



Queens Road Methodist Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133071
Inspection date	27 January 2006
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Setting Address	Queens Road Methodist Church, Queens Road, Keynsham, Bristol, BS31 2NN
Telephone number	0117 9877753
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Registered person	Queens Road Methodist Church Pre-School
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?

Queens Road Methodist Church Pre-School is located in the Methodist Church hall and was first established in 1968. The group has access to the main hall, side room, kitchen, toilets and small enclosed outside area. The pre-school serves the local area. It is managed by a church and parent committee.

The pre-school operates Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 hours to 12.00 hours and in the afternoon from 12.30 hours until 15.00

hours. There is no session on a Tuesday afternoon. Registration is for a maximum of 30 children from 2½ to 5-years. There are currently 66 children on roll and of these there are 35 funded 3-year-olds and 14 funded 4-year-olds. The provision caters for children with special educational needs. There are currently no children with English as an additional language.

There are 9 members of staff, 7 of whom hold a relevant child care qualification. The number of staff present at each session varies according to the number of children. Queens Road Methodist Church Pre-school are accredited members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. Support on the education programme is provided by Bath and North East Somerset Early Years Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted. They play in a clean environment. The risk of children becoming ill is minimised as the clear sickness policy is included in the contract with parents. Staff follow hygienic procedures, such as using table clothes at snack time. Children learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine and know that they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack. As sinks are of child height they are independent and know their own small towel which they have brought from home. Some topics help children to develop more understanding of how to promote their own health as they are visited by a dental nurse and optician. Children are further protected as all staff are qualified to administer first aid and accidents are appropriately managed, recorded and shared with parents. There is a suitable procedure for managing medication.

Children do not get thirsty as they are able to ask for a drink from the covered jug. Snack time is a social occasion when children sit in key groups. Before helping themselves from the selection of fruit they say a short prayer. Children are aware that fruit and vegetables are healthy, but are unable to identify what foods are not so healthy.

In the summer staff set up some activities outdoors so children are able to move freely between in and outdoors. They are protected from the elements as they wear hats, shade is created with parasols and a gazebo, and parents apply sun screen. Before they are able to go outdoors in winter to explore the snow children know that they must wear a coat. The group participate in the 'Fun Fit Scheme' and through regular practise children develop action skills, such as running, balance and co-ordination. Children have access to physical activity throughout the session. They use rhythm ribbons to move to the tune 'Hop, skip and jump', on other occasions they crawl through a long tunnel. Towards the end of the session all children participate in a group activity and pretend to be jumping, runner and string beans. As they do so they develop large muscle skills jumping, stretching and curling up into a ball.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel welcome at the pre-school as they receive a personal greeting from a member of staff as they enter the premises. They hang their coats on low level coat pegs on which they also place their name card. The room looks bright as there are posters and children are proud of their artwork which is displayed at their height. As the group divide into two for much of the session children have a large space in which to play. They move around freely and play undisturbed by peers as activities are placed in clearly divided areas on tables and mats. As they listen to a story in the book corner they relax and move the cushions to suit themselves. Activities are set out before children arrive and on entering the hall children immediately go and find something that interests them, such as, the cars and garage. They remain interested as there is a broad range of clean, safe toys and books available on a daily basis, which cover all areas of learning.

Children play in a safe, secure environment and are only released to authorised parents and carers. Staff check the environment on a daily basis to ensure there are no potential hazards and use a check sheet, so that nothing is forgotten. The named health and safety representative undertakes more detailed checks every two months. When reviewing accident reports further preventative measures are introduced if a hazard is identified. During the session staff are vigilant and if children place themselves in danger. For example, when climbing on a table children are advised to sit on a chair as they may fall. Children know how to protect themselves by walking in a line between different rooms, pretending to be dragons or rabbits, rather than running. In the event of a fire children know how to evacuate the premises as they practise the fire drill on a monthly basis. Occasionally a fire officer visits the pre-school to reinforce the danger of fire and allows the children to explore the fire engine. Children are aware of the dangers of the road as they are visited by a crossing patrol and police officer. Further protection is offered to children as staff are knowledgeable about local child protection procedures and make children aware that they are able to say "no".

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to be at pre-school. They form close friendships with both staff and peers. Having brought in a toy from home they are keen to show staff. Having shared her doll one child then stated that she will place it on "the don't touch table so she is safe". They call out to friends and when their friend does not respond gently tap them on the arm. When one child decides to go and play with something else they ask their friend if they are also leaving the toy farm. One child explained that a monkey on a playing card looked sad and he thought it was because he had no friends to play with. They develop independence as they try to put on their own coats and shoes at home time. When creating a collage dinosaur they select from a range of resources and as they do so use fine muscle skills. However, as they seal down envelopes that contain their cutting they are not given the opportunity to break of the

cellotape using the tape dispenser. Children are keen to learn and develop confidence as staff reinforce each achievement with praise.

Children enjoy being at the pre-school where learning is fun. As they guess what items are in the sound box they show an understanding as to what words begin with the letter 'c'. From the clues given, such as an animal that lives in the dessert, a vegetable, they quickly guess the correct answer. The game also extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world as they are informed that calculators are often used in offices and encouraged to say the word calculator. Communication, language and literacy are well promoted. They talk about life outside pre-school and can recall a visit to Avon Valley Country Park. Language is used to express their views and to negotiate with peers as to who they should be in their imaginary play. More able children are able to proudly talk in a large group about the toy they have brought in from home and when shown a puzzle relating to the Chinese New Year at register, one child confidently announced that she had already done it. Children enjoy listening to stories and in small groups try to get close to a member of staff as she reads 'The Gruffalo'. They are just as enthusiastic about stories in a large group and when told it is story time quickly move forward. As they listen to the story of 'Sleepy Sam' they laugh at the sheep eating the washing and at the end are able to recall the names of the people in the book. Children are learning to recognise their name in print and more able children are able to write their own name.

Mathematical development is promoted throughout the pre-school session. Children count many things such as the number of candles on the birthday cake and threaded beads so that many can count beyond ten. As they thread the beads they are able to identify circles, squares, stars and semi-circles. Children are enthusiastic as they ask staff to look at the length of their threading and compare it to their own height. When singing the rhyme 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears' they demonstrate through actions that they are able to identify the difference in huge, small and tiny.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff make learning fun and provide children with an example through participation. When using the rhythm ribbons as well as listening to the words of the rhymes, children follow the lead set by staff as they hop, skip and jump. All staff have input into planning, although one member of staff, a qualified teacher, assumes responsibility for writing down the details. Planning is organised into weekly topics which are then broken down into daily session plans. Daily session plans are basic and include the range of resources, specific daily activity relating to the topic and small group work. However staff meet and discuss in detail the activities for the following week, including any special considerations or extensions for more able children and this works well. There is also a different number, colour and letter for each week. For part of each session children go into key groups for snacks and a specific focussed activity. Often activities are planned such as listening to the nursery rhyme of 'Little Miss Muffett' and then trying to organise three pictures in the correct sequence. When children place the cards from right to left, staff point out that it would be good to have the cards going the opposite way, the same as writing. At other times the key worker uses this time to focus on an activity which is particularly pertinent to the key children.

Staff continually monitor children's progress against the profiles which they have taken from the Foundation Stage, but have rephrased to focus on specific activities so that the information is more relevant to parents. Although the profiles relate particularly well to the first two stepping stones there are gaps in monitoring children's progress against the latter two stepping stones. Whilst this is acceptable for most children, it does mean that the progress for very able children may not be monitored or fully extended. Key workers identify targets for each child against each area of learning based on their current stage of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children new to the pre-school settle quickly as they visit with a parent in advance of the start date. Parents complete a form giving details about their child's likes, dislikes and level of independence which are made available to the child's key worker in order that there is some understanding of the child's individual needs. As the relationship between parent and key worker is fostered children feel secure. Children feel special as they are each given an opportunity to show and talk about the toy they have brought in from home. They feel extra special when it is their birthday as everyone sings 'Happy Birthday' and they get to blow out the candles on the cake. Staff sensitively meet children's special needs by working in close partnership with parents and following the Code of Practice.

Children's spiritual, social and cultural development are fostered. Prior to snack children say a short prayer. They are well behaved, polite and show consideration for others. For example, when children were informed that there was a baby asleep in the corridor they crept past so that the baby was not disturbed. One child fetched a chair from elsewhere in the room so his friend could also sit at the sand. Respect is shown for the environment as children sometimes assist in tidying up. Children are familiar with their local community as they are visited by the minister, police and fire brigade. They go on nature walks in Keynsham Park and go to the library. Reception teachers from the local schools visit the group so the transition to school is less traumatic. The group support charities such as Children in Need and children are made aware of the reasons behind the fund raising. As children play with readily accessible resources reflecting positive images of our diverse society and signs around the hall are written in nine languages, they learn to appreciate difference. They learn about the traditions of others as they celebrate a range of festivals. For the Chinese New Year they were able to look and touch a good range of resources from that country, such as a silk dragon and decorated red envelope. They were able to listen to someone say Happy New Year in Chinese and later painted an envelope for someone special. Some children wanted to paint more than one, so that there was one for each parent, another child said he had two special friends.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents comment positively about the provision and the warm welcome provided by staff. Parents new to the group are provided with a nicely illustrated prospectus. The operational plan is always available to parents along with other literature which may be useful, for example books to share with children about specific subjects such as a death in the family. They are kept informed

of practices within the setting via monthly newsletters and the notice board. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by assisting at sessions and taking in items from home relating to the topic. Where the key worker feels there is a specific area of learning where parents can assist their children, they are provided with samples of how this can be achieved. Parents are well informed of children's progress as they are regularly updated by the key worker and are invited to look at their child's records, report and samples of work prior to the formal reviews which are held twice a year.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. Although recruitment procedures are not rigorous, the clear induction makes staff and students aware of their role and responsibilities. However recruitment is rare as there is a stable staff team; the last person joined the group in 2001 and the leader has been with the group since 1988. The welfare officer undertakes bi-annual appraisals to check the ongoing suitability of staff. Keen to extend their skills and knowledge staff have undertaken many training courses during the past year. Staff provide a child-focussed, learning environment. Good communication systems such as charts indicating areas of staff responsibility on any given day and drops for notes to colleagues with whom there is little contact ensures that children's welfare is promoted at all times. Sessions are well organised and children receive a high level of support as staffing is above the minimum requirements and staff are appropriately deployed. Children are actively occupied at all times and potential waiting times, such as hand washing before snack are reduced as children go in key groups. Where needed the daily routine is varied slightly at the end of the session to ensure each child who has brought something in from home is given time to share with their peers. The detailed operational plan, which is always available to parents is continually reviewed. Readily accessible documentation complies with the requirements of the National Standards. It is confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents.

Leadership and management are good. The leader is passionate about her work and continually strives to make improvements. She provides clear guidelines for staff and is aware of their particular strengths such as working on a one-to-one basis with children where required. The leader encourages staff to develop their own skills by taking on areas of responsibility such as, health and safety. The leader is able to identify strengths and weaknesses within the education programme. She values the strong commitment of staff and the fact that they work additional hours at home to ensure paperwork is up to date. She has sought to address the constraint on children's access to natural materials.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection staff agreed to meet four recommendations. Children are given more opportunities to socialise at snack times as they sit in key groups and are joined by their key worker. They do not become thirsty as they are able to ask for a drink of

water from the jug which is within view and staff offer a drink of water if they feel a child has a cough. Children receive a high level of support as adult to child ratios are always above minimum requirements and staff are appropriately deployed. The policies and procedures are included in the prospectus so parents are fully informed about the provision. Parents are also able to access the operational plan at any time.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- help children to understand what foods are less healthy to eat so that they are able to make informed decisions about their own wellbeing
- ensure recruitment procedures are rigorous

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):

- continue to develop monitoring and planning so that more able children are sufficiently 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:

