



Magdalene Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	124999
Inspection date	29 November 2005
Inspector	Claire Jean Douglas / Lisa-Marie Jones
Setting Address	St Mary Magdalene Church, Canning Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 6QD
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Registered person	St. Mary Magdalene Parochial Church Council
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?

Magdalene Pre-school opened in 1992. It operates from a spacious hall in Addiscombe, and is run on behalf of the Parochial Church Council for St Mary Magdalene with St Martin. The children who attend the pre-school are from the local area.

There are currently 69 children on roll between the ages of 2 and 5 years. This includes 36 3-year-olds and 15 4-year-olds in receipt of nursery funding. Eleven of

the funded children have English as an additional language. The group works closely with other professionals involved in the identification and assessment of children with special needs.

The group opens between 09.30 and 12.00, Monday to Friday and from 12.25 and 14.55 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays during term time.

Nine staff work with the children, of whom five have an early years qualification and four are working towards an early years qualification. Seven staff are currently undertaking an NVQ in childcare. The manager and deputy manager both hold The Diploma in Pre-school Practice. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and the Pre School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children take part in regular physical activity that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Children of all ages have opportunities to play outside each day. They enjoy an excellent variety of experiences in the well-planned outdoor area, where they enthusiastically run freely, ride bikes, practise climbing and balancing on large equipment such as the climbing frame and work alongside their peers in group parachute activities.

Children learn about good personal hygiene when they wash their hands before they eat or after using the toilet. The risk of cross contamination is generally reduced because there is clear guidance for staff about appropriate hygiene procedures. Children's individual health needs are met, staff keep records of any accidents the children have had and ensure they share these with the parents. Accurate details of any medicine children need and when it has been given, are kept.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They help themselves to drinking water throughout the session. Healthy foods are discussed and promoted whilst children choose toppings for their toast.

Children under 3 years old generally settle well due to the staff's effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff are warm and responsive to the children, which helps children develop secure bonds with their carers and fosters their emotional well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their play in an extremely safe environment where staff are highly vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Children and staff practise the emergency evacuation procedures on a regular basis, this helps children become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency. There is a

consistent, high ratio of adults to children present. The staff are appropriately deployed ensuring children are always well supervised, by staff who have an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. The staff give utmost priority to involving children effectively in organising their own environment, allowing them to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm.

Children have access to an excellent range of high quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. Those with special needs and those learning English as an additional language are safe and fully included due to the sensitive adult support, effective communication methods and well-planned adaptations to resources and activities.

Children are extremely well protected by dedicated staff, who have a comprehensive knowledge of child protection policies and procedures and give utmost priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children throughout the setting have good relationships with staff, which helps them settle quickly and grow in confidence. Children all take part in a varied, stimulating routine throughout the session, which keeps them busy and interested, and helps them achieve well.

Children under 3-years-old are becoming independent, enjoying making choices in their play and beginning to do things for themselves. They happily experience the texture of mixing porridge with water in a tray, they enjoy painting freely, cutting and sticking, and enjoy many other creative experiences. Staff join in with children's play and support the development of their communication skills through questioning and by listening to what the children have to say.

Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities for the younger children, which helps them experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff observe the children and plan appropriately, building on their skills and interests.

Nursery education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the expectations for children's learning. They provide a good variety of interesting, meaningful activities and experiences for children in the pre-school room, helping them to make good progress in all areas of learning. Children show high levels of initiative, curiosity and self-esteem. They come in to the pre-school confidently and are eager to join in.

Children are keen to communicate and use language well to start conversations with their friends and talk about their experiences. They practise writing their name on their work and make marks while they play. Children look at books independently and listen intently to stories, confidently predicting what will happen next. They show an

interest in numbers when they count how many children are at pre-school today, and are encouraged to solve problems during everyday routines, such as working out how many more plates are needed at snack time.

Children have good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor area provides a wealth of experiences that encourage children to explore, investigate and find out more about the natural environment. Children question why things happen and how they work when they experiment with ICT, for example, clicking on different icons to cause different things to happen.

Children use their imagination and express themselves in a variety of ways. They act out well known scenarios and stories during role play. They are inspired by props such as the climbing frame covered in a black sheet to turn it into a cave. Here the children played 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Children enjoy taking part in musical workshops, using instruments to beat out the rhythm of a song. They break into song spontaneously during play, for example giving a cheerful rendition of 'The wheels on the bus' after they had turned a row of chairs into a bus.

Planning makes very good use of children's interests to plan future activities on a week by week basis. This means children are keen to take part in activities and are motivated to learn. However inconsistencies in the systems used by staff to monitor how or whether children are making progress, means there is the potential for children to be unsupported in some areas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Staff welcome children as they enter the pre-school which helps them to settle and look forward to attending. Children develop excellent relationships with their peers as they share their toys and participate in games. Through accessing a vast range of vibrant, developmentally appropriate resources, play opportunities and activities which acknowledge cultural differences, children learn about diversity. Staff openly welcome children with special needs and work intricately with outside agencies to ensure that children's needs are fully met. Staff help children to be aware of others by setting excellent examples of behaviour, children respond appropriately, with good behaviour and manners for example saying 'thank you' when they are offered snacks and drinks. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral and cultural development.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is outstanding. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in projects, which contribute to their good health, safety, development and learning. Parents of pre-school children are provided with clear information about the Foundation Stage curriculum through notice boards, displays and a home plan. This explains what the children are learning and gives good examples of how parents can follow the learning through at home, as well as ideas for becoming involved in the pre-school. Parents

are kept up-to-date with what their child is doing, which contributes significantly to children's well-being in the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted due to effective recruitment procedures. Staff have a secure understanding of child development which helps them meet children's individual needs. Staff ratios throughout the setting are high, which ensures children receive a good level of individual attention and are cared for by consistent staff that they know well.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager works closely with the organisation's management committee. The manager monitors and evaluates the curriculum to identify strengths and areas for improvement. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education as part of an accredited quality assurance scheme. However, there is no system for monitoring and evaluating the use of observations and target setting for all children, which means there is a possibility that children's progress is overlooked. The manager provides a clear ethos for the pre-school and is strongly committed to continual development and improvement. Staff throughout the setting are supported to develop their skills and knowledge through on-going training. This has helped ensure that staff working with pre-school children have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to use it in practice to support children's development.

All required records, policies and procedures which contribute to children's health, safety and welfare are in place. Policies and procedures work well in practice, as there are effective procedures for keeping staff up-to-date both individually and through staff meetings. Space, staff and resources are well organised throughout the pre-school, creating a stimulating and accessible environment where children enjoy themselves and spend their time purposefully. The range and quality of the experiences offered to children ensures they make good progress. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made with regard to good hygiene practices at snack time and increasing the opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress. Since the last inspection, staff have taken positive steps to promote the health of children by improving hand washing facilities at snack time. The parents of older children are now kept informed of their children's progress through regular parents meetings every half term. These improvements have had a positive impact on partnership with parents and children's health.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- make improvements as indicated in the nursery education section below

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):

- improve the system for monitoring and evaluating the children's next steps to aid planning and ensure all children make progress (also applies to care)

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