Mills Hill Playgroup
Mills Hill Baptist Church, Mills Hill Road, Chadderton, Oldham, M24 2FD

**Inspection date** 08/01/2015
**Previous inspection date** 18/10/2010

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**The quality and standards of the early years provision**

**This provision is inadequate**

- The provider does not carry out robust checks to fully assess the suitability of all practitioners. This compromises children's safety and well-being.
- Training does not focus sufficiently on safeguarding arrangements and not all practitioners know the reporting procedure should they have a child protection concern.
- Practitioners do not seek to engage parents sufficiently in order to promote learning at home or encourage parents to share children's achievements from home to provide continuity in their learning.
- Practitioners do not plan sufficiently for all children's individual learning. As a result, activities lack adequate challenge.
- Practitioners do not provide children with daily access to the outdoor area. Consequently, children's learning is not maximised and extended in this environment.

**It has the following strengths**

- Children are happy and develop positive relationships with each other and practitioners within the playgroup.
Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, and spoke with practitioners and children.
- The inspector looked at observation and assessment records of the children.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider’s self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of the parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector
Suzanne Fenwick
Full report

Information about the setting

Mills Hill Playgroup opened in 1987 and is on the Early Years Register. It is run by a management committee and operates from Mills Hill Baptist Church in Chadderton, Oldham. The playgroup has use of three playrooms and associated facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor area. The playgroup employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds level 2. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm, during term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 20 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- implement an effective system to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children, are suitable, and maintain records about the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed, including details of references obtained

- ensure that all practitioners are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues to protect children's welfare

- implement ways of engaging and supporting parents in guiding their children's learning by improving the exchange of information and encouraging parents to share their children's achievements from home

- ensure that practitioners reflect on the different ways in which children learn and plan challenging activities which meet the individual learning needs of the range of children who attend

- ensure children have daily access to the outdoor area to maximise and extend their learning and development in this environment, particularly those children who learn more effectively through outdoor activity.
**Inspection report:** Mills Hill Playgroup, 08/01/2015

**Inspection judgements**

**How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Children are not making sufficient progress in their learning and development because practitioners are not planning adequately to meet the individual needs and learning styles of all children on a regular basis. As a result, activities are not always sufficiently challenging the children in all areas of learning and development. Children do not currently have access to the outdoor area. As a result, children's learning needs are not being fully met, in particular those groups of children who learn more effectively when outdoors. However, the indoor environment is adequately resourced. There are areas of provision set up for the children in the main room. For example, children enjoy playing with wet sand and, as a result, they are exploring some textures. Practitioners are available at the beginning and end of every session to talk to parents regarding their child's achievements and care needs. However, there are no strategies in place to engage and support parents in taking an active role in their children's learning, particularly sharing information about the learning that takes place at home. Therefore, children are not receiving continuity in learning.

Practitioners are friendly and approachable. They mainly interact well with the children, offering them support if needed. Practitioners create a relaxed atmosphere in the indoor environment. Resources are organised and accessible to all children, enabling them to choose what they want to play with. There is a sufficient balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities, although the specific focus on learning objectives and the purpose of some activities is not always clear. Children happily engage in a suitable variety of activities that reflect some of their interests and choices. For example, children playing with play dough are supported by a practitioner who demonstrates how to model the dough and encourages the children to engage in imaginative play, which maintains their attention. As a result, children are developing their small muscle control in preparation for writing. However, practitioners are not sufficiently planning next steps to ensure children are ready for their next stage in learning and school.

Children's communication and language development is supported through practitioners spending time reading and sharing stories and singing songs with the children at regular intervals. For example, during group time a practitioner engages the group of children in a story through the use of props, using an animated voice and making the story interactive. As a result, the children demonstrate that they can recall past events as they recite parts of the story. The environment is rich in print, for example, resources are clearly labelled, which supports children's literacy development. Practitioners provide the children with opportunities to engage in more energetic play in the large hall. For example, children enjoy riding bikes and practising throwing and catching balls. As a result, their physical development is being adequately supported in this indoor environment. Practitioners have experience of supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They know what children should be doing and have sufficient knowledge to recognise any gaps in achievement, and alert parents and external agencies if they identify any concerns.
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The provider's lack of knowledge and understanding of how to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage compromises the children's safety and well-being. Children and parents are given a false sense of security as the setting is breaching the safeguarding and welfare requirements with regard to assessing the suitability of practitioners. Children learn some appropriate safety messages; for example, practitioners demonstrate how to safely use tools, such as scissors. Children are encouraged to be physically active in the large play area, which promotes the importance of physical exercise and develops their large muscle control. For example, children access small climbing apparatus and take part in team games, such as parachute activities. As a result, they are learning how to manage their own safety and risk and play cooperatively together. However, children do not have daily access to the outdoor play area and this restricts their opportunities to be physically active in the fresh air.

Children appear happy and settled in the playgroup as they form generally good relationships with caring practitioners. This is because there is a key-person system in place. Key persons work with parents and children when they begin attending the playgroup. Sufficient information is gathered from parents, such as specific dietary needs, medication and personal routines. This ensures continuity in children's physical and emotional well-being. The practitioners are kind and caring towards the children, which supports their well-being and sense of security. For example, children approach practitioners for help when they need it and practitioners are genuinely interested when children tell them about their experiences from home.

Children cooperate well with each other and know what behaviour is acceptable as they play. Practitioners reinforce their positive behaviour with sensitive reminders, such as the importance of sharing and taking turns, as well as remembering to walk in the playroom. Children have access to a sufficient range of resources and equipment which they are able to access independently. They develop independence and self-care skills as practitioners encourage them to manage their own personal care needs where appropriate, wash their hands and serve their own snack. These are practical skills that help to prepare them as they progress through to school. Children are encouraged to enjoy their food and appreciate healthy choices, in order to promote their growth and development. They enjoy a range of nutritious snacks, including a variety of fresh fruit, and drinks are constantly available. All children are encouraged to develop appropriate hygiene routines and learn that they must wash their hands before eating. This helps to minimise the risk of cross-infection.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership of the playgroup is not effective in ensuring that all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. This results in a number of breaches of the legal requirements. This has a significant impact on the children's safety and well-being and their learning and development. Children's safety and welfare are not fully assured. The practitioner recruitment and selection procedures are not robust as the provider does
not always advertise posts appropriately and relies on using people known to the setting. This means that some background checks on prospective practitioners are not always carried out, such as references and past employment history. The provider is also not maintaining the required information regarding identity checks and vetting processes. The provider is, however, aware of the duty to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks on practitioners and committee members. The designated lead practitioner for safeguarding has attended appropriate training. This enables her to recognise the signs and symptoms that may indicate abuse and to be clear about how to follow up any concerns promptly. However, the provider has not ensured that all practitioners are appropriately trained and informed about the safeguarding policy and procedures, to fully protect children and ensure that swift action would be taken in the event of a child protection concern. Practitioners complete daily risk assessments, in addition to further assessments of specific activities that children participate in. Consequently, most areas and activities accessed by children are safe and any hazards are identified and removed.

Following the last inspection, the provider has taken some steps to improve the provision. The manager now monitors practitioners' observation records of the children. However, this process is not sufficiently monitoring the practitioners' planning of children's next steps in learning. As a result, activities are still not sufficiently tailored to meet the individual needs of individual or groups of children. There has been little improvement regarding the engagement of parents in their children's learning and development. Children are cared for by suitably qualified practitioners. The manager communicates a desire to improve the quality of the service through the use of basic self-evaluation and reflective practice. However, any actions addressed are not sharply focused on improving the quality of learning experiences and opportunities for children, such as their continued lack of access to the outdoor area.

Parents spoken to at the inspection indicate their children enjoy attending the playgroup. They say practitioners are approachable and enthusiastic. The manager keeps parents informed about events and dates through regular verbal updates. The manager has established good relationships with the local primary schools, and children are visited by their new teacher prior to making their move between settings. This means that they experience a smooth move from this playgroup to school.
What inspection judgements mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Requires improvement</td>
<td>The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met</td>
<td></td>
<td>There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not met</td>
<td></td>
<td>There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.</td>
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Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Unique reference number</th>
<th>508046</th>
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<tr>
<td>Local authority</td>
<td>Oldham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspection number</td>
<td>877244</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of provision</td>
<td>Childcare - Non-Domestic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration category</td>
<td>Childcare - Non-Domestic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age range of children</td>
<td>0 - 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of places</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Number of children on roll</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of provider</td>
<td>Mills Hill Playgroup Chadderton Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of previous inspection</td>
<td>18/10/2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone number</td>
<td>07944989814</td>
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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools
and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder’s own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.
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