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Church of the Ascension Pre-School
Playgroup
Chatterton Hall
School Road, Hall Green
BIRMINGHAM
WEST MIDLANDS
B28 8JQ

Our Reference 509383

Dear Church of the Ascension Playgroup Committee

Monitoring for provision judged as inadequate

An Ofsted inspector, Rachel Wyatt, monitored your provision on 18/09/2014 following your inspection where the provision was judged to be inadequate.

Outcome of monitoring

As a result of our inspection on 03/07/2014, we sent you a notice to improve. If you were set actions at the inspection, or as a result of our subsequent monitoring or investigations, these are included at the end of this letter.

During the monitoring visit the inspector discussed with you the steps you have taken to address the actions raised in the notice to improve. The inspector accompanied you on a walk round the areas of the premises used by the pre-school and she observed interactions between the staff and children during activities and routines. The inspector spoke to you, the manager and staff and a local authority early years consultant for safeguarding and welfare who was present for part of the visit. The inspector discussed and looked at your planning and assessment records and your current self-evaluation form and discussed your arrangements for monitoring safety and staff's performance. She discussed and checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff working with the children and your arrangements for notifying Ofsted about changes to the management committee.

The inspector found that you have updated your self-evaluation form and agreed action plans initiated by the local authority early years consultants working with you. You have begun to address all of the actions raised at the last inspection as well as those raised by the local authority. However, most of the changes you have made have only been implemented recently. Therefore, it is too early to assess the impact of, for instance your revised observation, assessment and planning procedures on children's learning and development and the quality of staff's teaching is still

variable. In addition, the inspector found that your evaluation procedures are not robust enough to ensure weaknesses in managing some aspects of safety or delays in the completion of some committee members' suitability checks are promptly addressed.

The inspector found that you have improved staff's deployment and their supervision of children during outdoor play and exploratory and creative play indoors. You have improved children's safety when using the main garden as you have bought some temporary fencing to fix to the railings along the slope and pathway leading to the grassed area. As a result of your own observations and the local authority's audit of the indoor environment, you have reorganised the layout and presentation of resources and activities in the main hall. You, your manager and staff are continuing to research for suitable resources and are improving how you display children's work and other information to help to make the premises more inviting.

While some practical measures have been made to improve children's safety, the inspector found that staff are not always aware of hazards. In addition, they are still unsure about how to effectively teach young children about being aware of and managing risks and about how to safely play with toys or use equipment. In particular, although staff usually adequately supervise children, they do not always fully promote their safety during creative and exploratory play. These activities are set up next to an area used for stacked chairs, tables and other equipment available to users of the hall. Staff are not sufficiently alert to the potential hazards posed by these because they put additional play resources in this area, which attracts some children's attention. The adults do not always promptly intervene to stop children from going towards the storage area or these toys. They have also not considered routinely talking to the children about possible risks or to agree boundaries with them before they go to play in this part of the hall. The inspector found that at other times staff remind children about walking inside and taking turns with toys but overall, not enough attention is given to helping children to understand how to behave safely and sensibly. If children throw toys or use one to bump into equipment, staff ask them to stop but do not explain the reasons why and they do not routinely encourage children to look after toys. As a result, some activity areas become untidy so children cannot see what is available to play with and lose interest. The inspector observed that when children are asked to help to tidy up they are keen to do so but often do not get involved as no one explains what they should be doing.

You, the manager and staff have welcomed suggestions from the local authority about how to improve assessment and planning for each child's individual needs. The manager and staff have recently started using a new format for recording their observations, to identify children's starting points and to track their ongoing development. You are all booked on forthcoming training and the manager and staff are meeting daily to reflect on the previous day's activities and to check how their

proposed plans for the day will promote children's learning and development in the areas of learning. These daily planning meetings along with more frequent staff supervision meetings enable the manager and staff to support each other in developing their knowledge of the learning and development requirements. The inspector found that the manager and staff are enthusiastic about the changes and already feel more confident about identifying and planning for their key children's needs and interests. The inspector observed some examples of activities staff had planned to promote children's next steps, such as some fun outdoor ball games and opportunities to discuss letters during snack time. Therefore appropriate measures are being taken to improve assessment and planning but these are not yet sufficiently embedded to have an impact on the quality of teaching and on children's learning.

During the visit the inspector found that prompt effective action has not been taken to notify Ofsted about changes to the pre-school's management committee. This is a breach of regulation and means that children's welfare is not fully promoted because Ofsted has not been able to initiate and complete suitability checks for some committee members.

Having considered all the evidence, the inspector is of the opinion that the setting has not taken prompt and effective action to address the points for improvement.

Next steps

The next step will be a full inspection.

If you have any further queries please contact us on the number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Nick Hudson
National Director, Early Education

Actions

Action	Due date	Closed date
review and improve the deployment of staff to ensure the well-being of children and to promote the safe and efficient management of the pre-school; this particularly refers to ensuring that children are effectively supervised at all times and are always within the sight or hearing of staff	07/07/2014	18/09/2014
improve the educational programmes for physical development and personal, social and emotional development by providing more opportunities for children to learn how to behave in a safe and sensible manner, and by helping them to understand the reasoning behind safety rules and the potential impact of their behaviour on their personal safety and that of others	11/08/2014	18/09/2014
ensure that ongoing assessment is accurate and precise, for example, through more effective monitoring of how staff gather and use what they know about individual children to track their progress and identify the next steps in their learning and development.	11/08/2014	18/09/2014
improve the educational programmes for physical development and personal, social and emotional development by providing more opportunities for children to learn how to behave in a safe and sensible manner, and by helping them to understand the reasoning behind safety rules and the potential impact of their behaviour on their personal safety and that of others	30/10/2014	
ensure that ongoing assessment is accurate and precise, for example, through more effective monitoring of how staff gather and use what they know about individual children to track their	30/10/2014	

progress and identify the next steps in their learning and development

improve staff's understanding of how to accurately assess and manage risks in all areas being used for children's play and learning, including ensuring all activities and play areas are organised to meet the needs of children and remain fit for purpose and are free from hazards 30/10/2014

improve arrangements for notifying Ofsted of any changes to the management committee so that suitability checks on new committee members can be promptly initiated and completed by Ofsted. 30/10/2014