

St Mary Magdalene Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	135391
Inspection date	24/10/2008
Inspector	Catherine Greene
Setting address	Windmill Hill, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 7AJ
Telephone number	020 8363 3953
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

St. Mary Magdalene Playgroup opened in 1982. The playgroup operates from the large hall, within the Magdalene Church Hall. There is also an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup serves the local area.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 25 children from two years to five years. There are currently 32 children from two and a half to five on roll. The provider is registered on the Early Years Register.

The group opens five days a week during school term times all year round. Sessions run from 09:30 - 15:15, 09:30 - 12:00 or 12:45 - 15:15. Full day care is available everyday apart from Wednesday when the session finishes at 12:00.

Six members of staff work directly with the children. Half of the staff team have a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Staff work effectively as a team to create an organised, friendly and supportive environment which generally meets the children's individual needs well. Children are safe and secure because staff use effective procedures and ensure consistent supervision. Staff provide a range of activities and opportunities that support children's progress in most areas of learning. This means that children make good progress, given their age, ability and starting points. Good links through partnership with parents and the local school is a key strength and contributes significantly to ensuring that the needs of all children are met, especially at times of transition into reception. The manager and her staff are eager to pursue improvements and are beginning to evaluate work to secure this aim.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that cleanliness of the premises is improved and maintained to promote children's welfare
- ensure the child protection policy is in line with changes to legislation and guidance and includes details of the regulator
- improve the risk assessments to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a more regular basis and maintain a record of when and by whom they have been checked
- evaluate and improve on methods to observe and assess the children in order to aid ongoing planning aims for each child.

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

- develop staff's awareness and understanding of

21/11/2008

effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

- assess the risks to children in relation to the garden and take action to minimise these (Suitable premises, environment and equipment).

21/11/2008

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The playgroup demonstrates a clear commitment to ongoing improvements and the staff team are developing their self-evaluation methods in order to bring consistency to this area. Policies and procedures suitably underpin nursery practice and are openly shared with the children's parents. Staff develop positive relationships with the children's parents and relevant information relating to the children's needs is sought prior to the children starting. This contributes to ensuring children's individual needs are met and inclusion is promoted to a satisfactory level. Ratios are good, meaning that children receive a lot of adult attention to their individual needs and parental support means they stay safe on outings. Recruitment procedures and routine daily checks make sure that children are safeguarded from harm. Written risk assessments are reviewed, but do not fully cover all potential risks in enough detail.

The committed staff team work well together and are beginning to evaluate their practice. The overall self-assessment was incomplete on the day of inspection, in discussion, staff identify main strengths especially in how well they work as a team to develop strong partnership with parents, other carers and agencies. They also recognise most of their weaknesses for themselves and take timely action or seek training and support to bring about improvement. Following the recent implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff reviewed their planning and assessment systems to have regard for the new statutory framework. Although they continue to record children's achievements, they have not yet finalised their planning format to identify how children's individual targets for future development and learning will influence short term planning.

Daily evaluation as the session goes by ensures staff act promptly to pursue children's present interests, which enables children to work and play in depth. Staff are aware of how children learn, can identify a range of needs and learning styles and provide additional help when required. Staff ideas for further improvements are shared with parents and their views sought. This makes sure the whole family are fully involved in the planning stages, and can comment on and influence major decisions based on their knowledge of what their own children need most and enjoy.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are welcomed into the setting and confidently separate from their parents. All staff work hard to provide a warm, loving and secure environment where

children feel valued and can engage in their learning and exploring the world they live in. Their learning and development is, for the most part, well supported and children demonstrate increasing independence and confidence in what they choose to do each day. Staff use their knowledge of children's starting points to plan a varied range of opportunities to help children progress in most areas of learning. Written observations go some way to supporting this aim, but are at a developmental stage, and observations and planning is not fully operational at present.

Children are enthusiastic about what is on offer and enjoy a range of practical opportunities to learn through their play. They enjoy participating in circle time songs, listening to and reading familiar books and counting everyday objects with staff at their side. The children particularly enjoy performing and have produced some much enjoyed productions, such as Sleeping Beauty in the summer term. They move around freely, both inside and outside in the garden, negotiating roles whilst they play together during role play in the castle. Children mostly behave well and staff offer lots of praise and encouragement. However, older children do not always understand what is expected of them and react negatively to staff and their peers as a result. Their behaviour overall is not always managed in a way which promotes their welfare and development consistently, which gives contradictory messages to children.

The presentation of a range of good quality, safe resources to support core activities makes sure children gain knowledge across areas of learning. Children's current interests are recognised and planned for. A whole range of activities developed from one child's favourite book 'Man on the moon'; from this the whole group enjoyed making rockets and space ships and baking moon rock cakes. Staff continually review what activities are stimulating the most interest and build on children's ideas. There is a good balance of adult and child-led play and learning. Children use numbers meaningfully to find out, record and share information about how many children are present and require a snack. The adult led activities are short and to the point, making good use of time and learning through action songs and rhymes.

Free play, where children choose what they would like to do, works well to promote learning. Staff are sensitive and know when to step in to extend children's growing independent learning and self-esteem. Most resources are accessible. Children are invited to ask for any additional items they might need to complete their creative art work and are confident to do so. Children know to wash their hands routinely, and make healthy choices at snack time, showing they are developing an understanding of their own needs and good personal habits. They independently help themselves to fresh drinking water, especially during active play.

Children learn about each other's cultures through well planned and resourced activities. Imaginative use of traditional stories, large group and individual art work, and acting-out scenarios stimulate active learning. Staff highly value partnership with parents, the community and outside agencies and this is reflected in the appreciation parents feel for the staff.

Children play in generally well organised premises and effective measures are in place to promote their health. However, floors and general areas such as walls and

doors are in need of cleaning. Clear procedures understood by staff and shared with parents include those for dealing with accidents and for administering medication. Staff encourage children to access the outside area regularly and they make very good use of the large space, however areas of the garden are overgrown with nettles and are not secured adequately. Staff support healthy eating habits and talk to children about the benefits of nutritious ingredients as they stir the mixture for their Halloween cakes. Staff give good regard to keeping the children safe and effective safety measures are in place, for example, teaching the children what to do in the event of a fire. Staff understand their responsibility to protect children from abuse or neglect and attend training. The recently reviewed child protection policy omits details of the regulator.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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.