



Misterton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142967
Inspection date	05 July 2006
Inspector	Bridget Copson
Setting Address	Misterton Village Hall, Unity Lane, Misterton, Crewkerne, Somerset, TA18 8NY
Telephone number	07870103376
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Registered person	Misterton Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Misterton Pre-School opened in 1993 and operates from within the village hall in Misterton, Somerset. A maximum of 34 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 to 13:00, during term time only. An afternoon session is also provided on a Wednesday until 15:30. Children have access to the recreation ground and play park.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 32

children receive funding for early education. The pre-school supports children with learning disabilities.

The pre-school is run by a parent committee and employs seven members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical development and fitness is supported well through daily activities using a good range of play provision on the recreation ground, in the play park and within the hall. In addition, children use the Sticky Kids music and movement tape and enjoy special music and dance activities, such as Take Art sessions. Younger children's development and mobility is supported well through age appropriate toys and activities. Children enjoy a good range of nutritious snacks at break times to support them in learning about healthy eating habits. For example, they choose from different fresh and dried fruits, which they bring into pre-school each day, with drinks of water or milk. They access drinks of water freely and independently throughout the sessions to ensure they do not get thirsty. Children also learn about healthy lifestyles through topics, such as 'food' in which they look at healthy eating.

Children are cared for within a clean and hygienic environment where staff have effective systems in place to prevent the spread of infection, for example, regular hand washing, disinfecting table tops, providing individual flannels for children, keeping toys and equipment clean and in good condition and excluding sick or infectious children according to policy. Children learn about managing good personal hygiene well through regular hand washing routines and through topics, such as 'the human body' in which they learn about keeping healthy and well.

Children's health, medical and dietary requirements are met efficiently by staff who keep written records of care required and any details of special dietary needs. They provide parents with written details of any accidents or medication administered on individual sheets for consistency of care. Four staff members hold appropriate first aid certificates and a first aid kit is kept within the hall and taken on outings. This all supports staff in caring for children appropriately in the event of an accident.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within well-maintained premises which are organised effectively to meet their needs. They are kept safe and secure by staff who ensure good measures are in place to protect them in all areas, for example, locked external doors, internal door stops, socket covers, locks on store cupboard doors and close supervision in all areas. Staff carry out visual checks each morning and annual written risk assessments of all areas to ensure high standards of safety are maintained. Children are kept safe and secure on outings through staff wearing

fluorescent tabards, checking all areas for any hazards and ensuring younger children hold hands with them. They also carry a mobile telephone and, on long trips, take a first aid kit and registration forms in the event of an emergency.

Children learn about safety well through clear guidance from staff, for example, road safety before a walk, using craft tools safely, using the physical play equipment sensibly and having a practical road safety session with the lolly-pop. Children also practise the fire drill each term to support them in responding appropriately in the event of an emergency.

Children access toys freely and independently from the choice set out for them and do not have access to anything that is not safe for them to use. They also extend their own play safely through choosing art and craft resources and tools from the portable drawer units.

Children are protected well by staff who have effective systems in place to safeguard their welfare, for example, keeping details of adults authorised to collect children, a visitors record book and records of children collected by alternative adults. Also, staff supervise the front door on children's arrival and departure to monitor who they leave with. Staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection issues and procedures to support them in keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of play provision to support all areas of their learning and development, for example, different construction activities as well as puzzles, games, threading, beads, peg boards and electronic toys to promote their manipulative skills. They also enjoy many small world sets, different role play environments, music and dance to promote their imaginative play and read a range of story and reference books. In addition, they use different materials to create pictures, collages and models as well as cooking. A four week activity rota is used to provide children with a changing range of activities to support their development and keep them interested.

Younger children arrive happy and settle quickly, some finding support and comfort from staff. They choose activities freely to play with alone or with friends whom they seek out. They also enjoy getting together for group activities which they join in with excitement, such as story time and music. They use their imaginations well in their play and communicate their feelings and thoughts with each other and staff with confidence. This all shows children have a sound sense of well-being within the group.

Younger children benefit from some of the same activities and learning experiences as those in receipt of nursery education funding, when they join the older children at different stages of the session. However, their learning and development is not actually planned within any framework. In addition, there is no system of monitoring and assessing their progress. As a result, children are not encouraged to develop to their full potential.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children enjoy interesting activities and practical experiences linked to themes which promote their learning and development in all areas. This is supported well by staff who have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are clear what they intend children to learn from activities. Children enjoy activities linked to monthly topics and themed events. For example, within the current 'Summer' topic, focusing on 'holidays', children paint holiday pictures and explore sand and water play using buckets, spades and sea-side shapes. They also discuss and re-call holidays, role play on a beach, bring in holiday photos to make a display and read themed books. They learn different colours each month linked to the topics, such as light blue for 'Summer'. This all supports children in making connections in their learning.

Staff apply effective teaching methods to keep children motivated and interested. For example, they ask lots of questions to encourage them to think, make decisions and communicate, such as with 'show and tell', extending imagination and problem solving. Children's progress is assessed well by staff. Key workers carry out regular observations of children which they record onto their progression file for each area of learning as they achieve. They use this information to support and extend activities to ensure appropriate challenges are provided for all children. However, each child's next steps are not individually planned to encourage them to develop to their full potential in all areas of learning.

Children arrive happy and excited and focus well on their play. They are motivated to learn and access new activities with interest. They talk freely about home life and share aspects of their own lives through topics, such as making displays of their own pets. Children are developing good independence. For example, they self-register on arrival, choose activities and resources for themselves and are learning to put on their own shoes and socks. Children sit and listen well to others speaking, such as at group time, and respond positively to instructions from staff. Children talk with confidence and pride about what they are making and doing in activities. They communicate their ideas and thoughts well, for example, making up alternative nursery rhymes, such as 'moo moo brown cow, have you any milk'. They make good use of books, both spontaneously and during group time. They have favourite stories, listen well at story time and enjoy joining in using props, such as being animals in the 'Gruffalo' story.

Children are developing a good understanding of numbers. They count those present at group time as well as spontaneously in their play. More developed children are learning to recognise numerals and some can sequence correctly using, for example, number puzzles. Children are developing a good understanding of size which they study through making growth charts and making displays of their own hands and heights to compare sizes. They name different shapes which they can identify in everyday activities. Children use correct descriptive language to describe position in their play and use their knowledge and skills to complete simple practical problems, such as puzzles and jig-saws. Children explore living creatures to find out more about them, for example, bugs from outside, fishing trips to the stream and handling visiting pets. They join in practical experiments to find out why things happen and how things work,

such as making ice and combining cookery ingredients. They plant and tend flowers in pots to monitor growth and change. Children are developing a good understanding of time and place through sharing aspects of their own lives and re-calling activities at group discussion times. In addition, they explore their local environment through lots of walks, noting seasonal changes and watching new houses being built in the village. However, children do not explore many different cultures and beliefs beyond their own.

Children move with control and co-ordination within running games outside, using physical activities indoors and with actions songs. They are learning to care for themselves well, for example, they know to wear sun cream and hats before going out to play in the summer and learn about healthy lifestyles through topics. Children use different tools with materials to develop fine motor skills, for example, rollers, cutters and forks with dough, sieves, scoops, buckets and spades with sand, bottles, jugs and cups with water, knives for spreading butter and brushes for painting. Children experience many different media and materials using tools and their hands to explore texture and colour, for example, foam, soil, sand, water, paint, oats, cookery ingredients and dough. They use different textures to create three dimensional collages and pictures, such as pasta and papier-mâché.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for equally and fairly by staff and their individual needs are met appropriately in most areas, for example, through records held, the key worker system and planning and assessments to promote funded children's progress. However, younger children's learning and development is not planned or assessed effectively. The pre-school has three special educational needs co-ordinators in place with allocated one to one workers to support children with learning disabilities. Staff work closely with parents, the local opportunity group and related health care professionals to ensure children's needs are met consistently and well.

Children behave well and are developing an understanding of what is right and wrong. Some children correct others correctly when they behave inappropriately and less confident children seek out staff for support. Children show a sound sense of belonging, for example, they arrive happy, self-register with confidence, seek out friends and key staff to share news, find favourite toys easily and regularly bring in show and tell items. In addition, they are familiar with the daily routine and expectations which they re-call correctly when asked. Staff create a positive environment to support this, offering children lots of encouragement and praise, certificates for special events and reward stickers. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are cared for consistently and according to parents' wishes in most areas of the provision. To support this parents complete registration, medical and consent forms detailing care required and are provided with an informative prospectus. Parents are kept informed appropriately through a large table in the entrance displaying comprehensive information on most aspects of the provision. Parents also

talk freely with staff at the start and end of sessions and are invited to meet more formally with them each term to discuss their child's well-being and progress. Parents are provided with a complaints procedure which informs them of how to raise a concern and how issues are resolved. However, this does not include all the required information in line with current legislation or Ofsted's contact details. This is a breach of regulation. The pre-school has not received any complaints since their last inspection. The manager is aware of the new requirements and is committed to addressing this as soon as possible.

Partnership with parents is good.

Parents are actively encouraged to get involved in their child's learning and development. For example, newsletters inform them of topics, themes, colours and letters of the month and many parents encourage their children to bring in related items to show and display. Many parents join in activities with their children at the start of the session, but are not actively involved in contributing towards their child's starting points on admission to support staff in setting appropriate early challenges. Parents are kept well-informed through good daily communication and additional meetings with staff during the term before children start school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for appropriately by a team of staff, most of whom hold or are working towards an appropriate child care qualification. There are procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff. However, these procedures are not effective in vetting all aspects of applicant's suitability thoroughly, especially physical and mental health. This potentially compromises children's safety and is a breach of regulation. The registered person is aware of their responsibilities regarding this regulation. The pre-school has not employed any new staff since the new regulations were enforced and is committed to addressing this issue with immediate effect.

There are appropriate systems in place to ensure staff continue to be suitable, such as a verbal induction for new staff and annual appraisals. However, these appraisals are not always used effectively to promote staff development and to improve the quality of care. This especially relates to the learning opportunities for younger children.

Children are cared for within suitable premises which are organised to allow children lots of space to play and move about freely and unhindered. Staff work efficiently as a team to provide well-organised sessions with lots of close supervision and support. They work according to rotas in all areas, taking turns to do group registration and story time, to prepare snack time, to greet parents at the door and to plan and organise themed activities each week. A member of staff also acts as a float each day to provide additional support. This all ensures staff are familiar with routines and are able to share and develop new skills. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Staff keep all records relating to children secure to maintain confidentiality whilst

allowing them to access information easily. Children's records are updated to ensure relevant information is held. However, not all documentation is updated to reflect changes to legislation, such as managing complaints and the recruitment and vetting of new staff.

Leadership and management is good.

The setting has effective systems in place to monitor its strengths and weaknesses and the quality of nursery education, for example, staff meetings each month with minutes kept for reference, regular activity evaluation throughout the week which is used effectively for future planning and staff appraisals. They also keep a record of children's responses to certain experiences and activities as part of their observations. The pre-school shows a good commitment to improvement. For example, they welcome and act upon all recommendations from external agencies and work closely with external health care professional to meet the needs of children with learning disabilities. In addition, they have developed close links with the village school and other schools children attend, with shared events and meetings arranged. This all supports staff in providing consistent teaching methods and aids children's transition into school.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the setting agreed to provide more opportunities for children to develop independence.

Children are developing good independence through activities, such as self-registering on arrival, choosing activities and resources for themselves and learning to dress themselves appropriately.

At the last education inspection the setting agreed to develop systems to ensure that all areas of learning are covered over a period of time, especially children's introduction to other cultures and development in modern day technology. It agreed to improve the assessment systems to show what stage of development each child is at, linked to the early learning goals and stepping stones and how they will be shared with parents on a regular basis. It agreed to provide more opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills, particularly solving simple number problems and using positional language. Also it agreed to provide further access to creative resources to allow children to initiate their own art and design and express themselves.

Staff have developed planning well to ensure that all areas of learning are covered over a period of time. This includes access to information and communication technology on a daily basis and some introduction to other cultures, although this area could be extended further. Children's progress is monitored through an effective assessment system which is linked to the early learning goals and stepping stones and clearly shows each child's stage of development. These assessments are available to parents at all times and are shared actively with parents each term. Children are provided with regular opportunities to develop their mathematical skills which they use to solve simple number problems. In addition they use positional

language regularly in their play. Children access creative resources each day to initiate their own art and design and express themselves.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- develop learning opportunities and assessment systems for younger children, for example, through implementing the Birth to three matters framework
- update the complaints procedure to include the new regulations in line with current legislation and implement a complaints record system to share with parents on request
- ensure that there are robust procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- improve staff appraisals to ensure areas for development are highlighted and addressed

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):

- develop further, assessments of children's progress to ensure their next steps are planned individually to encourage them to develop to their full potential

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