



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101541

DfES Number: 524713

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	12/10/2004
Inspector Name	Miriam Sheila Brown

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Barnabas Church Playgroup
Setting Address	Orchard Way Cheltenham, Glos GL51 7JY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Barnabas Church Playgroup
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Barnabas Church Playgroup
Address	Orchard Way Cheltenham Glos GL51 7JY

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

St. Barnabas Church Playgroup opened in September 1972 and is well established in the local community. It is situated in the church rooms of St. Barnabas Church in the Hesters Way area of Cheltenham. The group have the use of two large and one smaller room within the building and the enclosed outdoor area.

The playgroup is run by a committee of staff and parents and is open from 09.00 until 11.30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and on Wednesday afternoons from 13.00 until 15.30, during school terms. It is registered to provide care for 26 children, aged between 2 and 5 years, at each session. At present there are 19 children on roll and of these, 12 are funded three-year-olds. The group do not currently support any children with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language.

Five members of staff work with the children, one of whom has completed the Certificate in Professional Management, level 3. Two other staff have level 2 qualifications and four staff have completed first aid and child protection training. Staff have many years experience within the playgroup and are supported by the local authority early years advisor and the Playgroup and Toddler Association.

How good is the Day Care?

St Barnabas Church Playgroup provides satisfactory care for children. Staff are experienced playworkers and are a well established team. Play areas are well organised and minimum adult to child ratios are exceeded. Some group policies do not provide sufficient detail to adequately inform staff and parents of specific procedures, for example sickness and child protection. There is currently no policy regarding lost or uncollected children.

Children's safety is very well addressed in all areas and staff are vigilant in supervising the children at all times. Basic hygiene is well addressed and accident and medication records are maintained and shared with parents. However,

permissions for emergency medical treatment have not been sought from them. A varied range of healthy snacks are provided for the children, some of which relate to topic work, for example porridge and breakfast cereals when talking about Goldilocks. Staff have received training and relevant paperwork is in place, to enable them to support children with special needs.

Staff provide a broad range of stimulating activities to support children's continuing development. They make regular observations and assessments to assist in planning to meet individual needs. Children are provided with many good opportunities to choose and make decisions in their play. Staff assist in developing their understanding through appropriate questioning involvement in play situations. Children are generally well behaved and supported by staff who provide good role models.

Parents are provided with information about the group through the welcome pack, regular notices, term plans and informal feedback. The existing procedures should parents wish to make a complaint, do not include contact details for Ofsted. Parent questionnaires strongly support the group and its staff.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to develop an action plan to ensure the leader attained suitable qualifications for her role. They also agreed to conduct regular risk assessments and to obtain written permission from parents prior to giving any medications.

The group have successfully addressed these issues. The playleader has completed a professional management course at level 3; daily risk assessments are completed and recorded and written permissions from parents are in place for any medications that have been given by staff.

Successful completion of these points helps to ensure that children are cared for in a more stimulating and safe environment and that both parents and staff have good, clear information regarding the administration of any medications.

What is being done well?

- All aspects of children's safety are well addressed. Daily risk assessments are completed at the start of each session as the building is used by a number of other groups when the playgroup is not operating. Staff supervise the children well and are vigilant about ensuring doors are secure at all times. The premises are clean, children encouraged to use good hygiene procedures and food is stored safely. Clear emergency evacuation procedures are displayed in each room.
- Good use is made of the play spaces and these are well organised to provide a variety of play activities at each session. Wall displays are bright and colourful and include many examples of children's work.
- Use of the group's extensive range of resources is well planned to ensure

that a balance of play opportunities are provided each day. Staff compensate well for children's lack of free access to all resources, which have to be packed away each day, by using toys and equipment on a pre-planned rota basis.

What needs to be improved?

- the information provided for parents and staff in some policy documents and statements
- specific information about group procedures if a child is lost or uncollected
- the seeking of permission from parents for emergency medical advice or treatment.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
2	Produce a procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost or uncollected	01/11/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and develop the sickness policy to provide clearer information regarding group procedures if children are unwell or infectious.
12	Include contact details for Ofsted in their role as regulatory body, within the complaints procedures.
13	Develop the child protection statement to provide clear information for

	staff and parents regarding all aspects of group procedures.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

St. Barnabas Playgroup provide a good quality nursery education and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's personal, social and emotional development, mathematical, physical and creative development is very good. Communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good.

Teaching is generally good overall and staff have a very good knowledge of the early learning goals and how these are used to assist in children's learning. Staff support the children appropriately and their behaviour is good, although there is scope to offer more support for some younger children. A good range of activities are provided to help children develop in most areas of learning however, some opportunities to encourage early writing, are missed and access to a range of construction materials and resources is limited. Staff have received training to enable them to care for children with special needs. Assessments and observations are completed regularly and used to assist in meeting children's needs.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. There is a positive staff team who work well together and who are committed to ongoing improvement. They regularly assess their own strengths but have been less able to identify some weaknesses in the provision, for example, in the partnership with parents. Staff, committee meetings and support from outside agencies assist in the assessment of education and issues from the last inspection have been addressed.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Information about the setting does not currently provide parents sufficient detail about the Foundation Stage and progress reports rely heavily on informal discussion. Parents are invited to provide items for group topic work and to join in with specific group celebrations. The parents notice board provides details of half-termly activities.

What is being done well?

- The daily book sharing scheme encourages children in their early reading, their enjoyment of books and how to care for them appropriately and gives parents a good opportunity to share playgroup activities with their children.
- Children are encouraged to care for themselves, each other and their immediate environment through well planned activities and group routines. They are increasingly independent in their self-care, understand and join in with tidying-up routines and enjoy fund raising for a variety of charitable causes such as the meningitis trust and red nose day.
- Children's early mathematical awareness is well supported in planned activities and daily routines, for example discussing the shape and size of ice blocks whilst also looking at how the ice is changing. In daily routines children

count the bear snacks they are going to eat and whilst waiting to move to another area, compare the length of line they are creating.

What needs to be improved?

- the methods used to keep parents informed of their children's continuing progress and the information provided for them about how the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones assist in their development
- the organisation and resourcing of the mark making area to provide a more inviting play area for children's free play
- the opportunities for children to construct and build using a variety of media and materials
- some minor aspects of support for younger children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group had two key issues from their last education inspection. The first was to make sure that the special educational needs policy linked directly to the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. The second, to make more frequent use of musical instruments to make music and to accompany singing.

Very good progress has been made in each of these areas.

Since the last inspection the person responsible for special educational needs has attended training and has put in place a clear policy and paperwork, both of which are in line with the code of practice and local authority guidelines.

Musical instruments are used on a regular basis, at the end of most sessions, for accompanying nursery rhyme singing and individual playing. These improvements have contributed positively to children's care and learning by helping to ensure there is a better balance of experience and that children's individual needs are met appropriately.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are very excited and enthusiastic about new activities discovering how making ice melts. They are confident in their play and keen to show each other their successes. Children behave appropriately at circle and quiet times, waiting for their turn and handing round the snack carefully. They are becoming familiar with group routines and rules and are competent in their self-care. They enjoy celebrating each others birthdays, going for local walks and fund raising for charities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk happily to staff and other adults. They respond well to simple instructions and express their likes and dislikes. They enjoy recalling past activities when talking about themed work. Children use books appropriately and are enthusiastic when choosing a book to take home each day. They write for a purpose, for example, naming celebration cards but do not regularly use the mark making area in their free play. Opportunities to develop their hand and eye coordination are good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are confident in their number work. They enjoy counting with staff throughout the session, for example, counting crisp bears at snack time, and practise simple problem solving in their play. Children compare, match and measure, making bar charts of favourite cereals, estimating how many children in a line and matching shapes and colours. They are starting to use appropriate mathematical language such as longer and shorter, in their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore and investigate through a wide range of themed work for example, finding out what happens if salt is put on ice and watching butterflies hatch from a chrysalis. They build using construction sets but have few opportunities to use recycled materials with a range of joining resources, in their free play. Children have a growing understanding of time and place which is well supported by group routines and planned activities such as local walks to the post office.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have many good opportunities each day to develop their small and large muscle control. They have a good sense of their personal space, dancing and riding wheeled vehicles without bumping into each other. Children are becoming increasingly dexterous using pens, pencils, glue sticks and other small equipment and tools. They have visits from the local dentist and staff talk about keeping healthy by washing hands at appropriate times and keeping safe in the sun.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children recognise and name the principal colours and enjoy a wide variety of craft activities such as printing and collage work. They listen to a variety of music and make their own music using instruments to accompany their singing. In the role play area children act out familiar domestic scenes such as ironing and cooking and use their imaginations well throughout their play. Children are developing the use of their senses well in everyday activities and through the planned 'senses' topic.	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- provide parents with more regular information about their children's progress and development and how the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones assist in this development
- provide a greater variety of mark making resources to offer a more inviting area for children to use in their free play
- provide more opportunities for children to build and construct using a variety of media and joining materials.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.