



## Mill Lane Pre-School Association

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY281631
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 March 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Cheryl Langley

<b>Setting Address</b>	URC Hall, Mill Lane, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, EN10 7BQ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Mill Lane Pre School Association
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care
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## 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mill Lane Pre-School opened in 1964 and operates from three rooms within the URC hall. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The Pre-School is open Monday to Thursday from 09:15 to 12:00 term time only. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from 2 years to 3 years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. The Pre-School welcomes children

with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The Pre-School employs 7 staff. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three are working towards upgrading their qualifications. The Pre-School have Qualified Teacher Involvement and are members of the Pre School Learning Alliance. The Pre-School have completed the Hertfordshire Quality Standard.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff follow suitable routines to prevent the spread of infection. Well organised routines ensure the children learn the importance of good personal hygiene. They wash their hands before eating snacks, after messy play and after using the toilet. They take part in routines to help tidy up, such as sweeping away the sand and set tables and chairs for snack time. Children enjoy planned activities which promote a healthy lifestyle.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet. They are able to have drinking water at any time. They eat healthy snacks and have fun preparing and eating food they have grown themselves. Specific dietary requirements are respected by staff, who ensure all foods comply with children's individual dietary needs to make sure they remain healthy. Children are beginning to learn about the advantages of healthy food through discussions at mealtime, organised play and a variety of story and information books.

All of the required procedures and documents are in place to help staff act in the children's best interests should an accident or serious illness occur. For example, parents provide detailed information about the children's medical and dietary needs and give consent for staff to administer the correct medication or seek professional advice and attention if required. A first aid box is always to hand and a member of staff with a current first aid qualification on site at every session. Staff work closely with parents to avoid the spread of infectious illnesses and make sure they can contact parents quickly in an emergency.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health and develop their physical skills. They learn to co-ordinate their bodies riding wheeled toys and following the actions to songs. They become adept at using their hands to construct walls and towers using wooden bricks or to thread cotton spools to make necklaces. Children cut, paste, paint and stick different materials to decorate numbers, or print animals. They enjoy using their fingers on keyboards, telephones and control pens and pencils to draw pictures. The daily routine for each session and organisation of the rooms offers space and appropriate areas for quiet activities.

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

The provision is good.

A good range of effective procedures are in place to assess any risks. Action is taken to minimise hazards to ensure the children remain safe and free from harm. This enables them to move around freely to play and access resources. Staff are deployed and organised to make sure the children are supervised at all times. Visitors are closely monitored and the premises both inside and outside are secure.

Children use a varied range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources which are cleaned and checked regularly. They learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. For example, staff skilfully explain safe practices, such as why children need to be careful not to hurt others when riding the tricycles in the hall. They are aware to be careful near lit candles on the birthday cake. Children know why they must leave the building in the event of a fire as they participate in regular fire drills. Various planned activities encourage their understanding of safety. They have fun taking turns as the lolly-pop person to cross the road safely and enthusiastically sing songs to remind them of the crossing codes.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. The staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and procedures are in place to ensure they update their knowledge regularly. All of the required documentation to deal with any concerns they may have is in place.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in a supportive and caring environment. They make positive relationships with the staff and their peers which helps them feel settled and relaxed. This sense of belonging ensures they enjoy their time at the pre-school and take part in a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities.

All children acquire new knowledge and skills. They respond to challenges which help them develop because the staff show an interest in what they do and value their achievements. For example, some children are able to recognise colours as they choose the red or blue hoops to jump into. Staff interact with the children throughout the session and talk and listen to them, asking questions to make them think, or to give them choices and extend their play. Children explore their feelings and ideas through role play. They have fun preparing a meal in the restaurant, sharing equal portions of birthday cake and dressing-up. They learn about words and meaning through story books and singing songs. Children can count in sequence to see how many of their friends are attending. They use different tools to create models with play dough or to join boxes and cartons. Using their different senses they explore water and sand. They work together as a group to create an autumn frieze to put on display. Staff have a good understanding of their different stages of development. They are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and some staff members have attended training in this area. All of the children's needs are met

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children are progressing well. They are supported by staff who have a competent understanding of the Foundation Stage. Plans cover all six areas of learning and there is a good observation and assessment system in place. This is used to inform the plans for the next stage of each individual child's development. The level of challenge is sufficient to interest all of the children and more able children's learning is extended. There are effective systems in place to support children with special needs if required.

Children are involved in their play. They respond to what they see and use different words and draw on their experiences to guess at what might be in the large bag. They are eager to see the parachute and enjoy singing songs and joining in with appropriate actions to move it around. They practise their mark making skills as they control pencils to follow different patterns or use blackboards and chalk. Children are developing an understanding of sounds and letters. They learn to recognise their name. More able children read their own full name and that of their peers confidently. Most of the children listen attentively at story time or enjoy looking at books on their own. Children develop their simple counting and calculation skills as they enthusiastically participate during songs, nursery rhymes and daily routines. For example, they count the hot cross buns left in the circle. They recognise which number represents their age. They choose an outline of a number correctly to decorate with different coloured shapes. Children can identify simple shapes and colours. They become aware of space and size as they learn about big and small animals. Matching and sequencing skills are developed through pairing and sorting. They pair socks and sort items for recycling. Regular cooking activities teach the children how to weigh and solve mathematical problems.

Children explore changes as they monitor the plants that they grow. They build and construct using different types of connecting materials. Children develop a sense of place through topics and activities about themselves and their local community. They are finding out about the wider world. The children enjoy activities to celebrate different festivals. The staff dress in saris and older children are invited to demonstrate what they would wear to celebrate Diwali. They have fun participating in traditional festivals and enjoy activities to prepare for the Flower Festival. They enjoy regular music and movement sessions which include playing musical instruments. Children's hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills are developed using a range of craft, mark making equipment, toys and puzzles. Children enjoy using paint to print pictures of different size animals and create junk models to take home to their parents. However, the opportunities to develop these skills independently by exploring different ways to cut, join and build for their own purposes is limited.

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

The provision is good.

The staff provide a good range of activities and meaningful resources to promote a positive view of others. Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of people from other parts of the world is increased with a variety of interesting books,

dolls, puzzles and activities to celebrate different festivals and learn about other cultures and people's differing abilities. They have learning about the significance of daffodils and leeks for St. David's Day.

Children are valued and respected. Their individual needs are met and all of them are included in the play and activities provided. Children learn to behave well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used by staff to manage behaviour. Children are learning to consider others, share, take turns and be polite. Some are very relaxed and confident. New children are beginning to join in at 'circle-time' singing songs or moving to music. Realistic challenges are set to help the children develop. For example, they are given sufficient time to complete tasks at their own pace and learn how to put aprons on or pour drinks. Staff give them gentle encouragement to join in with group games or try new activities and compliment them on their achievements. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem. They feel relaxed and secure and able to make independent choices about what they want to do.

Children benefit from a good partnership between the staff and parents who exchange information regularly. Parents provide the pre-school with comprehensive information about their child to help the staff meet their individual needs. Staff have daily discussions at the beginning and end of each session with parents, who are welcome to talk about their children's achievements and share their records with the friendly staff at any time. This helps keep parents informed of how their child's needs are met. Ofsted has received positive and complimentary feedback from parents about the care their children receive. The notice board informs the parents of the activities the children cover and the policies and procedures are to hand at each session. Regular newsletters are sent to announce particular events. However, the procedures to record and deal with complaints made by parents as per the National Standards is not included in the current complaints policy.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good.

Parents receive good quality information about the six areas of learning which is clear and concise. They are informed about current topics, through the regular newsletter, letters and the notice board. Parents are invited to attend fun-days, take part in planned activities and to share their children's progress and achievements. They are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by sharing topic related items, books and complete a treasure hunt form which encourages the continuation of the children's learning and development through the holiday periods. Parents have the opportunity to exchange information about their children on a daily basis with their keyworker and the other experienced and friendly staff. Parents receive a detailed assessment report when the children leave the pre-school as a record of their child's achievements and progress. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Thorough recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure children are

protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. A formal appraisal system highlights staff strengths and areas for training to maintain high levels of care and learning for the children. Policies and procedures are in place to run the pre school effectively and to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Children enjoy a good balance of small and large group activities and a variety of play and experiences. There is a regular routine to make the children feel safe and secure in their surroundings, but staff are well organised to ensure they can be flexible to meet each child's individual care needs. Children are stimulated and sufficiently challenged. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager promotes the professional development of all staff and encourages training in nursery education to update their knowledge and understanding. They attend regular meetings and all take part in planning activities and play for children to learn and make progress through the Foundation Stage. The pre-school has very close links with the mother and toddler group, and baby group, that use the URC Hall as well as local primary schools. This helps the children settle quickly and feel secure and relaxed about the changes in their routine when they begin pre-school or move on to school. The curriculum is monitored and evaluated regularly to ensure children receive broad experience of the six areas of learning.

The manager and her dedicated and enthusiastic team work effectively together. The children benefit from their commitment to provide a stimulating and exciting learning environment. The staff have developed positive working relationships and continually strive to promote an inclusive environment in which every child matters.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last nursery education inspection the staff agreed to increase their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance to the foundation stage and to use it effectively to help children make progress in all areas of learning.

Staff have attended training, and continue to update their knowledge in this area. This is to ensure they have a secure understanding and experience of the curriculum guidance to the foundation stage. They use these skills effectively to plan activities and monitor the children's progress in all six areas of learning towards the early learning goals.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report. 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**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

#### **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):

- update the complaints procedure to record or share appropriate action regarding a complaint, to ensure parents' concerns are respected and acknowledged and the children's welfare monitored.

##### **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):

- provide opportunities for children to build and construct with a wide range of objects, enabling them to select their own appropriate resources and adapt their work where necessary.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)