

# Horfield Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106984
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Valerie Anne Curotto
<b>Setting Address</b>	Churchways Avenue, Horfield, Bristol, Avon, BS7 8SN
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<b>Registered person</b>	Horfield 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?

Horfield Methodist Playgroup was established in 1967 and is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It operates from a church hall in the Horfield area of Bristol. Children aged from two and a half to five years attend, from the local area. The playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee which includes parent and church representatives. Children have use of the main church hall and a side room for quiet activities. A kitchen and an enclosed outside play area are also available. The playgroup operates during term time only and is open each week day morning from 09.00 to 11.30 hours. There are currently 28 children on roll, of whom 11 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Three members of staff work with the children, two of whom are appropriately qualified. Additional support is provided by parents and carers on a rota basis. Staff are experienced in supporting children with additional needs and who speak English as an additional language. The group is registered to care for up to 24 children each session.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop an understanding of hygiene through everyday routines. They independently wash and dry their hands after craft activities and take turns to do so before snack time. However, current arrangements, using communal bowls, do not fully promote their health. Children have sufficient opportunities to develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work during the year. For example, they become familiar with fruit and vegetables during tasting sessions where they sample 'green foods'. Snack time is a sociable event when children gather to sing songs and exchange news as they have a drink and a biscuit. While the range of snacks is not extensive, children's individual dietary needs are met. Children have daily opportunities to develop physical skills and move around in their surroundings. They confidently use a climbing frame and small trampoline under supervision during free play. They enjoy parachute games and music and movement using streamers they have made, during more structured activities. The small outdoor area is used extensively during the summer months when a canopy is erected to provide shade, to promote children's health.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are supervised effectively within the building when using shared facilities, such as toilets. The main hall is secured during sessions to further safeguard children. A range of appropriate health and safety policies are now in place to support children's welfare, although these are not always consistent in their application, for example, the frequency of fire drills to ensure all children are familiar with evacuation procedures. A risk assessment is in place and reviewed annually to promote children's safety. In addition, staff are proactive in raising issues with the management committee to minimise risks to children. While staff have not routinely updated their child protection knowledge, they are familiar with the local authority's procedures and are confident regarding the signs and symptoms of child abuse. All staff have a first aid qualification and an understanding of action to be taken in an emergency which further safeguards children.

Children have access to a wide range of resources which are attractively laid out in the hall each day by staff. These are well organised to enable children to safely move around a range of table top and floor activities. Space is made available for physical play each session and children are able to relax in a comfortable book area. Children learn boundaries for safe play, such as only using the climbing frame when supervised, as staff reinforce expectations appropriately. While independent access to resources is limited, children have sufficient choice and staff readily bring out additional items in response to children's needs.

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

The provision is good.

Planning provides children with a variety of interesting activities throughout the year. A series of weekly topics and varied resources are thoughtfully linked to engage children in fun activities. All children readily engage with a space theme as a variety of resources are available to them during free play. They dress up in space suits, decorate a rocket, use play figures on a space station and look at related books. Resources stimulate children's imaginations and provide new experiences. For example, they investigate darkness and light using torches in a dark 'universe'

of planets and spaceships. A flexible approach to the main activity session allows support for child initiated activities. For example, children approach staff confidently for other items and for support in new and challenging activities. As a result, children have time to develop their own ideas and grow in confidence.

Children are familiar with the daily routine which includes an appropriate balance of free and structured activities. Opportunities for physical play are balanced well with quiet, group time for stories and songs. Children develop good self confidence in group activities as they take turns to choose songs or hand out snacks. Children's preferences are acknowledged within the daily routine. For example, a staff member is available to engage with children who prefer to sit and talk or enjoy a story, rather than join in with sit and rides toys. Children are informally supported throughout the main session as adults are involved in their imaginary play and engage in conversation.

Children are encouraged to participate in an adult led activity which provides more focussed learning intentions. For example, children use a variety of craft materials to produce a range of themed art work. They design their own planets sticking ribbons, buttons and tinsel to a base. They develop language and communication skills as they are asked what materials they want to use and how much they need. Children involve adults in their imaginary play as they manipulate dough to make birthday cakes. They add candles which they count spontaneously and with staff support. All children are observed and their progress recorded, although there is currently no suitable assessment framework to track the development of children under three. However, staff ensure that the range of equipment is suitable for children of all ages and enables them to engage with activities.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. An adult led activity provides the focus for the week and this is supplemented by a range of other equipment supporting the weekly topic. Resources are linked well to provide meaning for children and engage them in activities. For example, children learn about their local community on a visit to the local hairdresser's. They create their own salon in the home corner and write appointments in the diary. General learning intentions are planned for the range of additional equipment. These ensure support for children's learning across all six areas of the Foundation Stage. However, these are not yet systematically linked to all aspects of learning, to fully support and extend children.

The setting has recently introduced a new assessment system to track children's progress. While this is not yet fully developed to inform planning, staff informally and spontaneously support children's activities to provide sufficient challenge. Children benefit from a balance of free and structured group activities. Support for children during the main, free play session is less effective as learning intentions are not as consistently reinforced by all adults. However, group time is used well to reinforce number and letter recognition and to promote social skills. As numbers increase across the year small, more focussed groups provide older children with opportunities for extending their learning.

## Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Settling in procedures are flexible and responsive to children's needs. As a result, children appear secure and settle well on arrival. New children are given space to become familiar with their new surroundings and offered sensitive support when necessary. Children's self esteem

and sense of belonging are fostered well by a number of photographs around the setting and attractive displays of their work. Children develop responsibility as part of the daily routine. They stack their cups at snack time and readily help tidy up at the end of the main session. Children are involved in creating 'golden rules' which are reinforced in meaningful ways at circle time throughout the year. For example, children use puppets and books as well as discussion to learn boundaries for their behaviour. Children generally behave well as staff gently, but firmly reinforce expectations. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's understanding of diversity develops as they access multi-cultural toys and puzzles during free play. Topic work provides fun opportunities to taste Chinese food and experience henna hand painting. Children learn to care for animals and understand the natural environment during bug hunts and visits by a variety of interesting pets, including corn snakes, land snails and tortoises. Children with additional needs are supported appropriately as all staff access relevant training and liaise appropriately with parents and other agencies.

Partnership with parents is good. Positive, informal relationships develop through an open door policy which ensures information is regularly exchanged and benefits children. Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to be directly involved in their children's learning. They form part of the duty rota and at other times share their skills and interests with children, as part of themed activities. A book-sharing scheme encourages children to take books home to read with their parents. An informative prospectus is given to all new parents and additional information about events, topics and assessment records is regularly provided through a series of letters. The setting continues to develop information to support parents' understanding of the Foundation Stage, such as noticeboard displays.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the clear, daily routine which provides a structured and familiar environment. Children receive continuity of care from the committed, experienced staff team who are aware of their needs. Parents on rota are used effectively to share practical tasks when setting up and clearing away equipment each day. They are provided with general guidelines to support children's play, although these are not yet fully developed. Documentation is generally well organised, including children's individual records. However, some aspects lack sufficient detail, such as times of children's arrival outside the standard session times. An appropriate range of written policies and procedures are in place to support children's care. For example, while medication is not generally required during the short session, clear procedures are in place should it be required and accident records are maintained appropriately. These continue to be reviewed to reflect practice within the setting.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The long standing staff team are committed to the development of the provision. They work well as a team, although lack confidence at times to initiate change. However, appropriate use is made of the local authority's quality assurance scheme to identify areas of development. These include identification of specific training needs and implementation of an appraisal system. The setting also liaises regularly with an advisory teacher to evaluate the assessment and planning systems for the Foundation Stage. Recent changes to the management committee are being finalised and the setting is aware of the need to submit appropriate paperwork and notify any changes to the regulator, as soon as possible. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The setting continues to make good progress towards two actions raised at the last inspection of children's care. Parents are now more informed about any written records held about their children, including new developments, such as the 'learning diaries'. The setting has adopted a series of written policies and procedures by the Pre-school Learning Alliance to support its practice and ensure all documentation required under the National Standards is in place. Staff and the management committee continue to familiarise themselves with these and review as necessary. Two recommendations made have also been addressed appropriately to improve outcomes for children. Children now have sufficient access to resources which develop their understanding of everyday technology, including a computer, digital cameras and a tape recorder. Guidelines issued to parents on rota and staff training have improved consistency of behaviour management within the setting.

Progress has been made towards the four key issues raised at the last inspection of children's education. Planning has been developed and now ensures a balanced curriculum across all six areas of the Foundation Stage. Appropriate learning outcomes for equipment put out each day are in place, although adult interaction is not always consistent to fully support children's learning. The setting continues to develop visual prompts for key areas, to promote more consistent interaction.

Children's mathematical development is fostered appropriately with sufficient opportunities as part of the daily routine to reinforce mathematical language. Children use varied resources to sort, compare and count, particularly during structured activities. The setting continues to look for ways to develop children's independence skills within the daily routine.

## **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**

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 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):

- continue to review the effectiveness of policies and procedures to further promote children's welfare.

- ensure planning and assessment records for children under three are appropriate to their developmental needs.

### **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):

- consolidate planning and the use of children's assessments to further support all aspects of children's learning.
- continue to develop arrangements to promote children's learning by all adults involved in their care.

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