

Chyngton Methodist Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109403
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Alison Weaver
Setting Address	Millberg Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 3ST
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Registered person	Chyngton Methodist Church Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Chyngton Methodist Church Playgroup opened in 1987. It operates from a church building in a residential area on the outskirts of Seaford, close to a local primary school. The group has the use of a large church hall and a smaller room. They also have access to the main church hall, a kitchen and toilets. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The group opens four days a week during school term times. They do not open on Thursdays. Opening times are from 09.00 until 15.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five staff. Of these, four of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. A member of staff is working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted, as the environment is kept clean and hygienic. Staff take the necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection. This includes appropriate nappy changing procedures and the wearing of disposable gloves in the toilet area. The children learn about the importance of washing their hands through the everyday routines and by the good example of the staff. The staff encourage the children to develop their independence by teaching them how to use the soap dispenser and how to turn the taps.

All of the staff hold a current first aid certificate so they can administer the correct treatment if a child has an accident. Staff obtain the necessary information about children's individual health needs from parents. This helps ensure that they meet the needs of each child in their care. Parents are kept informed of any health concerns and there are appropriate procedures for the care of sick children.

Children enjoy a variety of fruit at snack times. They learn about the importance of healthy eating through some well-planned themes and activities. They make collages where they sort foods into which are healthy and unhealthy for them to eat. They enjoy outings to a local farm shop where they choose and buy fresh fruit and vegetables. They make healthy soups with the different vegetables they purchase. Children are able to help themselves to a drink when they want one, as there is a water jug and cups in easy reach. They also have drinks at the break times to prevent dehydration.

Staff plan and provide plenty of activities that effectively promote children's physical development. The children show good co-ordination as they play safely with a variety of large equipment. They climb and slide on the climbing frames available. They ride trikes and cars safely and with skill. They learn to aim and throw as they play with balls and beanbags. Their fine motor skills develop well as they use a variety of small tools and equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a secure and safe environment. Staff ensure that visitors do not have unsupervised access to the children. However, the management fails to carry out health checks to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children. This compromises children's safety.

The staff are well deployed and the children are closely supervised at all times. Staff create a colourful and welcoming environment for the children with plenty of displays of children's work. They organise the room effectively by making different play areas for the children to access and enjoy. This includes a cosy area for children to sit quietly and look at books. All the children enjoy playing with a wide range of safe and suitable toys and equipment.

Staff complete daily checks to ensure that the hall and toilet areas are clean and safe for the children. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, including socket covers, radiator guards and a fire blanket. The setting carries out regular fire drills to ensure that all staff and children are aware of what to do in an emergency. The health and safety officer carries out regular risk assessments. She also produces and implements risk assessments on new equipment and for outings. This all helps ensure children's safety is given high priority.

Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. They are fully aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns about a child. This helps to promote and safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly when they arrive at the setting. The children are confident and secure around adults. They make their own choices from a wide variety of activities that are interesting and fun. They take advantage of the opportunities to choose from resources in the cupboards. Good use is made of the low storage trays containing craft items. Children help themselves to these resources, creating interesting collages and pictures. They become absorbed in the activities and are well occupied. The children achieve because staff spend their time with the children supporting and helping them develop as they play. Staff are caring and friendly, creating a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan appropriate activities for children under three years to help promote their development. Observations are carried out on each child and these are used to assess their progress. Staff identify targets for the children in order to help them develop and make further progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals due to effective planning and the staff's secure knowledge of how children learn. Staff interact well with children to support and reinforce their learning in everyday play as well as at focus activities. They use good questioning techniques to encourage children to think about what they are doing and express their thoughts. Staff make good use of the indoors as a stimulating learning environment. However, they are not yet making full use of the outdoor area to help promote children's development.

The curriculum is broad and balanced as it covers all areas of learning. The planning has clear learning intentions that link to stepping stones. Good use is made of the focus activity plans to ensure that staff are aware of how to carry out an activity effectively and what children should learn. Staff identify targets for individual children from regular observations and the records of progress. These targets are used informally in the planning to ensure that all children are challenged and moved on in their learning.

Children play happily on their own and with others. They begin to form friendships and relate well to adults. Some children show care and concern for others, for example, as they help a younger child get a drink. Children's independence develops as staff encourage them to see to their own needs. Children pour their own drinks, put on their coats and help to tidy up. There are some opportunities for children to self-select resources.

Children speak confidently to peers and adults. They talk freely in circle times and learn to listen to each other. Staff promote children's communication skills at everyday activities as well as planned activities. The children learn to recognise the link between sounds and letters through phonic work. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. They begin to recognise print and letters around the room. There are many opportunities for children to practise mark making and forming letters in their names.

Children count confidently and often choose number activities during free play. Staff interact effectively to ensure that mathematical development is promoted with the children in free play and everyday activities such as circle times. Children learn to use mathematical language correctly, for example, as they talk about bigger and smaller when digging in the garden. They explore measuring and weighing as they do cooking activities. Children learn to recognise shapes and sizes through a variety of planned activities.

Children enjoy many opportunities to explore the natural world using their senses. Staff provide good support by asking them questions about what they see and feel, to help them express their thoughts. This is particularly evident when they examine the different natural objects in the treasure basket. Children have fun digging in the garden and finding worms and spiders. They use magnifiers to look at the toy bugs indoors. They plant and grow flowers, beans and bulbs. They show increasing skills on the computer, drawing pictures and printing them off. Children learn to use different tools and equipment such as garden forks, scissors, magnets and binoculars. They become absorbed in making different models using a variety of construction materials. They learn about other ways of life as they explore topics on other countries and festivals. They find out about other people as they welcome visitors such as fire officers, police and a road safety team.

Children express themselves creatively in a variety of different ways. They thoroughly enjoy the free craft activity table where they help themselves to a good range of materials and tools. They are well supported by adults as they play in the role-play area. They have fun acting out different scenarios, for example, as they pretend to make meals and hang out the washing. They enjoy singing and playing instruments. They explore rhythm and sound, for example, as they do Tapping Teddies.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff work closely with parents to meet the individual needs of the children. When a child starts in the setting, parents are asked to complete a form indicating what their child can do. They also use a needs questionnaire to identify any specific concerns about a child. This helps staff settle children in and build on what they can do. The registration form also gives other information about a child so that staff can respect the wishes of parents and acknowledge their home backgrounds.

Staff ensure that children have access to a variety of resources that represent the wider community. The resources include puzzles, posters, dolls, play figures and books. The staff extend these resources by making good use of a toy library. The resources and planned activities help children develop a positive attitude to others and learn about the wider world. For example, they learn about China as they celebrate Chinese New Year. They taste the food, dress up and role-play.

There are good arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that they are fully included. Staff adapt the environment to meet the children's needs and give them the necessary care. They work closely with parents and other professionals to create individual learning plans for the children so that they can make progress. Staff use picture symbols to help children learn the routines. Some of the staff use signing to help children with communication problems.

Children behave well and respond positively to staff. They learn to share and take turns as they play together. Children learn about acceptable behaviour as staff reinforce the golden rules with them. Children's achievements are celebrated with the use of stickers. Staff praise and encourage children and this helps build their self-esteem. Appropriate strategies are used to deal with any unacceptable behaviour. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents of funded children receive some information about the Foundation Stage, which gives them a general overview of what children are learning. Parents can see the curriculum plans, themes and are kept informed about what activities the children enjoy each day. Parents have regular opportunities to meet formally with key workers to look at the profiles and discuss children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff discuss the children's individual targets with the parents so that they can share what they know. They are encouraged to give their comments and contribute to the profiles. Staff provide parents with information about how to extend activities at home so that they can contribute to their child's learning. However, this is not done on a regular basis throughout the year.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is well organised and space is used effectively for the children. Staff group children appropriately and supervise them well. Children benefit from being cared for by a high level of qualified and experienced staff. The staff are keen and enthusiastic. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. However, the accident records, medication records and the record of attendance lack some necessary detail.

There is a recruitment procedure in place; however, it is not robust enough, as it does not include any health checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. There is a satisfactory induction procedure in place to ensure that new staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Policies and procedures are available to staff and parents.

Leadership and management are good. The ongoing development of staff is promoted through regular training and appraisals. This helps ensure that staff develop their skills and knowledge of how to support children in their play and learning. The staff keep well informed about current childcare practices and implement new ideas in the setting. The staff work well together and show commitment to improving the nursery education provision. They regularly discuss the provision and put development plans in place following their meetings, to help them improve. All staff are included in the planning and decision-making. The staff meet regularly to discuss children's progress and the curriculum planning. They regularly evaluate the activities and plans to ensure that children are gaining from their experiences in the setting. This helps ensure that the provision is helping children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection, the setting has established clearer child protection procedures to protect children. They have also extended the range of resources that show positive images of diversity to help develop children's understanding of the wider world.

Since the last nursery education inspection, the opportunities for parents to contribute to children's learning and assessment have improved. Parents are much better informed about

the plans and activities that children take part in. They meet regularly with key workers to formally discuss children's progress, review targets and look at the profiles. Parents are encouraged to share their skills with the children and contribute to the themes. There is also a book loan scheme to encourage parents to read stories with their children.

The setting has improved the planning to ensure that all children are extended and challenged. They set individual children's targets and use these to inform future plans. Staff implement the plans and as they work with the children in small groups, they adjust what they are doing to take into account children's differing abilities. However, this is not always clearly identified in the written plans. Staff make more effective use of everyday activities and routines to interact with children and help them develop.

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):

- improve the recording of administration of medication, and the record of times of attendance of children and staff
- ensure that a robust recruitment procedure is carried out which includes health checks.

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 outdoor area as a learning environment for the children.

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