

# Mickleover Methodist Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	206141
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jean Otter
<b>Setting Address</b>	Mickleover Methodist Church Centre, Station Road, Mickleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE3 9GH
<b>Telephone number</b>	07811 756532
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Mickleover Methodist 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 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?

Mickleover Methodist Playgroup opened in 1967 and is committee run. It operates from two rooms within the Methodist Church Centre in Mickleover, a suburb of Derby. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday morning during school term time, from 09:15 to 11:45 and additionally on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 12:35 to 15:05. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 59 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs nine members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about healthy eating because the setting provides a healthy snack menu which consists of, for example, a variety of fruit or a yoghurt. Children's independence is supported well as they have a 'time slot' for snack, which means they can choose when to come to the snack table. Staff talk to the children about healthy eating during themes and some learning opportunities are introduced during snack time, such as name recognition as they find their names from the nearby board. Children have a choice of drinks or they can bring a favourite drink and beaker from home. Water is available at all times so children can help themselves if they become thirsty. Snack time is a social occasion where children choose to sit where they want. Staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's dietary needs and all snacks comply with any special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy.

Children's good health is supported in most areas because staff practise good hygiene routines, such as wiping tables before and after snack and ensure all preparation surfaces, toys and equipment are clean. However, the routine for hand washing before snack is not considered 'best practice', as all children share the same bowl of water to wash their hands, which may result in cross-infection. Satisfactory policies and procedures are in place which help children stay healthy, for example the medication procedures, which supports those children with a potentially serious allergy or condition who may require immediate medication. Written instructions and parental permission is in place for such incidents, however, the wording on the form to seek permission for emergency medical treatment or advice is not clear and potentially confusing to parents.

Children take part in planned physical exercise at each session, either indoors or outdoors. The indoor activities include movement sessions which the children enjoy and they learn to move their bodies in different ways. Action songs and musical games are also included and there is a suitable range of physical equipment such as 'space hoppers' and a mini trampoline which are used indoors to further support their physical development. Outdoors children experience a range of resources, such as low balancing equipment, bikes and balls and supplementary resources such as traffic lights and petrol pumps are provided to add interest.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where risks are limited through very good safety and security procedures. Staff monitor access to the group at all times and good procedures for the collection of children are in place. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily checks on the outdoor area, premises and equipment are completed to ensure children are kept safe. Children are well supervised and staff ensure that adult to child ratios are maintained at all times. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed and are practised regularly ensuring that children are familiar with the procedures and can help to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Children learn about safety and how to avoid accidental injury through discussions, routines and activities implemented by the staff team. Staff are vigilant and support children appropriately in safety matters. The premises are suitable for their purpose, they are cheerfully decorated and well maintained. Children have free access to a good range of high quality toys and equipment that support their development well.

Children are well-protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection issues. Staff know signs of possible abuse and the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident within the group and enjoy their time there. Activities and resources that they enjoy are very well presented and create an environment where they can be independent. Children are learning through play which is imaginative and fulfilling. An effective key worker system ensures that children's welfare and development is monitored effectively and they approach all staff with confidence for their needs which are met well. Children interact very positively with staff which increases their sense of belonging and trust. They benefit from familiar routines which are well-organised. Staff are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure the general planning provides suitable activities for the children under three years, and detailed observations and assessments are completed to monitor their development. Staff provide help and support and interact sensitively with the children to encourage their confidence and emotional well-being. Children are learning good social skills such as being caring towards each other and sharing their toys and resources. Children's personal independence is nurtured well and they know how to behave appropriately and listen carefully to instructions from staff.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have extensive knowledge of how children learn in practice, and the planning to meet their collective group needs is very well-organised. Themes and topics are used well to extend children's learning and enjoyment. The learning intentions of activities and themes is extremely well evaluated, which also contributes to children's learning. There is a good understanding that one activity may allow a child to cover aspects of all six areas of learning in the curriculum at the same time. Observations and assessments are completed on each child and staff are trying to use these effectively to inform planning for the next steps in individual children's learning. The systems currently used are cumbersome and take time to complete, also the links between individual children, their place on the stepping stones and their next steps in learning are not recorded clearly. However, staff can verbally demonstrate these links and are searching for a more simplified approach to recording this information.

Staff engage in children's play and work well together as a team, sharing observations and aspects of planning. The deployment of staff is effective, and ensures that children get the most out of activities. They provide a resource rich environment with good opportunities for children to become independent learners and provide a good balance of free play and adult focused activities. Children are eager and motivated to learn, they concentrate well because they are stimulated, encouraged to be creative and initiate their own ideas. Children are forming good relationships with adults and join friendship groups with their peers which helps to promote a sense of belonging. They help to tidy up after each session and are learning to take turns. Behaviour is well managed which results in a calm and caring environment.

Children's achievements in speaking and listening are good and they have opportunities to speak out in a familiar group which promotes their self-confidence. They can talk about their favourite book which they have brought from home and are able to give a short resume of what the story is about. They listen well to stories and sing their favourite songs and rhymes. They show good interest in books and handle them well. The current theme of 'Our favourite books'

gives children the opportunity to; explore different types of books, their design and content, know how to look after books, discover some purposes of books and design and make a simple book. Children are beginning to recognise familiar words and are learning that print carries meaning. They have good opportunities to practise their emerging writing skills and most children are beginning to write their own name. Staff are using phonics and encouraging children to say the different sounds in words in sequence.

Children are beginning to count and are using numbers well. They count reliably to 12 and some children can count beyond this figure. They have opportunities to develop simple calculation skills and to develop number order and recognition, for example, through number rhymes. Children are introduced to concepts such as 'faster', 'slower', 'higher' and how to match, sort and sequence. They demonstrate a clear knowledge of colours, shapes and patterns. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to access technology, for example, taking photographs with the digital camera.

Children are introduced to a range of topics that help to develop their awareness of the environment and the world in which they live, for example, the current theme of 'Our favourite books' introduces children to the new library in the locality. They have the opportunity to see the difference between the old library building and the new one, and take photographs of both to compare. Children look at objects they find outdoors, they look under pots and inside plants to see what insects they attract. Children are encouraged in circle time, for example, to talk about familiar people and the things they enjoy.

Children move confidently and are developing good co-ordination skills. Large equipment to support physical play is used both indoors and outside. Children learn how to balance on the 'space hoppers', jump on the trampoline and pedal the bikes. They handle a range of tools and small equipment well, such as hole punches, staplers and scissors which develops their small motor skills. Action rhymes and movement sessions that involve moving their bodies in different ways are particularly enjoyed. Children are learning the importance of being healthy, they independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. The snack menu is healthy and their learning is extended through themes such as 'Healthy Me', where staff talk to children about germs on their hands.

Children use an excellent variety of different materials to develop their creativity and imagination. They explore texture through natural materials and have the opportunity for free expression as well as more organised creative opportunities. Painting, drawing, colouring, junk modelling and malleable play is regularly available. There are good opportunities to learn about building, construction materials and how to build objects using tools, for example, using the stories of the 'Three Little Pigs' and 'Billy Goats Gruff' as a foundation. Role play is used particularly well to support children's creativity and imagination. The setting use different scenarios, such as 'the office' or 'market stall' and children have picnics on the mat. Dressing up clothes and a very well resourced home corner actively contribute to their enjoyment.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a supportive and caring environment, they settle well and play happily together. Good relationships are developed with adults and other children in a setting where staff work well with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs. The setting knows the children well and they are provided with equality of opportunity; there is no bias in their practice. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed and staff are

committed to the full inclusion of all children. Children's awareness of the wider society and different cultures is introduced through a range of planned activities. A good range of resources are available which give children a balanced view of the world and supports their learning in this area. Children behave well in response to clear boundaries set by staff. They are learning to take turns, share their toys and develop good manners. Children are involved in making choices about their play, they have free choice of a wide range of toys and activities which fosters their independence well. Praise and encouragement is used meaningfully by staff to promote children's self-esteem, their contributions are valued and good work and behaviour is acknowledged. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive written information about how the setting operates, and a written complaints procedure is displayed along with most other policies and procedures. Parents are made to feel very welcome at the setting, staff work closely with them to ensure their child's needs are met and as a consequence children settle and progress well. Planning for the younger children is supported by the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff use differentiation to adapt the activities to ensure the emotional, intellectual, physical and social development of the younger children is embraced within the setting. Key workers have a good knowledge of the needs of the children under three years. The partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery education funding is good. They receive ongoing information about the educational programme via interesting and regular newsletters, the curriculum planning is displayed in the playroom and they are kept well informed of their child's progress via intermittent meetings and daily verbal feedback. Parents are encouraged to continue their child's learning at home, to share their knowledge about their children with staff and to play an active part in the management of the group.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience and good childcare knowledge. The staff team meet the requirement that over half have an appropriate early years qualification. They demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of all children to promote their well-being. Good recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are safe and cared for by staff who are suitable. Staff are committed to undertake further training which in turn benefits the quality of care and experiences for the children. Staff are very approachable and children are confident to ask questions and request support which is freely given. Children benefit from a familiar and consistent routine which helps them to feel secure in the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how to implement these in practice. Space and resources are well organised to maximise children's play and learning, and staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the setting. Most policies and procedures are suitable with one minor exception and support the care, safety and welfare of the children. An accurate record is maintained of children's attendance.

Leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. The manager takes the main responsibility for the planning which demonstrates a stimulating and inventive range of experiences and activities for the children. She also works directly with the children and has a good understanding of their learning and developmental needs and how to deliver the curriculum in practice. The group needs of the children are very well provided for, the learning intentions of activities/themes are well documented and show good creativity in how to extend children's learning. She provides a good role model for the staff team, is enthusiastic, precise and includes them in decision making regarding the running of the

playgroup. The self-evaluation sessions work particularly well and have a direct influence over the improvement and progression of the staff team. Observations and assessments are completed on each child and staff are trying to use these effectively to inform planning for the next steps in individual children's learning. The systems currently used are cumbersome and take time to complete, also the links between individual children, their place on the stepping stones and their next steps in learning are not recorded clearly. However, children's progress is not hindered as staff can verbally demonstrate these links and are searching for a more simplified approach to recording this information. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and systems are in place which provide them with good direction and support, such as an induction package and regular team meetings.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last care inspection three recommendations were raised, all relating to documentation, as follows: to ensure that the child protection policy includes the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or a volunteer, to ensure the record of medicines administered to children are signed by parents, and to improve the confidentiality for the accident and medication records. At the last nursery education inspection one recommendation was raised in relation to partnership with parents, as follows: to further parents' understanding of the individual learning needs of their child.

All recommendations have been addressed. Children are safeguarded as a procedure has been added to the child protection policy to address the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. Medication is not usually administered at the setting, but some children have conditions where immediate administration of medication is vital. In these instances parents have given prior permission for the staff to administer the medication. The medication and accident records are confidentially written on separate pages. Finally, parents are given good quality information regarding the curriculum and meetings are held to discuss with them their child's progress.

### **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):

- ensure good hygiene practices are in place to prevent the spread of infection in relation to the hand washing routine before snack
- ensure the correct wording appears on the form requesting parents' permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future.

### **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 the systems used to record the links between individual children, their place on the stepping stones and their next steps in learning.

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)