bikes and throwing balls and hoops. Younger children enjoy learning to manoeuvre equipment with their feet or by pushing and pulling. Children benefit from indoor physical activities, for example, a range of action songs, such as 'were going on a bear hunt', which help children develop control of their bodies.

Children's health is fostered through the provision of a healthy and nutritious snack each day. They happily eat crackers, raisins and raw vegetable sticks and fresh fruit is available daily. Children are unable to access drinks independently throughout the session as they are only served at snack time. This prevents them from learning to recognise when they are thirsty. Snack times are a social occasion where staff and children sit together in their key worker groups and discuss the benefits of healthy eating or talk about their home and special events. For example, children talk about what they eat and drink at home and they describe how hot chocolate is made by mixing milk and powder and warming in a microwave.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are familiar with where they can play freely and where they must go with direct staff supervision. For example, they line up and wait at the gate to be escorted to the small room for snack time or small group work. Individual coat pegs for hanging personal belongings and the displays of sufficient children's art work ensures a homely and welcoming atmosphere is created. Children are provided with good quality toys and resources and they access the daily activities which are set up by staff before the start of the session.

Appropriate steps are taken by staff to minimise risks within the setting. Effective staff deployment ensures children are kept safe, particularly as they move from the playroom to the small playroom. Procedures are in place for emergency evacuation and fire drills are held at sufficient intervals. This ensures emergency procedures are known and understood by adults and children. Parents provide a security password, ensuring that children do not leave with unauthorised adults. The first floor main entrance is locked during opening hours to prevent unauthorised access. However, on days when other user groups are in the building, children's safety is compromised as the entrance door is left unsecured.

Children are protected well as the manager has a good awareness of child protection issues and procedures in order to safeguard the welfare of children. She ensures the staff team are kept informed about safeguarding issues by cascading information at the regular monthly staff meetings. The management committee is responsible for ensuring that all adults working in the setting have undergone the vetting procedure.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop warm relationships with staff early on as a result of the well organised settling in period. This time ensures children settle well and consequently they enjoy their time at the setting. The key worker meets children's individual needs appropriately as detailed personal information, such as preferences and achievements are gathered using the 'getting to know you' tool. Staff are friendly and caring, they welcome children individually into the setting and children separate from their carers with confidence and ease. Staff are well deployed within the playroom and work at the children's level at all times, either by sitting with them at the tables or on the floor. They spend time playing with the children, talking to them and asking questions.

Children are engaged in a broad range of appropriate play activities. They make independent choices from the continuous play provision that the staff set out each morning. However, their ability to enhance and extend their chosen activity is restricted, as they do not show interest or explore the additional resources provided in mobile units and staff do not offer encouragement. Children frequently seek out their special friends and approach activities with interest, they talk about what they are doing, such as painting rainbows and making pizza with tomatoes on the top. They use their imagination as they play in the home bay or the doctors role play area. Staff give consideration to the 'Birth to three matters' framework for younger children, to support their play experiences and learning. However, they are not yet familiar with all the aspects of the framework and observation of children's progress is not yet consistently recorded.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are good systems in place to find out what children can do on entry to the setting and planning systems are steadily developing. Monitoring children's development through written observations is in the early stages of development. They are not currently used to inform children's assessment in line with the stepping stones. As a result, there are missed opportunities to plan the next steps for individual children's learning and development. Areas of continuous provision are suitably resourced and children find them inviting and appealing. As a result, they engage well and make steady progress. A variety of teaching styles are used and children have opportunities to work on a one to one basis with a member of staff or in small and large groups. Staff show children great kindness and respect and through their positive role modelling, children are well mannered, polite and motivated to learn.

Children are developing a positive approach to learning and they are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. They confidently enter the setting and hang their coats up on their individual pegs. They leave their carer well and quickly settle in the playgroup environment. Children make close friendships and often choose activities where they can play with their friends. They can access a suitable range of toys and resources and concentrate for long periods of time on one task. Children develop an enjoyment of books as they frequently

look at books independently or listen to stories read by the adults. They learn that print has meaning as they take their name card and post it in the key workers coloured box. Older children are beginning to use emergent writing and they link sounds to letters. They write the first initial of their name and more capable children can write their name in full. Children have opportunities to mark make within the role play areas as well as the designated writing area. Children occasionally count as they play and are beginning to recognise some numbers, for example, they recognise numbers as they fit the crocodile jigsaw together. They compare sizes as they look at the small, medium and large bears and the size of their hand compared to an adults.

Children have occasional opportunities to share in activities within the life of a local school, for example, when they visit for a concert or nativity, or when the reception teacher visits the playgroup. They benefit from festival work, which introduces them to the wider world and issues of diversity. Children have sufficient access to a range of creative resources to allow them to explore and develop their own creative ideas. They enjoy using their natural creativity and proudly show off pictures of their rainbows. They make pizza from the play dough and roll small balls to make tomatoes for the topping. Children develop fine motor skills and coordination as they use a range of tools, such as pencils, scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes. They have daily opportunities to develop large motor skills as they ride and manoeuvre bikes and scooters during outdoor play.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are appropriately known. Staff gather important information about what children can and cannot do, and their preferences, from the 'Getting To Know You' booklet, which parents complete as the child starts in the group. Children have some opportunities to develop their sense of community as they link into some of the local school's activities, such as invitations to concerts. They also have some experiences to learn about customs and lifestyles as they engage in familiar celebrations, such as Christmas, Easter and Mother's day, and less familiar festivals, such as Chinese new Year and Diwali. Staff help to raise children's awareness about similarities and differences in others as they look into mirrors and talk about their hair, eye and skin colour. Staff are experienced in supporting children with learning difficulties and work towards creating an inclusive environment. They have recently introduced basic sign language and all children are becoming confident in using signs for hello, water and milk.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is appropriately fostered within the setting. Children show care and concern for one another due to the strong friendships they forge. For example, one child passes another a fresh piece of paper as they say they cannot reach. Children work cooperatively and without conflict whilst completing a large jigsaw puzzle together. Children are appropriately praised and encouraged by staff and stickers are frequently used to promote positive behaviour. This values their achievements and ensures children feel good about themselves.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents find staff friendly, approachable and supportive. They feel the key worker keeps them well informed about their children's progress through informal conversations and a portfolio of photographs and examples of their art work. A written 'inclusive assessment tool' is completed for children prior to them leaving for school, which records progress through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage curriculum as children start in the group and again prior to them reaching three-years-of-age.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Significant changes within the staff team, including the appointment of a new manager have had a positive effect on the operational plan. The required number of qualified staff and staff with first aid certificates is maintained and staff are encouraged to access additional training. Regular monthly staff meetings take place and training issues are frequently on the agenda. The manager has introduced appropriate systems for supporting staff, such as induction programmes for new carers and regular one to one sessions for all members of staff. Key workers have been identified and as a result children's individual needs are appropriately met. The implementation of key workers also ensures that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.

The environment is planned to provide children with continuous play provision and promotes children's play and learning. Members of staff arrive daily before the children and spend time preparing the play areas to ensure that they are ready for children as they arrive. Staff are deployed within the setting to offer children appropriate adult support. Children benefit from a caring and committed staff team who strive to provide children with appropriate care and attention.

Records detail the individual requirements of each child and include relevant consents and contacts. However, children's times of attendance are not recorded and the existing style of recording accidents does not maintain confidentiality. All the legally required documentation and policies and procedures are in place which promote the safety and well-being of the children present. These are currently under review to ensure that they are appropriate to the changing needs of the setting and that the quality of care is developed.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Children benefit from a staff team who work appropriately together and who demonstrate a commitment to develop and improve the nursery education. Staff have worked hard in introducing observations and planning systems and are aware of the gaps in identifying the next steps in children's learning and making links within the planning framework. They demonstrate a commitment to developing these further over time to ensure that they support children in making sound progress.

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 setting was asked to develop an action plan to identify how staffing qualifications would be met, in both childcare and first aid certificates and several recommendations were made relating to documentation. Qualification requirements are now met and relevant changes have been made to the documentation. This action has improved the quality of children's care.

## **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 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):

- make sure drinking water is made available and easily accessible by the children
- take reasonable steps to make sure the premises are secure on the days other groups use the building
- improve outcomes for children by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- make sure that recording systems maintain confidentiality and add the times of children's arrival and departure to the attendance record.

#### 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 plans link consistently to the stepping stones and make effective use of assessments to plan for the next steps in children's learning
- further develop the continuous play provision so that children readily access the enhanced resources in order to initiate their own ideas and extend their play (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)