

# St Josephs Playgroup Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY365592
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 June 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Silvia Richardson
<b>Setting Address</b>	83 Plaistow Lane, BROMLEY, BR1 3JF
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Josephs Playgroup Ltd
<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?

St Josephs Playgroup Limited was registered in 2007 as a limited company. It originally opened in 1973 and has been owned and managed by the current provider for more than 20 years. The playgroup is situated on church premises in the London borough of Bromley. It operates from St Josephs church hall and has use of an adjacent room, toilet and kitchen facilities. Children have access to outside play space, including a secure garden to the rear. A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. Sessions are from 09.00 to 12.00, Monday to Friday, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 55 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. This includes 42 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are five full time and two part-time staff employed to work with the children, of whom six work directly with the children each session and one is a qualified primary teacher. At least half the staff including the manager have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. Staff have access to training courses and support services run by Bromley Early Years.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Adults take good care of the children's play areas and facilities, maintaining a clean and hygienic environment, promoting children's health and welfare. Children are developing good personal hygiene habits, through regular hand washing routines. Children understand how germs are spread and the importance of washing their hands, especially before handling food and after using the toilet. Visual signs are available to support children's learning and adults encourage them to develop some independence with their personal needs. Children are well hydrated because drinking water is readily available to them throughout the session. Refreshments and snacks are also offered alongside the free-play session, during which time children gain social skills and talk about healthy eating. They are offered a variety of healthy options, including fruit, ensuring they are well nourished. Arrangements are relaxed and informal and promote children's health and well-being.

Suitable records are kept about children's health and dietary needs, such as any food allergies, accident details and written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, promoting children's welfare. Adults are trained in first aid, enabling them to respond appropriately should an accident occur. Sick children are expected to stay at home, minimising the risk of spread of infection and protecting the health of all the children in the setting.

Children have some excellent opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise, because the session is well organised to facilitate access to outside play space. A good range of equipment is available both inside and outside, enabling children to develop physical skills, such as balance and co-ordination. Children confidently climb and slide, crawl, hop and jump, while exploring different ways of moving around and developing spatial awareness. Children like to run and move around using their whole body, but these experiences are generally discouraged over safety fears. There is plenty of space and areas in and around the premises for children to expend energy and develop their learning potential through large movements, but their experiences are also restricted because space is not fully and effectively utilised.

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

The provision is good.

Children play and move around the premises safely, because precautionary measures are in place, protecting children from harm and helping to avoid accidents. The entrance and step down into the side room, has a rubberised non-slip surface and children are taught how to walk slowly and use the step carefully. Extra security is applied to doors, such as small sliding bolts, ensuring children are unable to wander off and there is no unauthorised entry to areas being used by the children. Fire exits are unobstructed and clearly marked with some additional advisory notices displayed, helping to ensure swift evacuation in the event of a fire. Children also practise drills, so that they know what to do and how to stay safe.

Children's safety is consistently monitored through risk assessments and potential safety issues are effectively evaluated with a course of action. An example of this, is the new arrangement for the collection of children from the side room, so that children cannot leave the hall and stray out into the car park while the outer door is open. Children are safe and secure while playing and learning, because adults talk to children all the time about safety, helping them to become aware of others around them, avoiding bumps, tucking chairs under tables and

walking around in an orderly fashion, preventing tripping. Children are kept safe and protected should safeguarding concerns arise, because staff have attended training, know what to look out for and how to respond if they are worried about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled, because adults provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, from which children make their own choices. The long free-play session is enabling children to learn at their own pace. There is plenty of time for children to explore and experiment, try out new activities and hone their skills, in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Adults support children well, so that they are confident, sociable and play well together in small groups. Activities are all successful, because there are sufficient resources for satisfying group play experiences. Children take turns with popular resources, such as bikes, and appreciate support with ensuring fair turns. They are confident about how and who to ask for help, when they need things, such as additional sheets of paper for writing and share resources well, such as pencils and tools for play dough.

Adults are attentive to children's care and welfare needs, so that they thrive in the setting. Routines are consistent and familiar, helping them to feel secure and enjoy a sense of belonging. Arrangements for snacks and drinks work well, so that all children have an opportunity to refresh and relax. The programme and schedule of activities is well balanced, so that children enjoy a good variety of learning experiences, both inside and outside. Resources are organised and stored at low level, so that children can help themselves and take toys, such as dolls, outside if they wish. Adults are warm and kind towards the children, cuddle them and reassure them, helping them to separate from their main carer and enjoy their time at playgroup.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals, because adults have a secure knowledge and understanding of children's needs and how they learn through play. They provide a broad range of activities across the six areas of learning and enable children to learn at their own pace through free-play opportunities. Adults observe children well, record and evaluate their attainments, so they can plan effectively for the next steps in children's learning. Children's learning and development is supported effectively through adults sitting with them and talking to them about what they are doing. An excellent range of resources are assisting children's skill acquisition, so that they become adept at using tools and materials, particular in creative play. Children's individual learning needs are addressed through adults creating an inclusive environment, where all children feel able to participate in activities at their own level.

Children are becoming confident and independent learners, because adults encourage children to think and do things for themselves, particularly in choosing activities and selecting resources. Children are confident about asking for help when they need it, because adults are warm and responsive. Children organise themselves well, especially in role-play and engage in lively discussion. Children are skilled in mark-making and writing for different purposes, including writing numbers and lists, because adults provide much scope for children to express and develop their ideas through role-play, such as playing shops. Children show excellent pencil control, forming letters to make words and digits to make numbers, for pure fun and enjoyment of writing. Picture and story books are attractively set out in a quiet area, encouraging children to relax and enjoy 'reading' for pleasure.

Children have opportunities throughout the session to practise counting, calculating, measuring and estimating through the broad range of resources set out. They talk about shapes, colours and sizes, when building, constructing and making things. Children are developing their knowledge and understanding of living things, through planting and growing activities. They talk about and take part in activities about lifecycles, such as that of the chicken, frog and butterfly. Children thoroughly enjoy whole group activities, such as the 'What's in the box' game, making learning fun and enjoyable. Sessions are skilfully led and managed, so that children learn to listen and take an active part in discussion, promoting skills for future learning and development.

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

The provision is good.

Adults understand and show a good level of awareness, that some children have learning difficulties and need additional support to develop skills and make good progress. They provide the necessary help and guidance, so that children integrate successfully and enjoy being part of the group. Children's welfare is promoted well, because adults are proactive in helping children to make friends and to join in. Details are recorded about individual children's learning and welfare needs, ensuring appropriate care is given. Adults hold positive attitudes and value children's differences, helping them to celebrate their religious and cultural festivals and traditions. Good systems are in place, ensuring all relevant information is available and used effectively, helping children develop a positive identity. The range of resources available to children reflect diversity, so that all children are able to feel good about themselves. Children demonstrate cooperative, kind and caring behaviour towards each other, because adults provide excellent role models. The children understand safety and social rules and remind each other of these when playing together, maintaining harmony. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers are made very welcome and have some good opportunities to come into the setting, to settle their children and observe them playing. There is an 'open house' opportunity on Wednesday mornings, at which times parents are encouraged to come in, sit and relax with a tea/coffee and look at their children's folders of work and observe their children at play. The manager and staff are available to parents and carers, so that they may talk about how well children are getting along and share any concerns. Arrangements are informal and enable parents and carers to get to know each other and share common parenting issues. Parents and carers are encouraged to offer their skills in relation to their professions, interests, hobbies, so that children's learning experiences are enhanced by parents' and carers' expertise. They are also invited to share aspects of the cultures and religious beliefs, so that children can take part in activities that promote their understanding of differences.

Matters of importance to parents and carers are children's safety and welfare and adults provide much reassurance regarding these issues. Parents and carers are happy that children enjoy a range of healthy snacks and lots of opportunities to play and mix with other children, so their children develop confidence and enjoy attending the group. They know about the sorts of play activities children enjoy and receive information and details about themed activities and how they may make a positive contribution to children's learning. Folders and albums with pictures, photographs and samples of children's work, especially their achievements, are made readily available to parents and carers, providing them with visual images of the sorts of things children are doing. There is some suitable written information available and displayed, about the six areas of learning and the early learning goals. However, parents and carers are less familiar

with these and report that they are happy to know that their children are enjoying and achieving through play experiences with other children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Adults are properly vetted ensuring they are suitable to look after children. A good ratio of qualified staff and assistants are employed so that children receive appropriate levels of guidance and supervision. Records, policies and procedures are in place ensuring the safe and efficient management of the setting. These are implemented effectively so that the welfare, care and learning of the children are actively promoted. Children's activities are well organised and arranged in the hall, so that they are able to make choices. Children help themselves to additional resources, because these are sorted well into sets and easily accessible, encouraging children's spontaneous play ideas. Adults are well deployed in the setting, so that children's free-play experiences are effectively supported, promoting their learning and development.

There is plenty of free space around tables, so that children are able to move freely and play comfortably together in small groups. The hall is arranged so that children have opportunities for physical play inside, such as climbing, sliding and crawling through play tunnels. However, children's active play is restricted, because space is not effectively utilised, so that children, especially the boys, can have a run and expend energy safely. They are frequently asked to slow down and be aware of others and equipment in close proximity, to the extent that their ability to settle at other activities is more difficult for them and is reducing their ability to concentrate and play purposefully.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The manager is committed to developing the provision and has effective systems in place for monitoring and evaluating strengths and weaknesses. The manager has the ability to stand back and look at presenting issues with a positive mind, finding practical solutions to potential difficulties, such as managing the arrangements for the collection of children. The manager strives for continuous improvement, reflecting on what works well and what could be done better, so that children enjoy high quality play and learning experiences that promote their well-being. Recent changes include the creation of a quiet area, so that children may take time out of their busy programme and schedule of activities and relax with books in a quieter area. The manager has much understanding and insight to how children learn in different ways, acknowledging the differing needs of boys and girls in the playgroup setting. The manager leads by example and provides a strong role-model for staff, in good practice. Training and development opportunities are high priority and the manager is committed to ensuring staff are able to attend some training events. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable. This is a post-registration inspection.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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):

- consider ways of developing children's learning potential, utilising space and resources for creating physically active play opportunities, for children to move around at different rates, speeds and levels

#### 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):

- ensure parents and carers are well informed about the Foundation Stage, the six areas of learning and the early learning goals

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)