

# Scalford Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226344
<b>Inspection date</b>	03 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ros Church
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Methodist Church Hall, New Street, Scalford, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE14 4DP
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<b>Registered person</b>	Scalford Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Scalford Playgroup opened in 1970. It operates from the Methodist Church in Scalford Village, Leicestershire and serves the local and surrounding areas. The group have access to the school room, kitchen and appropriate toilet facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The group operates on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 09:30 to 12:00 and Thursday from 09:00 to 11:30, term time only.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 19 children from two to four years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are five staff who work with the children. Of these, three staff hold a recognised early years qualification, with one member of staff working towards a qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the Leicestershire Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and well-maintained premises. Their good health is promoted because staff follow effective health and hygiene procedures. For example, ensuring tables are cleaned prior to snacks, that all facilities are available within the toilet areas including liquid soap and paper towels and at snack time that each child has their own individual plate. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines, including hand washing after using the toilet and before snacks. Pictures are displayed near the wash hand basins to remind children and help them learn the hand washing routine. Children are well protected if they have an accident or become poorly, staff ensure that at least one person who has a first aid certificate is always present. Clear sickness procedures are in place, these are shared with the parents.

Children are developing an awareness of healthy eating. They enjoy a good range of healthy and nutritious snacks which include fruit, toast, and bread sticks and drinks of milk, water or juice. Children's individual dietary needs are met as staff take account of their preferences and respect parental wishes regarding snacks. Children have good access to fresh drinking water throughout the session, this ensures that they take sufficient fluids and do not become thirsty.

Children have good opportunities during the session for physical exercise and fresh air. A good range of activities are provided in the outdoor area and children are able to choose whether they play outside or indoors. Children wear suitable clothing when they go outside to enable them to experience different types of weather conditions. For example, they are encouraged to bring and wear Wellingtons when they go outside, this also enables them to have the full use of the outdoor area. Children enjoy using the wheeled toys, practising their pedalling and steering skills on both the grass and hard surfaces. They use balancing and climbing apparatus, or join in with group activities which include parachute games and musical movement. Children use small tools such as pencils and scissors, helping them to develop their small muscle skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Staff ensure a suitable range of activities are set out prior to children arriving. The school room which is used for the group is well lit and provides both lino and carpet areas, allowing children to be physically active and creative or to sit quietly and look at a book in the book corner on the comfortable chair. Some children's work and educational posters are displayed to help promote a welcoming environment. Equipment is well maintained and suitable for the range of children attending.

Children stay safe as staff follow generally good safety procedures. Staff supervise children well during the session, particularly at arrival and collection times, ensuring that children only depart with adults authorized to collect. Risk assessments and daily visual checks are carried out to ensure equipment, such as, safety gates and fencing are mostly in place. Fire safety procedures are in place and staff undertake evacuation practises with the children at regular intervals. Staff ensure play areas are secure and children are unable to leave them unsupervised, for example, locks are in place on the gates and door to the premises.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in safeguarding children. However, policies do not reflect the current guidelines and staff have not attended recent training to ensure that they are fully aware of any changes in procedures and children's welfare is met.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident within the setting and enjoy their time at the group. They are cared for by enthusiastic and motivated staff, who plan a suitable range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children make some choices from the variety of planned activities which are generally suited to their interests and stage of development, for example, box modelling, moulding and making shapes with play dough, role play, construction, and joining in with group activities, such as, story time and singing. Staff interact well with the children, they show interest in what children do and say and listen attentively to them. This helps children to feel secure within the setting and form close, trusting relationships with both staff and their peers. They learn to share the equipment with others and to take turns in their play.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress because staff plan and provide a range of activities. They carry out long and short term planning which links to the Foundation Stage curriculum and enables children to receive a generally balanced coverage across the six areas of learning. Most staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and understanding of how children learn and progress. However, not all staff have a clear understanding of the learning intention for individual activities to ensure children can reach their full potential. Staff are beginning to systematically observe children and to record their interests and achievements. They are currently developing the assessments of children's learning. However, these do not yet clearly link to planning to ensure children move forward to their next stage in learning. Staff interact well with the children, where they have conversations about their interests and experiences and encourage children to think and ask questions. Children have opportunities to be independent during the daily routine, such as, accessing their own aprons, before going outside putting on coats and Wellingtons, or collecting their plates and drinks at snack time. Staff use stickers as a reward system to promote good behaviour; this raises children's awareness and self-esteem. A suitable range of activities are set up around the room and within the outside area. However, activities are not always well resourced, such as, small world play and some role play and consequently do not offer adequate challenge for the older and more able children to extend their play and learn independently.

Children are confident within the group and make positive relationships with staff and their peers. Many children enjoy sharing their experiences with others, such as, during group times they learn to talk confidently as they share what they have done at home with their family. Other children enjoy choosing books and sharing these with friends. Children have some opportunities to recognise their own names, such as, when they enter the group they find their name to hang on their coat peg and during adult-led activities children are beginning to have a go at writing their name. Children show interest in numbers and counting, with many more able children being able to count and recognise numbers to 10 and above. During planned activities, such as, a walk around the village children recognise the numbers on houses and cars. However, during some activities the more able children are not sufficiently challenged in the area of problem solving. Children learn to use mathematical language within their play, using words such as big or small to identify objects.

Children have some planned opportunities to explore and investigate materials and the natural world. These include planting seeds and learning that these need water and light to grow. Children observe change through activities, such as, making play dough, where they learn to measure and mix the ingredients. They are developing their awareness of technology and have opportunities to use equipment, such as, a computer. Children regularly use a wide variety of tools and equipment which enables them to develop good small hand skills, such as, whilst exploring the dough they use rolling pins, shape cutters, scissors and moulding equipment to enable them to form their desired shape. Children have opportunities to use some accessible materials to be creative, during collage and painting activities. Children act out their experiences whilst joining in with role play activities which are set up to include a generally good range of different situations both indoors and outdoors, such as, the airport, sea side, garden centre and the motorway. However, these are not always well resourced to enable children to extend their play and learning. Children enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes, and use a range of different musical instruments.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the setting, they are valued and respected as individuals. Staff work well with parents and take into account children's individual needs, such as, dietary requirements. Children are well behaved, they have clear and consistent boundaries and know what is expected of them. They learn to play cooperatively together, to share and take turns with equipment. Staff interact well with the children, they manage behaviour in a positive way, for example, they give praise and encouragement for good behaviour and achievements. This encourages children's self-esteem and confidence. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children learn about the local area through outings, such as, walks around the village. They are beginning to learn about the wider world through activities which link to different festivals and toys and equipment which show positive images of diversity in society. However, resources are not always available to help children independently learn about similarities and differences in society. Systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, where staff work well with the parents and other agencies to meet children's individual needs.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents and children are welcomed on arrival and staff give time to discuss individual needs and care as required. A range of information is given to parents, such as, regular newsletters and for parents of new children starting the group the settings prospectus which includes information on the Foundation Stage. Other information is available on the notice boards within the entrance areas and children's room, this includes the policies and procedures. However, although there is a complaints procedure in place, this has not been updated to reflect the management of any formal complaint to ensure parents have all the necessary information and children's welfare is met. Information on topics and related activities is displayed on notice boards, this also gives some information on how parents can be involved in children's learning. Although there is currently no formal session for parents to discuss and see their child's assessment, they are able to request to see records as they require.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are content in the relaxed environment and develop settled relationships and interest in their activities. Staff work well together, they organise the setting and plan a range of both indoor and outdoor activities to meet the needs of the children. Most policies and procedures are in place, however, these have not been updated to reflect current changes. The majority of staff have been at the setting for a number of years, all existing staff have been appropriately vetted. However, clear recruitment and selection procedures for future staff are not currently in place to ensure that all background checks are carried out and children's welfare is ensured. All the required staff and children's records are in place and confidentiality is maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The committee, supervisor and staff are committed to improving the nursery education for children. They are supported to attend a range of relevant training. Most staff have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn through their play. Practitioners do not effectively monitor and evaluate children's learning, however this is currently being developed. The setting makes use of locally available support, such as advisory staff and local training courses.

Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure children belong to a key group which has consistent staff, and to ensure there is an effective system to manage access to the premises. The provider now ensures that each child belongs to a key group which has a named key person. An effective system to manage access to the premises is in place, with either locked gates or entrance door with bell to alert staff of parents or visitors. This helps to promote children's safety and welfare.

Since the last nursery education inspection the provider has built on systems for planning activities and the grouping of children by ensuring long and short term planning is in place with all areas of the curriculum covered, giving some additional time to the four-year-olds to help them reach their full potential. The group is currently developing assessments and identifying children's next steps in learning, although this information is not yet used effectively to inform planning and remains a recommendation. The group talks to parents daily and has plans in place to share children's development more formally. The group now plans a wider range of practical activities and makes some use of daily routines to further promote children's understanding of mathematical concepts. This helps to promote children's learning.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### 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):

- ensure policies and procedures required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are updated, with particular reference to child protection (safeguarding children) and complaints
- ensure a clear procedure is in place for the recruitment and selection of staff to ensure all background checks regarding their suitability are carried out
- develop further the resources which promote children's awareness of equal opportunities and diversity in society, ensuring that these are easily accessible to children.

#### 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):

- ensure activities are well resourced or additional resources are easily accessible to enable children to access independently and ensure that all children are adequately challenged
- continue to develop the use of assessments and evaluation of children's progress to more effectively inform planning to ensure children's next steps in learning are met
- ensure all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and have a clear understanding of the learning intentions for individual activities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)