



## **Newbold Community Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	316413
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 March 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Care Management Group
<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*

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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Newbold Community Playgroup opened in 1992. It operates from two rooms within Newbold Baptist Church in the Newbold area of Rochdale. It is situated in close proximity to Rochdale town centre. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.30 to 11.45 term time only. Children do not have access to an outdoor play area.

There are currently 19 children aged 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 7 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The setting is not supporting children with special educational needs or children who speak English as an additional language at this time.

The playgroup employs three staff and is supported by regular volunteers. The manager holds an NVQ Level 2 early years qualification and is working towards a level 3 qualification as required by her position as playgroup leader. The deputy has an NVQ Level 3 early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an understanding about good hygiene practices which ensures they keep themselves healthy. They routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom. Children's individual needs are suitably met because staff seek information from parents about medical and dietary needs. Children learn to promote their own good health as they are encouraged to avoid cross infection by covering their mouth when coughing or sneezing.

Children develop a positive approach to healthy eating as they are provided with a variety of healthy foods and drinks during snack time. They enjoy a substantial snack and a daily portion of fruit with a choice of water or milk. Their knowledge of healthy living is promoted through purposeful activities and discussion, for example, children explore the human skeleton and talk about the impact of good food on their bones. However, drinks are not available outside of snack times so children do not know they can have an additional drink if they want one.

Children enjoy sitting and eating with staff and other children. This provides them with valuable opportunities to talk about home and special events. However, children do not routinely help adults during snack, which prevents them from developing their self-help and social skills much further.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. Children move around freely which promotes their sense of confidence and belonging. They have access to a variety of good quality toys, equipment and resources which promote their interest and development. Their equipment is effectively organised which allows children to self-select and make decisions about what they want to play with.

Positive steps are taken inside the setting to minimise risks to children, the priority given to staff deployment ensures children are safe and well supervised. Good consideration is given to security and emergency evacuation. Doors remain locked at all times and visitors are escorted into the premises. Regular evacuation drills ensure

children are familiar with what is expected so they can be escorted safely to designated meeting points. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they are reminded not to run indoors and not to use the climbing frame without shoes in case they slip. However, their safety is compromised when children are allowed to eat fruit as they play.

Policies for safety are currently under review to establish new procedures to reflect changes in the setting and the staff team. As a consequence, action plans have been devised and staff are beginning to increase their knowledge of procedures such as child protection. However, their general knowledge of health and safety is currently weak and they have not yet developed formal systems for risk assessments. Therefore, potential hazards such as hot radiators are not recorded or formally reported.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children make good relationships with staff which ensures they settle and enjoy their time at playgroup. Their emotional needs are well fostered which ensures children feel happy, secure and confident. Children are fully engaged in a variety of self chosen activities which promote their overall development. They approach their activities with great enthusiasm and interest ensuring they take full advantage of all the activities on offer.

Children are eager to participate in the creative activities, such as junk modelling, water play and painting. They make good use of their imaginations when creating their own role play scenes as shop keeper and builders. Purposeful theme work has been effective in promoting children's awareness of shape, number and colour as children are beginning to recognise and name numbers and they can name a variety of shapes such as a diamond.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are working in close partnership with the local advisory teams to improve and develop the nursery education. Staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is steadily developing through guidance and training which is enabling them to provide a generally well balanced curriculum. Staff are pro-active in implementing the new initiatives and ideas they have gained from their training. Improvements with regard to the organisation of resources and the learning environment have had a positive impact on children's interest and willingness to learn. The steady introduction of enhanced and continuous provision ensures children can develop their own ideas and themes during the course of their play. Planning and assessment systems are very much in the early stages of development. Children's development is informally tracked at this time but a more structured system is being devised. However, the lack of a clear key worker system inhibits staff from ensuring all children are appropriately and consistently monitored and current activity plans do not reflect differentiation between older and younger children which has a detrimental impact on children's behaviour.

Children are beginning to make sound progress towards the early learning goals. They develop a strong sense of community within the setting which encourages them to seek the company of adults and friends. They frequently talk about home, sharing experiences and events. Children are confident due to the praise and encouragement they receive for their efforts and achievements. They behave generally well as they are polite and show a willingness to share and help others. Children enjoy interactive stories which allow them to use props or join in parts of the story. However, they do not display the same interest in reading books independently. Activities such as circle time promote children's speaking skills as they are encouraged to share their ideas, thoughts and experiences with other children in the group. Children benefit from generally good opportunities to mark make but the lack of a designated writing area restricts their ability to develop their emergent writing further.

Children routinely count and are beginning to name, recognise and match numbers. Children use this knowledge creatively by combining one activity to another when matching number stencils to a number lotto game. They are introduced to mathematical concepts such as weight, measure and size when baking and they are able to solve more complex problems with shape when asked to find 'the large, red, triangle'. However, children have limited opportunities to explore simple calculation. Children enjoy constructing their own models using resources, such as dough and junk materials. Children are introduced to technology as they often use calculators, shop tills and more recently, a computer. Children learn why things happen and how things work when observing water mixed with icing sugar. Children have insufficient opportunities to explore nature and their local community due to lack of outdoor activities and trips.

Children frequently use a good range of media, such as sand, water, paint and dough. However, they do not have range of creative resources at their disposal to allow them to further explore and develop their own creative ideas. Children use their senses to explore texture and form, for example, when describing a mixture as soft, dry or sticky. Their imagination is successfully nurtured as they engage in various role play scenes and story lines. They explore the sounds of their musical instruments when creating quiet and loud sounds, however, they have limited activities which introduce them to music and movement. Children make good use of indoor apparatus to develop their physical skills, for example, when climbing and balancing. They are provided with a suitable range of tools, such as various sized paint brushes, glue sticks and containers for pouring. Planning for children's physical development is not specifically focused and it does not take account of the lack of opportunities for children to run and make larger movements.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are well known due to effective communication with parents at the time of placement. Children learn about respect for others through discussion and by the example set by adults. Children engage in familiar celebrations, such as Christmas and sometimes Chinese New Year, however, they

are not provided with sufficient activities and resources to raise their awareness of diversity and the wider world.

Children are developing an understanding of right and wrong due to consistent behaviour management, which helps them to learn about the consequences of their behaviour. They are steadily becoming familiar with the behavioural expectations within the setting which helps them to share, take turns and play in harmony. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement which values their achievements and ensures they feel good about themselves. However, their behaviour sometimes deteriorates when the size of group activities are too large as younger children become distracted and lose interest.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is appropriately fostered as children develop a strong sense of community within the setting. They enjoy coming to playgroup because they look forward to playing with their friends. The Christian ethos they share during prayer time reminds children of the necessity to respect, welcome and show concern for others by thinking of family and friends who may be poorly or unhappy. Children therefore learn to be kind and responsive to other people's needs, for example, when willingly giving up their seat at the snack table to allow two other friends to sit together.

The partnership with parents and staff is satisfactory. Parents find staff to be approachable and supportive, particularly with regard to the settling in arrangements. Parents value the interest staff take in their children's emotional and developmental needs as they feel they are leaving their children with people who know them.

Parents are satisfied with the verbal and written communication they receive about the setting, however, the absence of a parental notice board prevents their access to relevant documentation. Activity plans are not displayed although parents have some opportunities to be involved in their children's learning as they are advised of weekly topics and themes which they are encouraged to be involved with. Parents are not provided with sufficient information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and they do not yet have access to formal assessment records as these are currently being developed.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Significant changes within the staffing structure and organisation have weakened the operation plan within the setting. The management committee have played a distant role in the running of the playgroup which prevents them maintaining a sufficient knowledge of regulation. As a consequence, they have failed to appoint a manager with a suitable qualification or notify Ofsted of significant changes and they have not implemented known procedures for vetting. This is a breach of regulation.

Childcare staff work well as a team to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement. Children are well settled and happy in their play environment and they are well supported by staff. However, the organisation of some routines and activities do not consistently represent the needs of both older and younger children.

The leadership and management within the setting is satisfactory, although, the successful integration of care and education is compromised at this time by breaches of regulation. Playgroup staff are developing their confidence with regard to the delivery of the education provision due to the training and support they are receiving. Improved communication systems between staff and managers promote the sharing of information and help staff to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. Planning and observation systems are developing steadily to ensure children's progress towards the early learning goals is suitably challenged and monitored. Staff now recognise the importance of effective planning but they have not yet established rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the success of the curriculum to ensure continuous improvement.

There are currently significant gaps with regard to the range of documents kept and how they are maintained, in some cases this is as a consequence of a review process. However, legal documents, such as the registration certificate are not displayed as required and accident records do not always include relevant details. Documents which advise parents of procedures and others which support safety measures are not in place, this prevents childcare staff from understanding their roles and responsibilities. This is a breach of regulation.

The quality of care is beginning to steadily improve as the setting has outlined suitable action plans to address current weaknesses and the group are receiving intense support from the local early years development team.

However, overall, the setting does not meet the needs of children attending at this time.

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

At the time of the last inspection the playgroup were required to provide an action plan relating to the lack of qualified staff within the setting and to ensure appropriate staffing ratios were maintained at all times. They were also required to increase children's opportunities to be independent and improve documentation systems by developing the range of information within written policies and by ensuring children's records were contained relevant details.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff who are experienced in childcare. Two members of staff now hold relevant early years qualifications, however, the new playgroup manager is currently working towards the level 3 qualification required for her position. Children's welfare and safety is ensured as staffing ratios currently exceed minimum expectations. Children benefit from some opportunities to be independent in their play as they freely access the full range of equipment and activities. The setting are currently reviewing all documentation relating to policies and procedures and children's records to ensure they reflect current practice and regulatory requirements, however, children's health, safety and welfare is compromised because accident records do not contain all the required details and the procedure for lost children does not outline the direct action to be taken in the event a child goes missing.

Children have some opportunities to be independent as they frequently make choices about what they want to do and where they want to play. However, opportunities for them to develop their self-help skills during everyday routines, such as snack time, remain limited.

### **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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the playgroup leader holds the required level 3 qualification by September 2006
- ensure all staff and regular volunteers submit to a vetting procedure
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters, continue to develop the operational plan with regard to the settings policies and procedures and ensure all relevant documentation contains pertinent details.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### **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):

- devise an effective system to ensure children's educational progress is consistently recorded and monitored by designated staff



- continue to develop current planning and assessments systems to ensure a balanced curriculum across all six areas of learning, ensure plans link consistently to the stepping stones and make effective use of assessments to plan for children's next steps in their learning
- review the organisation of everyday routines and activities such as story time, to reflect the differentiation between children's ages, stages and abilities
- further develop systems for monitoring and evaluating the success of the educational provision to ensure continuous improvement.

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