

Church of the Ascension Playgroup

Chatterton Hall, School Road, Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM, WEST MIDLANDS, B28 8JQ

Inspection date	26/02/2014
Previous inspection date	29/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- There is a limited understanding of safeguarding procedures and practice is not secure. Therefore, children's welfare is ineffectively safeguarded.
- The provider does not have a sufficiently good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation stage to ensure staff promote children's learning and well-being effectively at all times.
- A record of the vetting of some committee members is not available.
- The quality of teaching is not stimulating and activities do not provide appropriate challenges to ensure all children make good progress from their starting points.
- Activities are overly adult-led and children are not encouraged to express their ideas to make links with what they already know.
- Information for parents about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how play activities help children to learn and develop is not available.

It has the following strengths

- Children can play with a wide range of resources and they are happy in the playgroup because staff are caring and support them to form strong bonds.

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 checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and the chairperson of the committee.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff.
- The inspector took account of the view of parents and carers on the day.
- The inspector looked at documents, including children's learning journals.
- The inspector observed activities in the room and during outside play.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises.

Inspector

Adelaide Griffith

Full report

Information about the setting

Church of the Ascension Playgroup opened in 1993 and is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents and members of the community. It is registered on the Early Years Register and operates from the church hall adjacent to the Church of the Ascension, in the Hall Green area of Birmingham. The playgroup serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The playgroup opens five days a week, from 9.15am to 12.15pm, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in one large room and have access to two enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 27 children on roll in the early years age group. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The playgroup supports children for whom English is an additional language.

There are currently four staff working directly with children, all of whom have appropriate qualifications. One member of staff holds a qualification at level 6 and one at level 4; two members of staff hold qualifications at level 3. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that all staff and members of the committee understand the safeguarding policy and have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues
- ensure that you implement the safeguarding policy, to effectively safeguard children
- provide stimulating activities that promote the learning of all children effectively to ensure they make good progress and achieve their full potential
- provide more opportunities for child-led play and support children to express ideas by responding to their developing needs and interests and by taking account of what they know
- provide clear information for parents about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how play activities help children to learn and develop
- ensure a record of the vetting of all persons who work in the playgroup, including committee members, is always available to keep children safe
- develop knowledge and understanding of the provider's responsibilities as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to ensure children learn and develop well and to provide an environment in which children are kept safe by promoting their welfare at all times.

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

Teaching is poor and children do not make adequate progress. Although, staff have a reasonable understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching does not stimulate children. Activities are mostly adult-led and do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to be actively involved in their learning. For example, staff ask open-ended questions during activities but do not allow sufficient time for children to respond and to develop ideas. Therefore, the child-led element of play is not nurtured to extend their thinking appropriately. Activities are mundane because staff invite children to the table to cut shapes and on completion children move away. Staff do not make links with what children already know and can do by helping them to look for shapes in the environment. Therefore, learning is not meaningful to help children make sense of what they do. Staff provide challenge for some children but not for others. For instance, during

a paint mixing activity, staff ask children aged four years to explain what happens when they mix purple and green paint. However, children aged two are not effectively supported to recognise the colours, including the colour, green. Consequently, they do not receive tailored guidance to promote their individual learning which does not adequately prepare them for their next stage in learning. Staff observe children's preferences for play with specific toys and plan activities accordingly. But they do not plan all aspects of the activity and do not adapt these according to children's age and stage of development. For instance, they have not thought through some additional activities that can help younger children to develop their small muscle skills before they use scissors. Staff deliver some activities that children enjoy, such as story time. Their understanding of number problems is growing as they sing nursery rhymes and then count the number of buns left each time one is taken away.

Staff encourage parents to provide information about what their children can do when they start in the playgroup. During play activities staff observe children and then plan for their further learning. The 'progress check at age two' is completed and staff discuss with parents the next steps that they wish to include, for instance, to focus on colours. However, some parents do not think that staff provide guidance on how they can support their children to achieve their full potential. This means that the continuity in learning is not effectively maintained for all children. As a result, their individual needs are not met. Conversely, staff are competent at following guidance from parents with regard to using methods shared by external professionals. Accordingly, they follow through with appropriate support for children who need extra help to develop their speaking skills. Children who speak English as an additional language can communicate with staff who speak their home language. Staff encourage children to count during activities and promote the recognition of letters and names.

The environment is well-resourced with a wide selection of toys and equipment. Children can easily get hold of resources and choose activities. For instance, some children stand at the writing table making marks on paper. They mount the steps to the wooden climbing frame which is erected indoors and enjoy play in the role play corner. They develop aspects of their play independent of staff and also choose activities according to their preferences.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The well-being of children is not effectively promoted due to inappropriate safeguarding practice in the playgroup. Nevertheless, children form strong bonds of attachment with staff, who welcome them warmly on arrival. Staff help children to settle by encouraging them to bring in toys from home. These familiar objects help children to feel comfortable and contribute positively to the move from home to the playgroup. Owing to the use of one large room children develop relationships with all staff and learn to form friendships with others in different age groups. Children gain an awareness of what to expect before they leave the playgroup because staff read stories about nurseries. Therefore, these arrangements prepare them adequately for their move to new settings.

Staff have a good understanding of promoting children's behaviour by using consistent methods which work for all children. Therefore, children learn the boundaries of behaviour and are well-behaved. Children move around freely in the environment and are confident to play with others. Some younger children feel more secure as they stay fairly close to siblings. Staff interact constantly with children and join in with activities, resulting in their sense of ease in the playgroup. Children's independence skills are developing well through all activities. For instance, they choose resources and learn to pour drinks at snack time. Staff help children to gain a clear understanding of healthy lifestyles due to the wholesome snacks and opportunities to play outside daily. Children learn to take sensible risks when they use scissors and hold these correctly to keep themselves safe. The welcoming environment and the ease with which children can select resources help them to feel at home in the playgroup.

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

The safeguarding arrangements in the playgroup are inadequate. The members of the committee do not have a secure understanding of their responsibilities under the Early Years Foundation Stage. Therefore, they cannot guide and direct the practice of staff effectively. A wide range of information is displayed in the playgroup, setting out safeguarding procedures to be followed. However, these have not been followed effectively. Although, staff and designated senior persons have completed safeguarding training there is limited understanding of the procedures. This means that children are at risk and their welfare needs are not met. Notification regarding child protection concerns are not made within the deadline and Ofsted is not informed when committee members change annually. These are breaches of the legal requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Information relating to the vetting of some members of the committee is not available. Although, they may help out in the playgroup, they do so under supervision; therefore, the impact on children is minimal.

Adequate recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children. The manager discusses ongoing suitability with staff on a regular basis to ensure they can continue to work with children. Risk assessments are used competently to identify where action must be taken. For example, the manager has made changes in the environment to ensure the temperature in the playgroup is appropriate for children. The manager reviews the planning and assessment of children's progress but has not yet established the monitoring of staff's practice. As a result, they have not had opportunities to clarify where improvements can be made to promote all children's learning effectively. The self-evaluation lacks rigour and does not take account of the weaknesses and their impact on children. The professional development of staff is maintained through attendance on courses. For instance, the behaviour management co-ordinator shares information obtained on a course with staff. Consequently, all staff have developed appropriate skills in managing a wide range of behaviours and this provides consistency for children. Regular supervision sessions ensure staff can discuss their role in the playgroup.

The partnerships with parents are satisfactory, but some parents do not receive sufficient guidance to promote their children's development. Parents do not receive clear information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how staff follow the framework to promote learning through play. Therefore, parents are not fully supported to help their children's learning. The working relationships with other professionals are established. This means that staff share information consistently to provide support for children who attend other settings.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	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.
Grade 2	Good	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.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	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. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	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.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

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

Unique reference number	509383
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	955402
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	Church of the Ascension Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	29/03/2011
Telephone number	0121 7786835 or 0121 624 6517

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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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