

# Scalford Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 226344  
**Inspection date** 26/05/2011  
**Inspector** K.A. Bryan

**Setting address** The Methodist Church Hall, New Street, Scalford, Melton  
Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE14 4DP  
**Telephone number** 07779 216704  
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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

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 an enclosed outdoor play area. The group operates on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9.15am to 1.15pm and Thursday from 9.15am to 12.15pm, term time only. The setting is registered on the Early Years and both parts of the Childcare Register to care for 20 children under eight years. There are currently 19 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. There are five staff who work with the children, of these, four hold a recognised early years qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled because the staff know them as individuals and provide a good range of varied and challenging activities for them. Staff also work closely with parents to understand children's changing care needs. Staff generally make good use of planning and assessment to ensure children have a good base to develop their future skills on. Most required policies and procedures are in place and are well-used to underpin the management of the nursery. Systems to monitor and evaluate the setting's performance are good and self-evaluation is used effectively to enable the setting to develop areas for improvement. All recommendations from the last inspection have been implemented.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- update written procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- promote links between children's starting points and the areas of learning so their achievements can be built upon
- develop systems to ensure staff understand they must declare all changes to circumstances which may affect their suitability to work with children.

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

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and some have attended training in this area. They are clear about reporting procedures and a useful policy is in place which is covered at induction so children are cared for consistently. However, the procedure is not fully in line with current guidelines as it

does not contain information about contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer. The premises are well staffed and people who are not cleared are never left alone with children. Most of the staff team are qualified and training is well supported at the setting, this ensures children are cared for by staff that are up-to-date and current with childcare practice. Appraisals ensure that staff members receive good opportunities for development and this helps them to provide a quality service to children.

Staff are vigilant about children's well-being and risk assessments ensure that the premises and resources are safe. Children understand how to keep themselves safe as they learn about road safety and on outings they also wear high visibility jackets which further enhances safety measures in place. Recruitment procedures are generally robust, however, other regulations relating to recruitment should be reviewed in order to further enhance safety measures in place.

Staff work hard to make the group welcoming for children and displays of their work helps them to feel valued and raises their self-esteem well. Free-flow between the indoors and outdoors provides children with lots of opportunities to explore the environment and their own interests. For example, as children look for bugs with magnifying glasses. The manager understands that self-evaluation is a working document and has used this effectively to identify areas for development, such as working on risk assessments. This ensures the group is always moving towards maintaining continuous improvement.

A useful range of operational policies and procedures are in place which cover all requirements and are always available for parents to see. Parents also have the opportunity to comment on the running of the group via questionnaires and suggestions and staff have readily acted upon these. For example, the group now stays open for lunchtime at parent's request. Staff are always available to speak to parents and they are invited to the group to talk to children about any special interests. Parental participation in children's learning is also well promoted as they comment on, 'Learning Journeys' and complete 'All about me' forms which show what their children are interested in. Parents spoken to expressed positive comments about the group and staff and felt they were well informed about their child's progress. Good progress has also been made in working with others who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children which means they receive a consistent service. For example, when children attend school, a transition document goes with them so staff know what they have achieved.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Staff are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and use planning effectively to provide children with an interesting and engaging range of activities. They also understand that planning must be flexible to follow children's interests and a child's request to use a tennis racquet was immediately built into activities. This helps children to feel valued as they know they are listened to and acknowledged. Good observations are in place which helps staff to identify the next steps in children's learning and assessments ensure they are all achieving to

the best of their ability. However, starting points are not yet linked to areas of learning which means recording of progress may not be as effective as possible.

The group is well-resourced and the room is attractively laid out to encourage children to initiate their own play. Most resources are at child-height and they readily sit at tables as they print using stamps or sit in the quiet area and choose books. This also helps children gain confidence as they choose their own activities. Warm relationships are in place between the staff and the children who happily involve staff in their play. Children are confident communicators and use these skills well as they speak in the larger group, they also use their imaginations well as they talk about putting cakes in an oven and how these are too hot to touch.

Children enjoy outdoor play and have access to a good range of resources to support their physical development. For example, staff made a 'Garden Centre' and children potted sunflowers, made sandcastles using flower pots and compost and then filled diggers with this. This promotes their small hand skills and understanding of the natural world effectively. The children enjoy many trips into the local community and have been on an outing which involved going into the fields and having their snack outside. This was then combined with looking at an aerial photograph and animal tracks as the children devised their own maps by cutting out shapes. This activity promotes children's shape awareness and knowledge of the world well. Children are also learning about recycling, for example as they make cars and robots out of recyclable materials.

Children have a secure understanding of good hygiene procedures and understand why they need to wash their hands. Children also learn about healthy eating as they enjoy snacks of vegetables and drinks of water and milk. They help themselves to these at the snack bar which also promotes their independence and choice well. Children have also grown cress which they eat and this promotes their awareness of sustaining the environment effectively.

Staff work hard to help children learn about the needs of others and their understanding of other cultures is also well-promoted. For example, the group joined the local school in a 'Dragon Dance' to celebrate Chinese New Year. Children behave well and understand that cooperation makes activities work, for example they thoroughly enjoy playing with a parachute and this also promotes their physical skills effectively. Children are also learning about the wishes of others as they vote on a book to read and readily accept the majority decision. This provides a firm and secure base for children to learn to compromise and work as a team.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*  
*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*  
*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*  
*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met