

Kingswood Methodist Church Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	106997
Inspection date	17/09/2008
Inspector	Yvonne Campbell
Setting address	Kingswood Methodist Church, Grantham Road, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 1JR
Telephone number	0117 9613488
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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

Kingswood Methodist Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee which include the parents of children who attend. It opened in 1988 and operates from the main hall of Kingswood Methodist Church close to the main shopping centre. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. Children from the age of two to five attend the setting (Early Years Register). The playgroup opens four days per week, from 09.15 to 14.45 (except for Monday when closing time is 11.45). It does not open on Thursdays or during the school holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children on roll, 10 of whom receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports a number of children who have specific learning needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

Five members of staff work with the children. Two staff, including the manager, have level 3 qualifications. A further two members of staff hold level 2 qualifications. The manager is currently working towards a level 4 qualification. The group receives ongoing support from a local authority advisory teacher.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are happy and behave well. They are making satisfactory progress as their needs are met through an interesting and varied learning and development programme provided by the playgroup staff. The premises are safe and safeguarding and welfare requirements are in place. Effective procedures are in place to meet the special educational needs. Staff are vigilant in their observation of children and promptly identify, monitor and support those who have delays or developmental needs. Systems for maintaining records and information about children and their families are also in place and these are reviewed regularly. However, there is a gap in the inclusion practice which impacts on the unique child principle as staff do not have sufficient information about children's starting point on entering the setting. Also, there is limited knowledge of children's ethnic backgrounds and the main language spoken at home for those who speak English as an additional language.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve learning and development; ensure staff have relevant information about children's starting points and that this information is used to inform learning plans for individual children. Provide suitable challenges to extend existing knowledge
- improve systems for documentation and ensure staff have relevant information about children's cultural backgrounds and home language
- assess risks to children regarding access to the utility kitchen and the cupboard containing the cleaning materials and, where risks are identified,

take action to remove these

- review procedures to promote children's dietary needs and ensure drinking water is accessible at all times to those who do not bring their water bottles. Ensure lunch boxes are labelled clearly

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The enthusiastic and committed leadership group have made significant improvements in the setting since the last inspection. Children play and learn in a spacious, well equipped learning environment with several activity areas set out for play exploration. They move around freely between areas and also self-select other play material from accessible units, according to their interests. The manager and deputy have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Activities are provided within the relevant areas of learning and development to help children make steady progress towards the early learning goals.

The group is able to assess its strengths and the areas for improvement in quality through the regular visits from the local authority advisory teacher. Plans are in place to improve the self evaluation system by purchasing a computer to enable staff to access relevant childcare information sites. Written records and policies are used effectively to support day to day practices which support the welfare of children. These policies, including the safeguarding children procedure, are displayed on the notice board. A risk assessment has been carried out and a check list is used by staff to ensure previously identified hazards to children are not present and control measures remain in place. However, the risk assessment does not include the contents of a cupboard in the utility kitchen which is accessible to children.

Staff are mindful of the barriers to learning some children may face and they work towards ensuring that the provision is inclusive and accessible to all children in the community. They have regard to the Special Education Needs Code of Practice. Children identified as needing additional support have their needs met though procedures for engaging and working with parents and the relevant care professionals. However, there is no effective system for assessing and making use of information about children's cultural backgrounds and starting points on entry to the group. Although staff use Makaton signing with some positive impact, this results in poor communication with some children who do not have English as their home language.

Parents feel welcomed when they drop off and collect their children. A member of staff greets them at the entrance and they talk happily and share information about their children. A well maintained notice board ensures they have information about written policies and any changes. Parents have the opportunity to share play with their children and observe good practice by attending sessions as parent volunteers. They know their children's key workers and have access to their children's learning diaries.

Staff development is promoted through an annual appraisal system managed by the manager. Areas for development are identified and suitable training is provided up to National Vocational Qualification level. There is an appropriate level of support from the management committee, which works closely with staff and ensures they have support in administrative matters.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and a broad selection of interesting and enjoyable activities is provided. The hall is prepared for play before children arrive. Most children separate from their parents and carers quickly and begin a period of free play before the main registration and welcome time. Children have opportunities to talk and to share. Staff join in conversation with children and encourage them to explain their thinking whilst modelling the correct grammar. Staff promote children's understanding of the passing of time through discussion about the days of the week. A rhyming song about the days helps them to memorise the order of the days. Children link up with others to enhance enjoyment of the activities. They are sociable and form small groups, talking about what they are doing, and are able to work with others to develop their play. For example, when cutting and shaping play dough, children make models of food and act out a scenario about what happens at 'tea time'.

Staff help children to recall and consolidate previous learning. Recognition of different shapes is supported by providing sheets of paper shaped as squares, triangles and circles. Children ask for paper to draw and say the shape they want. Many mark marking opportunities are provided to encourage the development of the physical skills and movements for writing. As well as painting, a range of crayons are accessible and children know that marks have meaning. Many children can recognise their name amongst others and use their name labels purposefully to self register on arrival and also at snack time. Children are learning to count and staff encourage them to point and count out the number of items up to four. However, this does not offer sufficient challenge to some children who find the exercise easy and differentiation is not considered for children who are more or less able. Children show interest in information technology equipment. Staff provide a laptop computer with age appropriate programmes which children complete independently. They have good understanding and control the mouse to select and progress programmes.

Children's health and well-being is promoted. Staff ensure that infection is not transferred to others in the playgroup. Parents know that children are excluded if they are unwell or have infectious illnesses. Prompt attention is given to children in case of minor accidents as several staff have current first aid certificates and the first aid box is accessible for use. All accidents are recorded and parents given a verbal explanation. They sign the records to acknowledge they have been informed.

Healthy eating for children is encouraged by staff who are also aware of specific dietary needs. Children have fresh fruit at snack time. They are learning to be aware of their own physical needs as staff allow them to choose to have snacks when they are hungry. Fresh drinking water and beakers are provided for children to help

themselves to water. Parents provide packed lunches and staff encourage them to omit items such as chocolate and fizzy drinks from the lunch boxes. The playgroup supplies a water bottle to each child and children can help themselves to drinks throughout the session. However, some water bottles are taken home and are not refilled and returned daily. Some children do not have enough drinks at lunch time or in the afternoon after the jug of water provided for morning snack is cleared away. Also, some children have lunchboxes of similar designs and parents do not always write their child's name on the boxes and there is a risk of children eating food not intended for them.

Children have some understanding about the need to be aware of danger and to follow safety procedures as staff alert children to things which may hurt them. For example, before going to the outdoor play area at the side of the building, staff remind and discuss with children what they must do and should not do, such as reminders to walk together and not run. Staff also remind children to pick up toys which fall on the floor so they do not trip and hurt themselves. Children are familiar with the procedure for evacuating the building quickly in an emergency as fire drills are organised by staff and are practised regularly. The procedure is being further developed to consider the needs of children with special needs.

Children are developing positive attitudes and skills which will contribute to the economic well-being. They socialise and work well with others and concentrate to complete chosen tasks, such as computer activities. Working parents are supported as staff make flexible arrangements to accept reception class children who are being gradually introduced into the school system.

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?	Satisfactory
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?	Satisfactory
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?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
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.