

A.B.C. Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	137749
Inspection date	14 November 2007
Inspector	Jennifer Devine
Setting Address	Alperton Baptist Church, Ealing Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA0 4BY
Telephone number	020 8795 1562
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Registered person	Ruth Elizabeth John
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 good. 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?

A.B.C. Playgroup opened in 1969 and is owned by a private provider. It operates from two rooms at Alperton Baptist Church in Alperton, in the London borough of Brent. A maximum of 45 children may attend at any one time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is open each weekday, term time only from 09.30 to 12:00 and an afternoon session is offered from 12:30 to 15:00 on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

There are currently 63 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs 12 staff, 11 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well being is well promoted within the setting. Children are cared for a warm, clean environment as staff are aware of good hygiene practices. Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and independently take themselves to the bathroom to wash their hands at appropriate times. The setting has procedures in place to reduce the risk of cross infection, for example, children do not attend if they are unwell. Accurate recording procedures are in place if children have an accident and medication procedures are in place should a child require medication. Most staff are first aid trained and this enables them to confidently deal with a medical emergency. However, not all parents have given their written consent for emergency medical treatment and this compromises children's welfare in an emergency situation.

The playgroup's ethos on healthy eating is exceptional. Children are provided with a wide variety of fruits and vegetables every day, such as pomegranates, mangos, beetroot and sweet corn. A group of children help each day to prepare the snack and are fully involved in peeling, cutting, grating and in using a can opener. Staff sit with the children talking to them about the different produce and assist them as required. Once the snack is prepared children help themselves at the snack bar and sit down for a relaxed and social able time. Drinks of water, milk or juice are provided and children help with pouring their own drinks. One member of staff has particular responsibility for healthy eating and the purchasing of the produce. Two children at a time accompany her to the local shops to choose the fruit and vegetables on a regular basis. During the summer months the children also eat their own home grown produce from their vegetable patch in the garden.

Children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise which contributes to their good health. They thoroughly enjoy playing in the well organised garden which enables them to extend their physical skills. They confidently run around gaining an awareness of space around them. They enjoy balancing, walking carefully along the beams and jumping off at the end. They enjoy using tricycles and cars where they steer and navigate around objects. Other outdoor activities include using the chalk board, weaving, rolling balls down the guttering pipe and digging with spades or digger trucks in the mud.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment that is comfortably furnished and equipped, enabling the children to make good use of space that is child focussed. The two play rooms are set out with an extensive range of activities which enables children to independently select their chosen play. Staff plan the room layout to ensure children can move around safely and freely. For example, the home corner has a large designated space which allows a number of children to comfortably play together, where they pretend to either cook in the kitchen or relax in the lounge.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised within the setting because it has good safety and security precautions in place. Daily risk assessments are conducted before children arrive in the morning to ensure the premises remain safe. Children are well supervised due to the good ratios and deployment of staff. The front door is kept locked during sessions and parents

or visitors ring the doorbell to gain access. A member of staff supervises the main entrance when children arrive and go home to ensure no children leave unaccompanied. Fire drills are conducted regularly and this ensures children gain an understanding of evacuating the building safely.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection and understand the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Staff attend child protection training on a regular basis to ensure they are kept updated with current legislation and this develops their confidence to handle any situations appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at playgroup, where they are making good progress in their development. Children are happy and settle well into the routine. They quickly find their name cards and confidently say good bye to their parent or carer. Children are highly motivated and eager to take part in activities. Staff know children well and have built up good relationships with them and their families. Children often seek out staff to share experiences with or gain support with an activity. Staff ensure children's emotional well being is met by placing a strong emphasis on supporting and encouraging shy children or children who speak additional languages. For example, new children settle at their own pace and are not expected to join in with activities and can observe their new surroundings. Children feel secure and grow in confidence because of the continual interest and warmth shown by staff. Staff have a good understanding of providing an environment which encourages all areas of children's development; they experience and actively engage in fun, well resourced activities throughout the session. A strong emphasis is placed on children's free play which is extended to the outdoors. Although children participate in story or song times this tends to be at the end of session and is rushed and not well planned. As a result children do not experience the full benefits of group times.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and develop. They plan an interesting curriculum which motivates and excites children to learn. Staff work directly with groups of children, encouraging and developing their thinking. Staff observe children's development and record progress on post it notes which are transferred to their individual files. However, they do not record children's next steps for learning and this impacts on children's individual development not being fully met at all times. Staff are developing their understanding of effective reporting methods to summarise children's development.

Children's attitudes to learning is very positive. They are motivated and eager to participate in all activities and spend long periods of time at their chosen task. Children have developed good relationships with each other and familiar adults. Older children are very caring and assist younger children with tasks where needed. Most children speak confidently with adults and each other. Children enjoy the book corner and sit together sharing books. Staff are close by to read to individuals or groups of children. Some children can recognise and write their own names, however, although there is a dedicated writing area for children to begin to mark make, the resources for this area are uninspiring. For example, pencils are not sharpened and crayons are old. This impacts on children not choosing this play often. Children learn letter sounds in fun activities, such as when fishing for letters in the water play. Children develop their number

and problem solving skills in various activities. They confidently count to 10 and are beginning to understand about adding one more when making patterns with peg boards. They learn about shape and size as they fit puzzles of varying grades together.

Children have excellent opportunities to explore and investigate their environment. Children are fully involved in taking care of their vegetable garden and help plant a wide range of seeds. They learn fully about tending for their crops and help to harvest them when ready. All the crops grown are used in the playgroup and many pumpkins that were grown were taken home by the children. Children have extensive opportunities to explore using magnifiers and closely examine insects using the light box. They can also use the digital camera to record and remember their experiences. Children use the computer confidently, being able to follow simple programs. Children's creative development is exceptionally well planned for in the curriculum. Children freely access the well resourced creative area where they can stick and cut using various materials. Children use their imaginative thinking well and persist with their creations. Children help to make play dough, measuring out how many cups of flour and water they need. They enjoy mixing up paints for the easel. Staff provide focussed activities, such as making soapy lather in the builder's tray. Children experience the effects of mixing water and soap together and delight in watching the lather build up. This activity is then extended to encourage children to write letters or draw pictures in the lather helping to develop their fine motor skills for writing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an emotionally warm, child friendly environment where staff are fully informed of children's individual needs. Children's confidence develops through having the opportunities to make choices and through the respect and care shown to them by staff who treat them fairly and with equal concern. The staff team represents the cultural diversity of the local community and this fully supports children and their families who speak English as an additional language.

The staff give the children clear, consistent boundaries, they praise them and celebrate their achievements, which helps build up self esteem. Children's behaviour is good and appropriate for their ages. Through displays, interest tables and activities which reflect the diverse community, children develop positive attitudes and appreciation of the customs and cultures of others. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The setting has a thorough understanding of the needs of children with learning and/or disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator has extensive knowledge and passion in ensuring children are fully included in the playgroup and that they receive any additional support from outside agencies if required.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff are friendly and make themselves available to discuss any issues with parents. The managers support parents with other issues, such as helping them apply for a school place or talking through the appeals process if they do not receive their choice of school. Newsletters keep parents well informed about playgroup life and these are also translated into other languages. Regular parents meetings are held throughout the year to discuss and share children's progress. The curriculum plans are accessible for parents to view and see what activities are provided everyday.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Most staff working with the children hold a recognised childcare qualification and robust recruitment procedures ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Most of the required documentation are in place to ensure the smooth running of the playgroup, except for some consent for emergency treatment not being obtained. The premises are well organised with the child in mind. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to maximise play opportunities for children. Staff ratios are well maintained and staff ensure children are well supported at all times.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The managers work directly with the children and provide good role models for staff. They have an extensive understanding of the Foundation Stage and work hard to develop practices and develop new ideas. There is a strong commitment by the managers to improvement, training and the professional development of staff.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the playgroup has made improvements in the care and education it provides to children. Children now have a key worker who is responsible for their overall care and although the group is not divided into two small groups the layout and planning enables children to be kept active with the extensive range of activities provided. Regular meetings are now arranged which keep parents well informed and enables them to participate with their child's learning. The programme for mathematical and physical development has been improved to ensure children have opportunities to develop in all areas of the stepping stones for learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure consent for emergency medical treatment is obtained from all parents.

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 systems for recording children's steps of learning (applies to care also)
- improve the writing area to encourage children's development in mark making or early writing skills. (applies to care also)
- develop more opportunities for small group story or singing times (applies to care also)
- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of effective methods of report writing (applies to care also).

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