



## **St. Catherine's Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY304659
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 February 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Taylor
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. Catherines Community Centre, School Lane, Manchester, Lancashire, M20 6HS
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lynn Gardner
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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## 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?

St Catherine's Playgroup was registered in 2005. It operates from one large room which is the community centre of St Catherine's church and school. It is situated in a residential area of Didsbury, Manchester and the playgroup is on ground floor level. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:45, term time only.

Children attending come from the local area. The playgroup supports children with

special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently 45 children on roll of whom 5 receive funding for nursery education.

The playgroup employs three staff, who are qualified or are working towards an appropriate early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from infection through hygiene routines, such as, the washing or wiping of children's hands at appropriate times. Through this, children learn the importance of personal hygiene. Children are learning to take care of their environment and equipment as they take part in tidying up the room after the session. For example, they stack child-sized, coloured chairs in piles of blue and red independently. They follow toileting procedures themselves and this promotes independent self care skills.

Physical activity is promoted and children can enjoy exercise on a range of equipment like wheeled vehicles, a climbing frame, bouncing toys and prams. This helps to ensure their physical development.

Children enjoy a healthy diet and staff promote a nutritious diet by providing snacks, such as, fruit, toast and crumpets. As they eat, the staff talk to children and encourage conversation and this promotes social development. Children have continuous access to fresh water and this effectively promotes their good health.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe in well maintained, welcoming premises. The setting is adequately lit, warm and well ventilated and this promotes children's wellbeing. All facilities are of a satisfactory level of safety and cleanliness. Children are safe within the setting as the entry system is secure. They play in a child friendly environment to enable free exploration and risk taking.

Children benefit from enough space which is adequately organised and includes areas for rest, quiet activities, active games, and messy games with all resources at an accessible level for the children. They benefit from an appropriate range of suitable equipment which is obtained to be at the children's age and stage of development.

Potential risks are identified and action is taken to minimise risks, for example, unsuitable areas are not used and sockets are covered. All necessary safety equipment is in place and this ensures the safety of the children attending.

Children's welfare is protected as adults have an understanding of child protection issues and understand their role to safeguard the child. They have attended recent training and would know how to contact social services for advice or to make a referral. Information about the child protection policy is shared with parents to ensure that they understand that the staff's first responsibility is with the child and that the protection of the child is priority.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily chat to the staff and each other and join an activity or choose their own play. They are relaxed and confident in the caring environment. Children who are unsettled are offered support so that they feel secure in the group. Settling in procedures are in place and are adapted to each child's individual needs to ensure a smooth transition from home to the group.

The group have not developed a system to allow them to make observations and assessments of children and plan the next steps in their development. They receive support from the local authority and are working to develop this area. This is also relevant for Nursery Education. The group's method of learning through play helps to provide appropriate care and education for the children attending the group.

Children are offered opportunities to progress in all areas of development. They enjoy continuous play opportunities like construction, small world, role play, puzzles, sand and books. They also participate in structured activities, for example, making a nursery rhyme clock or Jack and Jill figure to take home. However, some activities do not offer sufficient challenge to the children attending and this is an area that the group are developing with the support of the local authority. This is also relevant for Nursery Education.

### **Nursery Education**

Children are attentive and responsive to the staff's use of questioning and explanation which is pitched at the right level for each child.

Children enjoy sharing books and the staff extend their learning by asking questions, such as, 'What noise does the bird make?' There are few opportunities for mark making, print recognition and mathematical development during continuous play and in the role play area and this does not contribute to development.

Staff skilfully join in children's games and sensitively extend play or introduce new ideas, such as, making spiders in the dough and counting the spiders legs. Children's attention is adequately maintained throughout lively story and song sessions, where children are encouraged to be involved in talking about the nursery rhymes, colours and animal noises.

Children learn basic concepts and solve problems as staff include mathematical language whilst making jam tarts. They talk about circles and count the jam tarts. With support, children count to ten and answer questions, such as, one more and

one less during the dough activity.

Children learn to predict and investigate and have opportunities to extend learning about the world. For example, they are fascinated during a circle time activity where they are introduced to a hamster as part of their nursery rhyme theme. They ask questions, such as, 'What is he called?' and are given interesting information about the animal. Children have access to basic information and communication technology like tape players. They develop creative skills during free painting and craft activities.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have some knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage and this provides an adequate foundation for the curriculum. A variety of teaching styles are used from individual, groups and whole class. Consequently, children make satisfactory progress in relation to the stepping stones. Every child is involved in the setting where planning systems are in place and activities are adapted to include younger children and those with special needs. Staff have a satisfactory awareness of each child's ability level.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a policy on equal opportunities which includes a statement about anti-discriminatory practice. The group are aware of the backgrounds that children come from and ensure that they settle well and feel secure very quickly.

Children with additional needs are supported through liaison with parents and other agencies. Inclusion of all children is promoted through the recording of children's individual needs.

Children are well behaved and staff have clear expectations of the children. Staff are very good role models for children as they are calm and polite. Praise is given to all of the children all through the session and this increases their self esteem. For example, they are told, 'Lovely manners,' when they say thank you for their snack. They respond well when asked to modify their behaviour and apologise. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents can easily access clear information about the setting and their role within the setting through information sent home. However, there is no clear method of reporting children's progress to parents. Parents are, 'Very happy with the care offered by the playgroup,' and feel that, 'The staff are very kind.' Parents stated that they have chosen the group because of its good reputation in the area.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a positive and supportive environment which effectively promotes their social and moral development. Staff are further developing their skills by attending training courses. This maintains and improves the quality of care and

learning for all children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Children benefit from the smooth running of the group and the routines which make them feel secure. Children are very aware of the routines of the group. For example, when the staff produce a snack, the children sit down without being asked. The manager uses induction procedures and ensures that staff are appropriately vetted and qualified. Staff work together to promote the effective running of the group.

Records detail the individual requirements of each child and include relevant consents and contacts. A detailed and relevant range of policies and procedures are in place to promote the safety and wellbeing of the children present in the group.

The provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- develop resources and provide activities, play opportunities and first-hand experiences which challenge children and allow them to build on their natural curiosity as learners, develop their language and mathematical thinking, use

their imagination and develop social relationships (this also applies to Nursery Education)

- observe what children do and use these observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development (this also applies to Nursery Education).

### **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):

- ensure parents receive information about the progress that their child is making
- increase opportunities for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development during continuous play so that children can experience these areas within a real context.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)