

Thundersley Methodist Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	650157
Inspection date	06/10/2008
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
Setting address	Kennington Avenue, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 4BS
Telephone number	01268 756649
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Thundersley Methodist Preschool is run by a committee. It opened in 1972 and operates from the main hall, a smaller room and the large entrance area of the Methodist Church in Benfleet, Essex. The car park is secured so that children have access to an outdoor play area. There is a ramp to the front and rear of the premises to allow access for people with disabilities. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting opens three days a week during school term times. Session times are Monday and Wednesday from 09:15 until 11:45 and from 12:15 until 14:45 and Friday between 09:15 and 11:45. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school currently employs six staff, of whom two of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school offers satisfactory provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and has some good aspects. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and effectively gather information from parents from the outset to enable them to meet the children's individual needs. Systems for planning and assessment have been reviewed to ensure that staff take account of the interests and enthusiasms of each child when preparing activities. Children enjoy their time in the pre-school and make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Most of the issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that evacuation procedures are practised more frequently
- monitor and evaluate the educational programme to ensure that activities consistently offer challenge and inspire children to achieve as much as they can
- develop use of the outdoor area to provide imaginative and innovative ways for children to take part in experiences linked to all areas of learning.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- develop and submit an action plan that sets out how the staff training and qualification requirements will be met (Qualifications, training, knowledge and skills)

28/11/2008

- ensure that the complaints policy includes the requirement that the complainant is notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint (Safeguarding and welfare).

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The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by an experienced and caring staff team who understand their designated roles and responsibilities. All the committee members and the staff have been vetted and cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau. Written policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated and most meet current guidelines. The complaints policy does not contain all the relevant details. Although the management do not yet complete self-evaluation or undertake formal monitoring of the educational programme, the staff team reflect on practice at the weekly staff meetings. Appraisals are not currently undertaken in order to determine the staff's training needs. While some staff are keen to attend training courses, there is no formal action plan in place to ensure that the pre-school meets the minimum required qualification levels.

There is a very friendly and helpful partnership with parents. Everyone is made to feel very welcome and parents frequently discuss their children's needs with the staff. Information is shared through verbal feedback, reports are written each term and parents meet with their child's key person. Newsletters are regularly distributed and parents take part in fundraising and charity events. Parents are very keen to express how happy they are with the pre-school.

Children are appropriately safeguarded. Staff are aware of current information regarding child protection which ensures they act in the best interests of children. The daily safety checks are recorded to ensure that the premises are secure and any potential risks are removed or minimised. However, fire drills are rarely practised to ensure that all staff and children know how to swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are gaining confidence as they take part in a balance of adult-led activities and tasks that they select for themselves. There are effective staffing levels and sessions are reasonably well paced so that children can work in small groups or at times have individual attention. Interaction between the staff and children is sensitive and amiable relationships are formed. A key person system has been introduced to promote better care and learning for the children and to provide peace of mind for parents. The key persons observe children as they take part in activities and have started a new format for recording achievements and identifying children's next steps in learning. A sound range of indoor learning experiences are provided each session. However, children are not always offered sufficient challenge because staff do not make full use of available resources to encourage them to independently extend their ideas or skills. The outdoor area is primarily used each

day to encourage children's physical development and is not yet used imaginatively to promote other areas of learning. Although outings in the vicinity are not organised, children learn about the local environment through visitors to the setting such as the librarian or fire service.

Children's welfare and medical needs are met well. They play in a clean and safe environment. A varied healthy menu is provided at snack times and children learn about the importance of hygiene routines. Care plans are efficiently maintained and all staff hold current first aid certificates and can deal with severe allergies and anaphylaxis. The special educational needs coordinator is extremely enthusiastic about her role and has attended training courses relating to promoting inclusive practice and working with children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Links have been formed with outside agencies and expert professionals to ensure that there is a smooth transition when a child enters full-time education. Children behave well and take a positive approach towards learning. They play with resources that reflect positive images of diversity, take part in charity events and contribute items for the harvest festival display in the church. Staff plan a reasonable variety of activities to enhance children's future economic wellbeing through developing their problem solving, numeracy, literacy and technology skills.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Satisfactory

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Satisfactory
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Satisfactory

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Satisfactory
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.