



Malborough with South Huish Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310820
Inspection date	14 February 2006
Inspector	Leoarna Mathias
Setting Address	Malborough With South Huish Primary School, Higher Town, Malborough, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 3RN
Telephone number	07967 604619
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Registered person	Malborough with South Huish 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 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?

Malborough with South Huish Pre-school has operated for many years in the village, and recently moved into a single storey Elliott Building within the grounds of Malborough and South Huish Primary School. The group has exclusive use of the building along with a secure outdoor area. They also have access to the school's larger playground.

The group is open from 09:05 hours until 12:00 hours Monday to Friday during term

time, with a lunch club offered between 12:00 hours and 13:00 hours on those days. There are currently 20 children on roll, 14 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The group supports children with special educational needs or English as an additional language, though none are currently in attendance.

The group is run by a voluntary committee made up of parents. The committee employs two members of staff to work with the children, one of whom holds an National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) 3 in child care and the other of whom is working towards that same qualification. The group also has a trainee who is working towards an NVQ 2. The group receives support from the Local Authority, and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a clear understanding of what it means to be healthy. They can identify nutritious foods as a result of staff taking regular opportunities to discuss what they eat, and enjoy healthy items and drinks, such as apple slices and milk, at snack time. Staff employ sensible cleaning routines throughout the session; for example, by regularly wiping surfaces in between activities, or encouraging the children to wash their hands after craft activities, before food and before cooking activities. Children are, as a result, becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. Sufficient members of the staff team are first aid trained, promoting children's access to a safe environment, and children's health needs are suitably monitored through the use of appropriate documentation systems, such as accident books, medicine administration procedures and a comprehensive health and safety policy. Children enjoy regular opportunities for outdoor play within the school grounds, using a variety of equipment; such as, hoops, balls and trikes. Staff supervise physical games closely to ensure that they successfully promote children's development. During clement weather, the provision is organised to allow free movement between the indoor and outdoor environment, further encouraging children to move with confidence and safety, and enriching the learning experience.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure environment, where both staff and parents contribute to ensuring access to the children by other adults is closely monitored. Hazards to children are minimised through regular risk assessments and daily checks, and high ratios of staff and volunteers to children ensures that children are closely supervised at all times. Resources and equipment are largely well organised, which allows children to independently access them while staying safe. Fully evaluated fire drills are held regularly, further promoting children's safety in the event of an emergency. Children's welfare, while they are in the setting, is fully promoted, as staff and volunteers have a good understanding of their child protection

responsibilities, attend regular training, and are clear about the procedures to follow should concerns arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly upon arrival, responding well to the warm welcome they receive. Strong relationships between children and staff are in evidence, as children readily gravitate towards staff when they need help, are upset, or want to share their achievements. Staff adapt their planning to meet the needs of the younger children within the group, and are currently introducing the Birth to three matters framework to further improve their provision for these children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children concentrate well, persisting with self chosen tasks and engaging with adult led activities. They respond promptly and enthusiastically when asked questions that make them think. Children are proud of their achievements, seeing much of their work displayed, and commenting that they have done things by themselves. Children are increasingly able to play co-operatively and to follow the group's agreed codes for behaviour, and often show kindness and consideration to others. More active children, do, on occasion, struggle to give their best throughout the session. However, staff recognise the needs of these children, and are working towards adapting the session to better meet their needs.

All children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. Children communicate readily with staff and each other during activities, and enjoy the challenge of answering questions posed by staff. They listen well at story time. They are also increasingly able to recognise their name in print, and to attempt writing it. Writing and mark making materials are readily accessible and well used by the children. Independent use of the book corner is not yet fully promoted by the staff, although plans are in place to make the area more appealing to the children. Children use number and counting frequently in their play, as well as being increasingly able to use the language of 'more' or 'less'. They can also make successful comparisons of size, and quantity when using sand and other resources. As a result of imaginative planning by staff, children are genuinely curious and knowledgeable about the world around them, discussing space and the sources of water with confidence. They also access resources that encourage them to become aware of other peoples, cultures and beliefs. They have very regular opportunities to design and make, using a broad range of resources including many recycled materials. As a result, they can make accurate observations about colour, texture and other features, as well as developing their skills in using tools and equipment. Children make good use of role-play areas within the setting, sustaining their imaginative games for significant periods of time. They also enjoy musical activities.

The play leader and her team have an increasingly secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and this, together with their understanding of each child's achievements, enables them to plan an interesting and varied range of

activities that promote learning effectively. Most staff are skilled in using all of the naturally arising opportunities that occur to promote children's understanding, while as a team they acknowledge that there is further room for improvement in this area of the provision. Similarly, much has been done to improve the evaluation of adult practice in recent months, and although these evaluations have not yet encompassed all parts of the provision, they have brought about positive progress for the group. Adults are calm and give children plenty of praise, helping them to solve their disputes appropriately. Recent revisions to the system of observing and assessing children's progress and participation are beginning to pay dividends, by allowing staff to more closely match planning to need. Although there are times during the session where time is not used well enough to ensure that the most active children are fully engaged in their learning, staff are organised in their set up of space and resources, which, when taken overall, ensures that they can maximise the time available for working directly with the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Each child is made to feel welcome in the group, as key working systems ensure that every child is well known to at least one member of the staff team. The many conversations between children and staff allow adults to remain update with the significant events in children's lives. Children are encouraged to develop respect for difference and diversity in our society through regular teaching and accessing a range of resources that promote such understanding. They are, as a result, becoming increasingly aware of their own needs and the needs of others. This learning is further consolidated by staff who are consistent in encouraging children to behave well, to be considerate and well mannered. Children voluntarily share and use 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting. The pre-school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) has a good understanding of her role, and strong relationships with outside agencies, and as such is able to offer effective support to children with special educational needs. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are encouraged to be regular volunteers, giving them valuable insight into how their child learns. Systems for recording children's educational progress are improving, and regular key worker-parent appointments are being introduced. Termly newsletters keep parents informed about the work of the group, and the current activity themes, and good relationships between staff and parents are in evidence. As a result, children enjoy high levels of continuity of care between home and the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Well maintained ratios of staff to children, and the presence of regular volunteers, ensures that children enjoy plentiful support and attention as they play and learn. Children are

cared for by staff who are confident in their roles and are given substantial access to training. The play leader and the committee chair have, when taken overall, a good understanding of their regulatory responsibilities. They acknowledge that changes to their appointment, vetting and complaints procedures are necessary to ensure that they are operating wholly in line with the National Standards. However, in all other respects, policies and documentation systems are in good order, giving children access to a well run group.

The leadership and management of the group is good. Despite the challenges of running a small rural group the committee provides consistent support to its staff team, particularly in the area of accessing training and outside agency support. The group has survived the challenges of sustainability, and is now becoming an increasingly valuable and integral part of the school, upon whose site they are based. The leadership team is able to reflect on the challenges that remain, and to take proactive steps to ensure that the cycle of continuous improvement is maintained, while acknowledging that not all parts of the provision, such as the book corner, the timing of physical play, or the use of the calendar, are rigorously evaluated as yet. However, the play leader is now able to delegate larger amounts of responsibility to her able team, and to encourage all to be involved in evaluating the nursery education provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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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 that vetting procedures for new staff meet current regulatory requirements
- ensure that the complaints policy and the complaints log meet regulatory requirements and are fully accessible to parents

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):

- further improve children's access to a balanced range of activities that promote learning by ensuring that all staff use effective teaching strategies, that time is used well throughout the session, and that areas of continuous provision are effectively evaluated.

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