



Elm Ridge Methodist Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	508023
Inspection date	13 October 2005
Inspector	Lindsey Pollock
Setting Address	Carmel Road South, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 8DJ
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Registered person	Elm Ridge Methodist Playgroup
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Elm Ridge Methodist Playgroup has been registered since 1991. It operates from three rooms in a modern church hall. There is a secure outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local and wider areas. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 during term time only.

There are currently 55 children aged from 2 to 4 years on roll, of these, 11 children

receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Procedures are in place to support children who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

Five full time staff and four part time staff work with the children. Five have suitable qualifications and three are currently working towards a higher qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff have implemented efficient hygiene routines to protect and promote children's health. High standards of cleanliness are maintained in the facility to ensure children are cared for in a clean, healthy environment. Good systems are in place for addressing individual children's health needs, for example, comprehensive documentation for the recording of any dietary and medication requirements. Staff ensure they work very closely with parents to facilitate children's growth and development.

Children are beginning to develop an awareness of good hygiene procedures. This is helped by the staff explaining the importance of following good routines and by setting a good example. Children are reminded to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They are beginning to manage their personal care with increasing independence.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks including fruit and are developing an awareness of healthy eating. They are encouraged to drink regularly and staff recognise other factors which affect how much children need to drink. Staff are aware that some children have special dietary needs and ensure these are met.

The programme for physical development is good. Children are becoming increasingly agile as they move confidently around the playgroup and in the outdoor area. They thoroughly enjoy their time in the garden and skilfully ride and manoeuvre bikes and other wheeled resources as they play in the fresh air. Fine motor skills are developing well as children successfully use tools for a variety of tasks, such as painting, drawing, cutting, spreading and in sand and water play. Their spatial awareness is developing well as they negotiate space both in and outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment which is maintained to a high standard. Much thought has been given to the organisation of space within the playgroup to ensure this is utilised to its maximum potential. Children are able to independently access a wide range of good quality and interesting resources. Staff carefully monitor and supervise children's choice of toys to make sure they are safe,

stimulating and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Staff sensitively help children to gain an awareness of safety both indoors and outdoors by talking and explaining to them and by setting a good example. They have a good awareness of children's constantly developing abilities and take appropriate safety measures to avoid dangerous situations. Detailed risk assessments are conducted and these have identified most potential hazards. High staffing levels means children are not left unsupervised.

Children are well protected. Staff are committed to ensuring all children are safe and protected and consider their welfare as paramount. They are confident to follow procedures to ensure children are protected from harm and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, safe and secure and enjoy their time at the setting. They settle quickly and are eager to participate and highly motivated. Staff are sensitive towards their individual needs and meet these fully. Warm relationships with the staff increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. They display emerging self confidence and feel good about themselves. Good quality adult-child interactions are supportive of communication skills. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in the many interesting activities available to them. All children are encouraged to participate fully. Staff are beginning to use early years guidance effectively, such as Birth to Three Matters to provide interesting and engaging daily experiences for children.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children participate in a wide range of stimulating, relevant activities related to their learning needs. They access varied good quality resources which support their educational development. Children are eager to learn, are becoming self assured in their play and are confident to try new experiences. They are developing good social skills and behave extremely well. They listen intently to stories and enjoy looking at books independently. Some children are able to write their name independently and others are beginning to give meaning to marks. They do not however have sufficient opportunities to attempt writing for different purposes. Children's mathematical development is progressing well, they enjoy using numbers in activities and in songs and are beginning to recognise numerals. They enjoy exploration and investigation and are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the world. They are interested in the world in which they live, in the weather, are gaining an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others and demonstrate impressive skill when completing simple programmes on the computer. Children enjoy singing rhymes and use their bodies to express themselves. They engage in imaginative and role play as they play in the home corner and when they become magicians to mix paint together to make new colours.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Planning covers all areas of learning and relates to stepping stones and early learning goals. Staff find out about

children's interests and needs and interact with them effectively to reinforce and consolidate learning. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and know what the desired outcomes are for individual children. Good systems for assessment are in place, these are used effectively to inform future planning. Staff find out exactly where children are developmentally on admission and review this regularly to ensure children continue to progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting. Staff help the children to experience a sense of community, compassion and concern for others. The children have varied opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through activities, visitors to the nursery and outings. Planned activities and accessible resources help to raise children's awareness of the diversity of society. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff successfully encourage children to take turns, during circle time one child reminded his friend that 'you have to share'. Rules and boundaries are clearly explained to the children to help them come to know right from wrong.

Partnerships with parents and carers of all children including those who receive nursery education is good and contributes significantly to their children's well-being in the nursery. Parents are welcomed into the playgroup and are fully consulted about their child's care and education and are actively encouraged to be involved. They receive clear information regarding the setting and regular newsletters keep parents updated on themes and of how they can be involved at home. Parents speak highly of the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. This enhances children's care and education. Rigorous and robust systems are in place to ensure staff are, and remain suitable to work with children. Clear induction procedures and use of staff appraisals helps to ensure that the settings policies and procedures are consistently applied. Staff are motivated to develop and improve their practice and work together effectively as a committed team. Children's experiences are significantly enhanced by staff's access to appropriate training and development opportunities. Clearly established monitoring and evaluation processes enable staff to identify strengths and areas for improvement so that children continue to make good progress.

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision are in place and are readily available for inspection. All are reviewed and updated on a regular basis and most contain the relevant

information. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection children's care and education has been enhanced by the increase in qualified staff working in the playgroup. Minimum standards for qualification requirements are now met.

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.

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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):

- increase safety by ensuring water temperature in hand washing facilities does not pose a hazard for children and by preventing their access to all electrical sockets
- develop planning and provision of activities in line with Birth to Three Matters
- ensure the written policy for child protection is based on the procedures laid out in the booklet 'What to Do If You're Worried A Child Is being Abused'.

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):

- extend the opportunities for children to develop skills for writing and ascribing meaning to marks

- continue to develop and monitor nursery education to ensure children remain appropriately challenged.

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