



Methodist Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251573
Inspection date	19 January 2006
Inspector	Susan Smith
Setting Address	The Methodist Church, Bramford Road (North West), Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2NA
Telephone number	01473 742554
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Registered person	Methodist Pre-School
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Methodist Pre-school is a well established committee run group. It operates from rooms within the Methodist Church in Ipswich. The setting serves the local area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 and on Fridays 12.45 to 15:15 during school term time. All children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 41 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 33 children

receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 8 staff. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through regular routines and activities. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before snack time and after going to the toilet. Children understand the need to use soap to 'get rid of the germs' and staff extend their understanding, for example, explaining that germs can cause upset tummies.

Children's well-being is promoted because staff are informed about children's health care matters and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. Some staff have attended first aid and food hygiene training to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. However, the first aid box is not regularly monitored to ensure its contents are adequate to ensure the welfare of the children.

Children's dietary needs are met through a balanced range of snacks that take account of their individual dietary needs and preferences. All children enjoy sufficient quantities of food and drink to ensure that their nutritional needs are met. Fresh fruit, cheese and biscuits and water or milk are provided at snack time and discussions are developing children's understanding of foods that are good for them and promote good health.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities both indoors and outside that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. However, this is not provided on a daily basis and therefore children are not given regular opportunities to observe the changes that happen to their body during physical exercise. Children enthusiastically join in with action songs but are not always given enough space to express themselves freely. Children have opportunities to develop their hand-eye co-ordination while using equipment such as peg boards, a variety of mark making tools and construction sets.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where risks are minimised and they can move around safely and independently under staff supervision. For example, staff carefully monitor children's arrival and departures and ensure a visitors log is kept.

Children use a satisfactory range of safe and appropriate resources, which are checked by staff when setting up to ensure they are in good condition. Staff explain safe practices, such as why children should not run around the tables so they do not fall and hurt themselves. This helps children to take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe.

Children's welfare is promoted because staff have some awareness of the procedures to follow if they have a concern. A child protection statement is shared with parents. However, there is no written procedure for staff to refer to and no procedure in place if an allegation is made against a member of staff. This compromises the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the setting and they benefit from generally positive interaction from the staff, which helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. At times of transition, such as at the beginning of the session, staff greet and say 'hello' to all children and their parents. This helps to develop secure and trusting three-way relationships.

Children are encouraged to be occupied in meaningful play through the familiar but flexible routine of free play opportunities and group activities. Children concentrate well as staff make effective use of praise and encouragement to help them to persevere with challenges, for example, completing puzzles.

Children are interested in the suitable range of activities and equipment. These are generally used well to support children's all round development. However, some resources for the older and more able children are not always used effectively to create a stimulating and challenging environment. For example, pre-cut circles in the painting activity did not allow children the opportunity to cut circles out for themselves.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals because most staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff are beginning to assess children's learning towards the early learning goals. These observations and assessments of children are recorded in individual records of progress. However, they are not used effectively to inform planning which means that activities do not always move them on to the next step. Staff are very caring, and value each child's contribution. They show an interest in what the children do, use questioning effectively and respond appropriately to children's requests.

Most children are confident communicators, they speak confidently and clearly with adults and each other. Children are aware that books carry information and show an interest in looking at books for pleasure. Some children recognise their names. Children have opportunities to develop early writing skills, for example, on the daily

graphic table. However, children are not encouraged to label their own work and do not use the self-registration labels to support this. In addition, there is limited use of visual displays of words and numbers around the room.

Children are beginning to recognise numerals and use mathematical language in context. Staff introduce basic mathematical learning such as size and shape throughout practical activities such as construction and modelling. Some children can count to up to eight.

Children display good levels of confidence and are eager to participate in new activities. There are some opportunities for children to develop independence skills, for example, selecting free play activities and pouring drinks at snack times.

Children gain an understanding of the natural world and a sense of time through everyday routines and experiences, for example, through growing cress and exploring snow. Children show enthusiasm for role-play and some resources are provided to support this. Children are given opportunities to explore colour when painting. However, art and craft activities are mostly adult-initiated which impinges on children's creativity.

Children use forms of everyday technology such as telephones and tills in their role play, and enjoy using a computer. However, use of the computer is not currently monitored to ensure that all children have an opportunity to access this popular resource.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and are able to make positive choices and decisions during their time at the setting. They are developing a positive attitude to each other and gain an understanding of the wider world through displays, topics studied and resources available that reflect diversity.

Children's behaviour is generally good. Staff are good role models and their calm and consistent manner helps children understand the expected rules of behaviour. Children are confident in their relationships with staff at the setting. They play happily together and with adults, enjoying using resources such as puzzles, sand play, small world toys and help at tidy up time.

The setting works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met. Policies are in place to care for children with special needs, and staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of special needs issues.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory.

Parents are very positive about the setting. They are provided with some information about the Foundation Stage and are kept informed about the setting through daily chats, and the notice board in the lobby. All new parents are given the opportunity to have a tour of the premises and meet and talk with the staff. They are also

encouraged to stay with their child until they feel they are settled. There are no formal opportunities to share children's records of progress, although parents are aware they can ask to see them. The group has developed a complaints log so it can be accessed by parents.

The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most policies and procedures are in place and work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. However, robust systems are not in place to ensure staff working with children are safe to do so. The staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well together to create a caring environment for children.

The room is organised to allow children to move freely and safely and the routine of the session help children to settle well. Staff are deployed effectively within the setting, spending the majority of their time interacting with the children to support children's care, learning and play.

The leadership and management is satisfactory.

The committee and the staff team are committed to improvement. Staff are eager to attend further training to improve their understanding and practice in early years education and to enable them to help all children achieve well. Staff meetings and support from the Early Education Support team help to evaluate the provision for nursery education.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to review its operational plan to ensure that all policies and procedures meet regulatory requirements.

The operational plan has been partially reviewed and most policies and procedures are in place to enhance children's care. However, induction procedures and a comprehensive child protection policy have yet to be completed.

At their previous nursery education inspection the group agreed to continue to implement the new planning and assessment records and to monitor its effectiveness. To develop short term plans and extending the children's everyday access to opportunities to promote children's development in music and movement.

The group have implemented their planning and assessment records and use adult-focus activities to monitor the effectiveness of planned activities to promote children's development in the six areas of learning. Children have regular access to

musical instruments and planned sessions give the children opportunities to explore music and movement. The short term plans still require further development.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- ensure robust systems are in place to ensure staff working with children are safe to do so
- increase opportunities for all children to develop their physical skills and to observe the changes that happen to their body during physical exercise (also applies to nursery education). Also ensure that the contents of the First-Aid box are adequate
- develop a child protection policy, including a procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

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):

- develop planning so that activities build on what children already know and offers all children sufficient challenge
- develop and enhance all six area's of learning to enrich the learning environment.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk