

Poynton Methodist Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305257
Inspection date	30 June 2008
Inspector	Barbara Christine Wearing
Setting Address	Poynton Methodist Church, Civic Hall Car Park, Park Lane, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 1RB
Telephone number	01625 871592
E-mail	
Registered person	Poynton Methodist Church Playgroup
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?

Poynton Methodist Church Playgroup has been registered since 1982. The group is based in Poynton Methodist Church in the Poynton district of Cheshire. It is open from 09.15 to 12.00 every weekday and 12.30 to 15.00 on Wednesdays during school term-times. The group has use of a large playroom, two smaller rooms and an enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is registered to provide sessional day care for a maximum of 30 children aged between two and five years. There are currently 45 children on roll; of these, 36 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is run by a committee. An appropriately qualified person is employed to manage the group on a day to day basis. The manager is assisted by a team of five staff, of whom most hold recognised childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from an Early Years Development Worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are generally well protected from the spread of infection and cross contamination as staff follow good hygiene and cleaning routines and clear health and safety procedures. However, children share a basin of water for hand washing. The playgroup's comprehensive ill/injured child policy and administration of medication procedure is shared with parents and ensures that children are well taken care of if they are ill. Clear records are kept for the administration of medication and contain all necessary details and signatures. Children develop independence in their personal hygiene routines and self help skills. They are given appropriate support when going to the toilet and washing their hands and pour their own drinks at snack time.

Nutritious snacks contribute to children's physical development and good health. The playgroup provides children with a snack of milk or water, cheese and crackers and fruit or raw vegetables. An understanding of healthy eating is developed as visitors to the playgroup, such as a dentist or parents, talk to the children about health issues. Staff discuss healthy eating with children during snack time and during activities, such as making milk shakes. Staff work closely with parents and are, therefore, aware of and cater for children's individual health and dietary needs.

Good use is made of the outdoor area and children benefit from opportunities to expend their energy and develop their large muscle skills both indoors and out, throughout the majority of the play session. They climb, balance, hop and jump, and paint on the paving flags using water and various rollers and brushes.

Staff show a high regard for children's emotional well-being. They spend time settling children in the morning and are attentive and responsive to their individual needs. Children are therefore confident, happy and relaxed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The playgroup provides a secure, welcoming and friendly environment in which children confidently and safely explore the range of activities and resources available to them. The room is well organised into various consistent learning areas. Within these staff set out a selection of resources and allow children to make some choices in their learning. Storage of resources does not allow children to freely select from a wider range but staff observe children closely and are therefore aware when children would benefit from longer to explore an activity. In this case they ensure that it is made available the following day. Children take resources from one area to another to extend their play.

Risks to children are minimised as staff closely supervise children at all times and all necessary safety and fire precautions are in place. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are given opportunities to develop skills, such as climbing, within safe boundaries and with adult support. Staff chat to children about possible dangers and children learn from visitors, such as the Community Police Officer and Road Safety Officer. Good procedures are implemented to keep children safe on outings. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident within the playgroup as there are always staff on duty who have a current first aid certificate. The setting has a well stocked first aid box and clear procedures for recording accidents.

Children are protected from harm as they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Staff attend training with regard to safeguarding children and have a sound understanding of their child protection procedures and are fully aware of their role within it. These procedures are made available for parents within the policy document.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have fun as they eagerly explore the resources and activities available in the indoor and outdoor environment. Staff are skilled in linking activities and stories to their current theme, ensuring that a range of skills are developed. Children enjoy playing a role play game using a boat and staff extend the activity as they encourage children to develop their writing/mark making skills to give out tickets for boat trips. Children access further resources to extend the activity, such as using a cardboard tube as a telescope or loud hailer, instructing children to 'walk the plank'. Children and staff reflect on where they went in the boat as they link it to the story they read at story time. Staff strike a good balance between allowing children to extend activities themselves and interacting with them, following their interests and presenting further challenges. Staff ask children to identify colours and shapes of bricks and identify and count parts of the body as they play with small world and construction activities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff observe children closely and have a sound knowledge of children's individual skills. They listen carefully to children and are highly skilled in following their interests to extend their learning through spontaneous and planned activities. Long, medium and short term plans and staffs' interactions with children demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Current assessment records show children's progress in all areas of learning but are lengthy, difficult to read and do not clearly identify next steps for children's learning.

Children are confident and assertive and have fun as they play together, seeking out peers and adults to share in their play activities. They treat each other with care and respect and are developing good turn taking and negotiation skills. Children organise themselves into teams for games, such as football and clearly articulate their plans, organising different roles for themselves and others. They chat confidently to each other and staff, sharing information about things they have done during the weekend. Staff show a genuine interest and ask questions that extend their thinking and language. Children develop good listening skills during group activities, such as listening to and clapping the syllables in their names. They develop an enjoyment of books and reading as they listen to stories in a large group and look at books individually and with others in the well resourced book area. Children demonstrate a clear understanding that print carries meaning as they mirror staff 'reading' to a group of children.

Children engage in a number of adult led activities to develop their recognition of letters and letter sounds. Staff skilfully deliver these in a way that is challenging and appropriate to children's individual levels of understanding. Many children are able to write their own names with varying levels of support and do so through spontaneous and adult led activities.

Children are developing a good understanding of number. They count, name and recognise numerals and use mathematical language spontaneously throughout the session. Staff ask children questions to present them with further challenges. They ask them to count how many

children are going on holiday and calculate how many boat tickets will be needed. Staff ask questions, such as 'how many more do I need to have the same as you?' when engaging with children in their chosen construction activity. Children develop an understanding of shape, space and measure. Two children compare their heights and talk about who is the tallest. They compare shape and weight during a sorting activity and persevere as they complete jigsaws with sensitive staff support.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have daily opportunities to explore different media, such as sand, water and dough. They explore items using magnets, discussing which materials the magnet will pick up. On other occasions magnifying glasses are made available to investigate various living and manufactured objects. Staff take opportunities to follow children's interests and extend their plans. For example when looking at the letter 'Z' they discuss that zebras all have a different pattern of stripes and make comparisons to human finger prints. Staff tell children that the next day they may have out resources to make some finger prints. Children design and construct, using construction sets and have some opportunities to use other materials, such as cartons and boxes, scissors and sticky tape. They use some technological equipment, such as calculators, tills and cameras when they are made available. Children enjoy going on nature trails to explore their environment in different seasons. They are involved in their local community through regular trips to the library, involvement in activities within the church and as they sing Christmas carols to a group of people from a local elderly person's group.

Children develop excellent large muscle and co-ordination skills. They have great fun playing with a range of equipment outdoors and take pride in their own and others achievements. One child praises his friend's 'good stop' as he prevents a goal. They invent and play various ball games including tennis, football, basketball and putting tennis balls through lengths of tubing. They jump and hop over ropes and when playing hopscotch. Children develop fine motor skills as they use equipment, such as small world resources, pens, pencils, scissors and construction sets.

Children develop highly imaginative and complex role play situations. During these they also develop social skills, language skills, maths skills, physical skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Creative materials, such as paint or collage resources are available for most sessions and children have opportunities to explore these independently and with staff involvement. Children enjoy regular opportunities to sing, dance and play musical instruments, thereby developing their creativity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff treat children with care and respect and give them opportunities to voice their opinions and make choices. Therefore, children are confident, develop a sense of belonging and a high self-esteem. All children are welcomed at the group, where there is a proactive approach to meeting the additional needs of children. Staff work closely with parents and therefore have a good understanding of children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs and religious and cultural beliefs. They ensure that these are reflected and catered for within the provision. Children learn about the diversity of our society as they are able to discuss differences they observe when accessing the good variety of resources that provide positive, non-stereotyped images. Children learn about their own and others' celebrations, festivals and cultures throughout the year. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work with high regard to their positive behaviour management policy. They have appropriate expectations of children allowing them freedom to explore within safe boundaries. Staff are calm and consistent in their behaviour management techniques and use effective strategies to encourage children to help with daily routines such as tidying up. The daily routine, room arrangement, stimulating resources and high levels of staff involvement result in children being well occupied throughout the session. Therefore, children play happily within the boundaries throughout the vast majority of the session. Staff are positive role models. Children are polite and their good social skills are acknowledged and praised by staff.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and children are welcomed into the setting. Parents settle their children at an activity in the morning and pass on information to staff. There are various effective ways in place for two way exchanges of information regarding children and the provision, thus maintaining consistency for children. Parents receive information regarding the setting during the settling in process, via the notice board, policy document and prospectus. They spend time with the playgroup as parent helpers.

Development records and information regarding activities for the funded children are shared regularly with parents which include related activities that can be done at home. Information regarding the curriculum activities and events within the nursery are shared via newsletters and notice boards. Daily activity/play plans, showing intended learning is not on display for parents. Information regarding children's progress and development is shared informally on a verbal basis. Parents' feedback demonstrates their appreciation of the care and education their children receive and the atmosphere that the genuinely caring staff create within the playgroup.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The routine of the sessions are well organised, maximising children's opportunities to freely explore their environment. Children have a wide choice of activities and resources indoors and out and are given time to thoroughly explore and investigate these with sensitive staff support and involvement. During adult led activities children in receipt of funding for nursery education are divided into smaller groups and the activities presented provide challenges appropriate to the children within that group.

The recruitment, selection and induction procedure ensures that staff have undergone necessary checks and that they have a clear understanding of their role and the setting's policies and procedures. There are no formal systems in place to ensure that staff are aware of their duty to inform the manager of any changes that may affect their suitability to work with children. Children benefit from being cared for by an established group of staff who work well together. Staff have a genuine interest and concern for children and commitment to the continuing development of the provision. They attend regular training that is used to enhance practice and receive support from early years staff within the local authority. Children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted as staff work in line with the setting's policies and procedures. These are comprehensive and contain all necessary information.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Daily discussions take place within the staff team to discuss children and review practice, thereby ensuring that the playgroup appropriately meets the needs of the children attending and develops their practice.

There are systems in place to ensure that good communication is achieved and that the effectiveness of the provision is evaluated. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

A number of actions were raised at the previous inspection. These related to maintaining the safety of the children and some recording procedures. All the actions have been met, thereby further maintaining children's safety and wellbeing.

Recommendations were raised with regard to assessment and planning techniques, the use of worksheets and extending opportunities for children to develop their independence and practise their self-help skills. The playgroup are in the process of developing their assessment and planning. This has had a positive impact on ensuring that the knowledge staff have regarding the children is recorded and used to inform their short term plans. A further recommendation has been raised to continue this development. The playgroup has reduced the use of worksheets and plan to reduce this further next term. Children are now engaging in more first hand, practical activities, thereby ensuring that the learning is more meaningful, active and fun. Staff have developed further opportunities for children to develop their independence such as pouring their own drinks at snack time.

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):

- review the system for hand-washing to further prevent spread of infection
- increase the selection of consistently available resources, allowing children to choose independently, practice and consolidate their learning and set themselves challenges
- devise further ways to share daily plans and learning intentions with parents

- formalise a system to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility to inform the playgroup manager of changes that may effect their suitability.

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):

- continue to develop effective systems for recording observations and assessments, ensuring that they clearly show children's progress, identify next steps in their learning and are used to inform short term plans.

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