

About Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup

(Operational Plan)

Introduction

Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup is a church-run, non-profit making playgroup. We are run by a Management Committee consisting of four members of Sidcup Baptist Church, appointed by the Deacons, and up to two parent representatives. The Playgroup Leader is appointed by the Church, and the Committee Chair works with the Playgroup Leader in the appointment of other members of staff.

Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup is a member of the Early Years Alliance and is registered with, and inspected by Ofsted. An application for Charity status to the Charities Commission is in the process of being made.

The Aims of Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup are:

- To provide a safe, secure and caring environment.
- To encourage the individual development of each child through encouragement of self-confidence and independence, thus enabling children to reach their full potential.
- To encourage interaction and social skills with other children.
- To encourage the children to appreciate one another's differences, be that in terms of culture or ability.
- To show God's love and care to both children and parents.
- To encourage parental involvement in the playgroup.

The staff plan and provide a variety of activities which cover the seven areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and encourage the children to make maximum progress towards the Early Learning Goals for each area. The seven areas are divided into the Prime areas and Specific areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Prime)
- Communication and Language (Prime)
- Physical Development (Prime)
- Literacy (Specific)
- Mathematics (Specific)
- Understanding the World (Specific)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Specific)

Premises

We are based in the church hall behind Sidcup Baptist Church and have the use of the halls, toilets, kitchen and gardens. At Christmas time we are able to use the church for the Nativity play, and at other times for parent coffee mornings (the latter is currently being on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions. We will review our Christmas festivities nearer the time).

The playgroup premises comprise

- an entrance hall and corridor (with cloakroom facilities)
- a small room used for confidential meetings

- three toilets and hand basins for the children, with separate facilities for adults; an area for nappy-changing; liquid soap; warm air hand driers; single use paper towels and a pedal bin
- a large hall where most of the daily activities take place, with an outside play area directly accessible from the hall. The outside area is fully enclosed and secured with gates/padlocks at either end
- a side hall which is divided into three rooms, with the larger two being used for small group work, singing and story times. The smaller room houses some of the playgroup toy cupboards and is used to store other items of playgroup equipment. There is also a small room at the far end of the main hall used, primarily, to support children with additional needs
- a kitchen with food preparation, cooking, washing up and washing facilities
- sheds behind the main buildings, in which are stored large toys and a variety of other resources – including craft supplies. We also have a large storage cupboard accessible from the corridor and a further cupboard to the rear of the hall where all confidential information is locked away
- gardens at the front of the church which are secured by lockable gates when in use by the children. The gardens have two areas of lawn, with planting between the lawn and fences and an asphalted pathway between the lawns and leading from the halls to the garden.

Parents are able to use the church driveway when bringing and collecting their children.

Session Times

The playgroup is open Monday – Thursday, 9.30am – 12.30pm during school term-times for a maximum of 38 weeks. We usually take up to 32 children each morning, some of whom may be under the age of 3, but may increase to a maximum of 34 when we are over-subscribed should adult:child ratios allow.

Admissions

The playgroup is open to every family in the community. The waiting list is operated on the basis of a child's age at the beginning of term, although in the case of over-subscription consideration will be given to the length of time a child has been on the waiting list. A place will normally be offered for the beginning of the term in which the child has their 3rd birthday. At the discretion of the Playgroup Leader an offer may be made during the previous term when the child reaches 2 years 9 months, depending on the numbers of rising 3s already on the register and taking into account adult:child ratios.

When a vacancy arises, parents will be contacted first by telephone and then by letter informing them of the days available for their child. If parents wish to take up the offer of a place the admissions form should be returned to the Playgroup Leader within 7 days otherwise the place may be given to another child on the waiting list. New children usually start by attending two sessions a week, increasing once they have settled in and as places become available. Prior to Covid-19 restriction parents were encouraged to visit with their child prior to starting and were welcome to stay for their first morning if they felt it would help with the settling in process. At the moment we are unable to have parents within the building during playgroup hours, but can arrange an 'out of hours' visit and send photos of playgroup inside and out so that there is a degree of familiarity for children on entry.

Fees

Playgroup fees should be paid in advance, at the beginning of each half-term or term, and are payable in the event of sickness and holiday. In the case of hardship different arrangements for the frequency of payment can be made. Payments are recorded in the Fees Register and paid into the playgroup bank account on a monthly basis. Information on fees and term dates are given when a place is offered at the playgroup and thereafter on a termly basis.

Children at the playgroup are eligible for funding (3 & 4 year old Universal Offer) from the beginning of the term after their 3rd birthday for a maximum of 15 hours per week. We are registered with Bexley Council to offer some places to children, under the Play2Learn (2 Year Offer) funding, from the term after their 2nd birthday, and where families meet the required criteria. More information on this is available on request. We are also registered to provide funding within the Extended 30 hours Offer – again, certain criteria apply. It should be noted that, in all cases, we can only offer a maximum of 12 hours.

Daily Routine

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| 9am | Staff arrive to set up the playgroup. A risk assessment is carried out by the appointed member of staff. |
| 9.15am onwards | The children arrive with their parent/carer and wait in the area outside the main door to the hall. |
| 9.30am-9.45am | The door is opened by the member of staff on register duty. The children are greeted by name and marked as present in the register. Other members of staff aid the children in hanging up their coats/bags and supervise them in washing their hands before entering the hall. Free play activities are available. |
| 9.45am-10am | The outside door is locked. Any latecomers ring the doorbell to obtain entry. Children and staff gather together for 'Carpet time' when the register is called. We talk about our theme, look at our calendar/weather chart and if there is a birthday, we will celebrate that altogether. |
| 10am-11.20am | Free play (in the halls and the outside area) – choosing from a range of activities which will include <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sand/water/soil/woodwork• painting/chalking• collage/junk-modelling• playdough/clay/cornflour/spaghetti etc• home corner/role play• construction activity• jigsaw puzzles• small world play• table top game• books, writing and drawing• large apparatus/bikes/balls/hoops/parachute games/see-saws/tunnel/slides• singing/nursery rhymes/musical instruments/drama• story time |

Group time sessions – an opportunity for smaller groups of children to take part in communication and phonics based activities

A **snack bar** runs alongside the activities providing a drink and snack for each child as they are ready. The adult who has taken the register supervises the children. After washing and drying their hands, each child is helped (where necessary) to find his/her name card on the board, take it off and choose a seat. They have a choice of milk or water which is put into a small jug and the children then pour their drink from this into a cup. The choice of snack varies – but will include fruit and dry cereal. A maximum of 7 children will usually be seated at the snack table, together with the member of staff.

- 11.20am-11.40am The children help to tidy the toys and then divide into two groups for singing/music time. The groups are divided according to age/ability. Adult:child ratios are maintained.
- 11.40am-12.10pm Free play. If we are using the courtyard, the children can choose to play indoors or out. All the above choices will be available plus additional toys outside to encourage the children's large motor skills. If we are using the main garden we all go outside. Areas are set up so that there is still a balance of activities available.
- 12.15pm-12.30pm Storytime – in two groups, using the side halls. As parents arrive to collect their child, they wait outside in the area between the main door and the driveway. A member of staff not involved in the storytime will catch up with anyone whose child's name is in the Accident/Incident file. At the end of the session, after a final handwash, coats and bags will be collected and any art/craft items made by the children will be handed out to them. The children and staff go into the corridor together and the children wait until their parent/carer has been seen and their name has been called. A password system is in place for use should a different person to usual be collecting a child.

Throughout the session the children may ask to go to the toilet. A member of staff will supervise where necessary.

At the end of the session, staff discuss the morning's activities to evaluate which were successful or otherwise. Suggestions for improvement or extension to the activities are noted on the weekly plans. Key persons file any observations in their key children's folders.

Lost Child Procedure

Strict security measures are in place to prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised (see Safety Policy). A register is taken and the children are counted during the morning. In the unlikely event of a child being lost the following action will be taken:

- The Playgroup Leader (or the person-in-charge in the playgroup leaders' absence) will be informed immediately.
- The Playgroup Leader and an appointed member of staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises. If a child goes missing during outdoor play, the garden will also be searched.

- The Playgroup Deputy and remaining staff will continue supervising/ supporting the children's activities ensuring that the morning routine is carried out calmly and without distress to the children.
- If the search is unsuccessful, it will be repeated and extended to include any outdoor areas surrounding the church buildings
- If the child is still missing, the Playgroup Leader will inform his/her parents.
- The police (and Ofsted) will be notified.

Uncollected Children

If a child remains uncollected after the end of the session (by 12.45pm) the following action will be taken:

- The Playgroup Leader and another qualified member of staff will remain with the child for a reasonable length of time (until 1pm) during which time they will attempt to contact the parents on the emergency contact number listed.
- If, by 1.30pm, the child has still not been collected and we have been unable to make contact with any of the named persons on the child's contact sheet, the Playgroup Leader will contact Social Services or Ofsted who will advise her of the appropriate course of actions.

Staffing Structure

The playgroup currently has nine paid members of staff who work directly with the children, seven of whom have childcare qualifications. Their names, current qualifications and usual days of work are:

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| • Mrs Yvonne Parfett – Leader/Manager
(NNEB+NVQ 4 Children's Care, Learning & Development) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |
| • Mrs Becca Birkbeck – Deputy/SENCo
(BAEd. Primary Education with QTS) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |
| • Mrs Nicci Smith (NNEB Dip) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |
| • Miss Debbie Crooks (NNEB Dip) | Tues/Thurs |
| • Mrs Julie Ray
(CACHE Level 3 Dip, Children & Young People's Workforce) | Mon/Tues/Weds |
| • Mrs Karen Blizzard
(NVQ 3 Children's Care, Learning and Development) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |
| • Mrs Cola Challis
(NNEB Cert) | Mon/Tues |
| • Miss Joanna Pullinger
(Paediatric First Aid) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |
| • Mrs Vikki Pearce
(Educare Level 2 Food Hygiene) | Mon/Tues/Weds/Thurs |

Staff arrive 30 minutes before the children in order to set up and discuss informally any matters relating to the day's activities.

We have regular fortnightly staff meetings during which we discuss our plans for the following two weeks. Our planning is based on the Areas of Learning and Development, Aspects and Characteristics of Effective Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Medium and Short term plans are developed and used to inform our weekly plans. An example of our planning documentation is attached to our Care, Learning and Play Policy.

Other matters affecting the efficient daily running of the group may be discussed, together with in-house training. Minutes are taken at the staff meeting. These are distributed to the staff and a copy kept on file on the premises.

We receive support from the Early Years Team. A record of all visits, whether in person or via telephone, from both the Early Years Advisors and Support Officers are kept on file.

Staff attend cluster meetings and training courses provided by Bexley's Early Years Team and other providers via the Bexley Services Network. We are also able to access training through our Early Years Alliance membership. These may be in person or via online provision.

Staff Deployment

- Daily rotas for specific staff duties are displayed on the staff notice board.
- Staff carry out mutually interchangeable tasks, with the Playgroup Leader taking ultimate responsibility for planning and deployment.
- Sufficient staff are employed to enable the Deputy/SENCo and the Playgroup Leader to take turns spending one session a week to carry out administrative and other duties in a separate room without compromising adult:child ratios.
- Students and volunteers are given tasks which are appropriate to their abilities and competencies, and take into account their DBS status.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and can be found on the playgroup page of the church website www.sidcupbaptistchurch.org.uk Hard copies are also available.

Feedback

Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup has been running for almost 50 years.

We have a good reputation for being a friendly, welcoming place. Many of the families who put their children's names down on our waiting list have had other family members (nieces/nephews) attending – in some cases the parents themselves used to attend! We have also had a number of children whose names were added to the waiting list at, or soon after birth, where an older sibling was moving on to another setting.

Children who are not following older siblings to the playgroup often come to us by way of recommendation, both from current or past families and from other professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, members of the Speech and Language Therapy team and local Health Visitors.

Parents have several opportunities throughout the year to have meetings to discuss their child's progress, meet with other parents at coffee mornings (subject to restrictions laid down by the government) and offer comments and suggestions through the annual parent questionnaire.

