

## Romford United Reformed Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118587
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Marilyn Peacock
<b>Setting Address</b>	United Reformed Church, 58 / 60 Western Road, Romford, Essex, RM1 3LP
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<b>Registered person</b>	Susan Cole, Lesley Mariott, Wendy Andreet & Elaine
<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 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?

Romford United Reformed Church Playgroup opened in 1979. The playgroup operates from a large room in the Church building. It is situated in central Romford, Essex. The playgroup is close to the shopping town centre, local schools, public transport and other community resources.

The setting opens Tuesday to Friday during term time. Opening hours are from 09:00 to 12:00.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time; the playgroup serves the local community and surrounding area,

There are currently 35 children on roll; this includes 16 children who received funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven staff working directly with children, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The playgroup has many effective systems in place to contribute to children's good health. Children are learning about keeping themselves healthy through regular routines and well planned themed activities. They play and are cared for in a clean environment and the cleanliness of all the areas children use is carefully monitored by staff. The staff implement effective health and hygiene procedures. Good measures are in place to prevent the spread of infection; tables are wiped before use and children clean their hands with baby wipes before snack. They are developing extremely high levels of independence. They help themselves to tissues and make sure they are disposed of in the bin and talk about why it is so important to rub the soap into their hands when washing them because germs spread. Children use individual paper hand towels which helps to minimise the spread of germs.

Children's health and well being is safeguarded by the staff's sound understanding of how to support children who are feeling ill or who have accidents. Should a child become unwell while in the playgroups care staff ensure children are comfortable; then telephone their parents to inform them that their child is unwell and advise them to collect their child. Good systems are in place and implemented to record medication and accidents. All staff have first aid qualifications, which are renewed on a regular basis, and therefore know how to deal with accidents effectively. Written information is obtained relating to children's medical history but written consents for children to receive emergency medical treatment have not been obtained. This compromises children's health in an emergency situation.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit, crackers and crumpets. They help to choose the fruit and snacks for the next week on a Friday. A careful record is kept of any dietary needs and care is taken to ensure children only eat food that is suitable for them. Children are becoming increasingly independent at pouring their own drinks. A stimulating variety of activities helps children gain increasing control of their bodies, for example, when they pour dry pasta from container to container or when they jump, slither and crawl on the obstacle course. All children are skilled at using scissors and they demonstrate increasing spatial awareness as they manoeuvre pushchairs around confined spaces. They have good exercise as they enthusiastically join in action songs to end each session.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the very welcoming, attractive environment of the playgroup. The premises the playgroup use is shared with other groups and there are restrictions to what can be displayed. However, staff have overcome this by using the fold away doors as additional displays areas. Good use is made of the small reception area to inform parents of playgroup practice and notice boards with information about policies, the curriculum and current themes are displayed. Although, there is a small outdoor play area available for the group to use, this is not used regularly by the children limiting their learning experiences.

Children's independence is fostered as they have free choice of resources and equipment that interest them when they arrive. All equipment and furniture is safe, suitable for the ages of the children and in very good condition. There is a wide variety of toys and resources in the

playgroup store room that staff rotate often. A broad, rich and stimulating range of activities are set out each day. Themed activity boxes help staff change resources frequently.

Children are kept safe through the thorough risk assessments that are carried out each day. Prompt action is taken when risks are identified to ensure children's ongoing safety. Children are familiar with the regular safety routines and ensure they hold on to the stair rail when walking down the stairs to use the smaller play room. Children are learning about safety as fire and emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly.

Children are protected by staff's sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. They are aware of the possible signs of abuse and what to do if they have concerns. This is underpinned both by a comprehensive policy in line with local safeguarding children guidance, and the training all staff have undertaken.

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

The provision is good.

Younger children enjoy their time in the playgroup. There is a happy atmosphere; children are having fun and learning as they play. Consequently, children are happy, confident and relaxed they readily approach staff for support demonstrating good trusting relationships. Children arrive happy and eager to participate; the playgroup uses a free play system therefore children are able to select their own activities for most of the session. Positive adult and child interactions encourage children to become skilful communicators. Children love listening to stories and joining in with their favourite action songs, excitedly giving themselves a big clap at the end.

All staff have a good understanding of child development. They recognise how young children learn and provide a rich, stimulating environment where all resources can be accessed independently. Staff plan a very good range of activities and experiences which incorporate the Birth to three matters framework components. They monitor children's individual development and use this information to help plan future experiences. Consequently, children develop at their own rate and their ongoing development is assessed. They enjoy play opportunities like construction, small world toys, role play, puzzles and books each day.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making very good progress helped by the ongoing observations the staff make of each child. Planning is informed by observations of children's individual learning and weekly plans include ways individual children can be encouraged in particular areas. Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and provide an interesting range of activities and experiences that cover the areas of learning well. Children's starting points are taken into consideration when staff make the initial assessment of their development. Planned activities are implemented well and practitioners know the learning intentions and adapt their questioning and teaching techniques to promote children's learning. Staff know all the children well and are skilled at adapting activities to progress children's learning incorporating their interests and skills. Staff make good use of the large hall to provide all children with a rich stimulating learning environment. However they do not make good use of the outdoor play area to extend children's learning outside. Music is used imaginatively to inform children that it is time for snack and they need to think about finishing their play and tidying up.

Children's self esteem and confidence is effectively encouraged by staff's warmth, and genuine interest in each child. Children are encouraged to develop their self care skills, for example by labelling their own paintings and putting on their aprons. They share and take turns when they act out families using small world toys, dolls and tea sets. The children make good use of the resources available to them and they concentrate at activities and are highly motivated to learn and to express their own ideas. They show that they understand the rules of the setting when they start to clear away at 'tidy up time'. The staff help children express their feelings and emotions using carefully selected books and pictures with stick on features.

Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well. They enjoy sitting on the mat talking about the weather, day and date and begin to recognise sounds and letters. Many children have a wide vocabulary and are confident when speaking in front of others. They are learning to listen to each other before contributing their own ideas. Children are learning the sounds letters make and many can identify the letters in their names. Letter of the week is used well to introduce children to the sound the letter 'D' makes. They bring in items from home which start with the letter of the week and introduce their item by the sound and then the name of the item. Children are starting to write their own names on their art work using correctly formed letters. They use books independently and excitedly retell familiar stories to one another.

Children are skilled at using mathematical language in the correct context, for example, they estimate the number of steps they will take to reach the next skittle during a physical play session. They sort coloured animals by size and colour and weigh and measure as part of cooking activities. Number action songs help children learn about simple addition and subtraction. However staff do not always capitalise on opportunities to help children develop their understanding of simple number operations during everyday playgroup routines such as snack time.

Children enjoy being creative using recycled materials and tissue paper to construct bridges and confidently build using building bricks and small world objects. Children are learning about different cultures and the wider world when they share festivals, for example Chinese New Year. Photographs show children excitedly participating in the dragon dance and developing their skills using ribbons.

The programme for physical development is good. Children learn to slither like a snake, they jump and straddle the rungs of the ladder laid as part of the obstacle course to extend their physical strength and development. They begin to understand what their bodies need to help them grow by taking part in projects. Children have good opportunities to use small tools for example, scissors, brushes and spreaders to encourage them to develop their small hand control. They pour and fill containers and show proficiency when cutting out the shapes from the dough and rolling with the rolling pins to create models. They confidently recognise colours in their play and match coloured pegs.

Children talk to staff about their facial features when they look in the mirror in readiness to make self portraits using plates, coloured paper and wool. They excitedly chat to staff about their family tree and where they fit in on the tree as they draw a picture of their family members. Planned activities enable children to observe and investigate, for example using magnifying glasses to examine mini-beasts.

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

The provision is good.

Children are extremely confident and self assured at playgroup. Their behaviour is extremely good because they are fully engrossed and interested in all aspects of the session. They occupy themselves sharing resources without adult support. Practitioners promote and encourage positive behaviour and talk to children about being friends. For example, children know they must sit quietly during circle times so that everyone can see and listen to what is going on. They take turns and show much concern for others. Staff are quick to praise good behaviour helping children develop positive relationships with their peers and value one another because practitioners value them as individuals. Very good support is provided for children that may have learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff work with children's parents and all agencies involved in the child's care to ensure they are provided with the support they need to become fully involved in playgroup life.

The partnership with parents is good. Children are extremely settled and happy whilst at playgroup. They benefit because parents provide written information about their individual routines through effective registration and settling in procedures. Parents can stay with their child until the child is completely settled into playgroup. Staff are friendly and approachable, they share information on children's progress informally most days. This helps to establish and maintain secure trusting relationships and enables practitioners to fully meet children's individual needs. Parents are well informed about the playgroup and receive detailed information at registration and ongoing through regular newsletters and a progress report each term. Parents are able to be involved in their child's learning and participate in the playgroup through the home links programme. Displays and newsletters keep parents informed of the current theme and how they can contribute.

Children are secure and happy because they are highly valued as individuals by practitioners and their peers. They discuss similarities and differences when making self portraits and talk about their families and home life as part of the theme 'ourselves'. They use puppets, share books and stories with practitioners and play with resources reflecting positive images of diversity. They are introduced to a range of customs, beliefs and traditions through stories and discussions and engage in planned experiences linked to special events and festivals. For example, children make fortune cookies, dragons, participate in the ribbon dance and taste new food as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The long established staff team work extremely well together. They are all fully aware of the vision for the group and work hard at ensuring all children are treated as individuals, enjoy their time at the group and feel comfortable and confident in their surroundings. Regular meetings and informal daily discussions at the start and end of the day means the sessions run smoothly. All staff are qualified and attend in service training regularly which enhances group practice and benefits children and parents as they are fully aware of changes in legislation and skilled at providing a rich stimulating curriculum. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children are very happy and settled in the playgroup. Effective policies and procedures promote children's health safety and well being. The required documentation is in place and accurate records are maintained apart from one small omission.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The staff team all work together to plan and evaluate the curriculum. Their knowledge and understanding of children's learning and suitable teaching methods is broadened through regular attendance on training courses and workshops.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last care inspection the playgroup were recommended to improve the daily attendance register by recording the time of children's arrival and departure. The playgroup now record the arrival and departure times in the record of attendance helping to keep children safe should there be an emergency situation.

### **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 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 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):

- obtain written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice to treatment.

#### **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):

- make better use of everyday routines to develop children's interest in number problems.
- provide children with more opportunities to use the outdoor space to take the learning environment outside.

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)