



Mobberley Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305195
Inspection date	09 November 2006
Inspector	Jane Shaw
Setting Address	Victory Hall, Town Lane, Mobberley, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 7HR
Telephone number	01565 872809
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Registered person	Mobberley Pre-School Playgroup
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?

Mobberley Pre-School first opened in 1986 and operates from the Victory Hall in Mobberley, Cheshire. The pre-school is organised and managed by a committee of parents and carers plus members of local community.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting opens each weekday from 09.00 to 13.00, term time only. The pre-school have access to the main hall, side room and outdoor play space. There is also a kitchen on site for the preparation of snacks and drinks.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the immediate locality and surrounding areas.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The pre-school are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and, as they are in receipt of early education funding, they have access to advisory staff from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted because staff have effective routines and procedures in place to ensure this, for example, sanitising tables prior to offering children a snack. Children are developing an understanding of the need to keep themselves healthy as they are encouraged to wash their hands after certain activities, such as craft and visiting the toilet, and before having snack. Older children are able to carry out these tasks independently, whilst younger children require support and assistance; all children are escorted to the bathroom area because of the nature of the building. Children's understanding of keeping themselves healthy is promoted through regular discussion and through themes, which include visitors to the setting. For example, a nurse visits to talk to the children about keeping themselves healthy, and in particular hand washing. A sick child policy and procedure, which is shared with parents and carers details the group's responsibilities to their children, however, this policy does not show the procedure that would be followed if a child was taken ill during the session.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and drinks during sessions. They are offered breadsticks part way through the session, and then a snack later in the morning. This consists of a range of healthy foods including fruit, a variety of sandwiches and occasional hot food, such as pasta and sauce and vegetable soup, which the children occasionally help to make. Some staff hold food hygiene qualifications ensuring children's good health during snack preparation. Children learn the importance of healthy eating through themes, discussion and access to posters and other visual information. Children have access to drinking water throughout the morning and are offered this when feeling hot or thirsty.

Children have daily access to a variety of physical play activities dependent upon the theme. Staff make use of the large main hall to offer the children access to a variety of large physical activities, for example, bicycles, obstacle courses, climbing and balancing, and small physical activities such as construction and other manipulative activities. Outdoor activities include walks within the locality and use of the hall car park in summer.

Staff have an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, and are beginning to develop their use of this to plan activities for children under three years and to record their development and achievements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff make good use of the available space to provide children with access to a good range of activities and opportunities on a daily basis. Rooms are well prepared prior to the children's arrival ensuring they have play opportunities as soon as they arrive. Children access a variety of activities and opportunities on a daily basis, these are supported by good resources and equipment, and contribute to children's good learning and enjoyment. Staff make good use of indoor space to provide children with physical play when outdoor play is not possible. The premises are satisfactorily maintained by the hall personnel, and the manager ensures all areas are clean and suitable for use prior to children's arrival.

Children access a good range of toys and equipment, which is well used to support planned activities. Toys and activities are rotated regularly to sustain children's interest and enjoyment. Opportunities are made available for children to make choices about the activities they wish to take part in from those made available to them or by requesting favourites.

Children's safety is satisfactorily promoted because staff have an understanding of the need to ensure their safety at all times. Children are being encouraged to develop an understanding of their own safety as they are gently reminded to hold scissors correctly when moving about, and not to run on the stage when using this for concerts. Appropriate policies and procedures are, in the main in place, however, an uncollected child policy is not available. Staff undertake regular risk assessments and daily checks to ensure children's safety during sessions, however, some central heating radiators are too hot and pose a danger to children. The regular conducting of fire drills ensures staff and children's responses are effective in ensuring everyone's safety in the event of this occurring.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection policies and procedures and are aware of their responsibility in this area, ensuring children's welfare is safeguarded. An appropriate child protection policy is in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children have access to a wide range of activities and opportunities, which promotes their enjoyment, good learning and overall development. A high ratio of staff work with all children on a daily basis supporting them well in their activities. Children are split into groups according to their age, and consistent staff work with these groups. Staff have an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and have plans in place to start to use this to organise activities for children under three years, and to record children's development and achievements. The manager has a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and is responsible for the planning of activities, and uses the curriculum guidance effectively to provide the children with a wide range of opportunities and experiences.

High staff-child ratios ensure children are supervised and supported throughout sessions. Themes and activities are supported by a good range of resources which are organised, planned and actively promote children's enjoyment. Toys and equipment set out relate to the theme,

for example, during road safety week the children have access to bicycles, zebra crossings, signs and road layout.

Most children arrive happy and settled and are aware of the routine of the day, which begins with register time for the different age groups. After register, staff explain to the children what is on offer, and invite them to make choices about activities. Children who may be unsettled upon arrival are given good support by staff, enabling them to quickly participate. Staff are engaged with children in their activities, talking and listening to them; as a result, children are becoming confident communicators. Children access a wide range of activities each day, and staff rotate toys and equipment regularly across the week, sustaining children's interest and enjoyment.

The premises are made welcoming and bright by being well organised prior to children's arrival, and by the displaying of some posters and examples of children's work. Children have opportunities to be actively involved in a range of play experiences, for example, craft activities, experimental play such as sand and water, role play, construction, floor and table top games. They have opportunities for free play or more structured activities, involving smaller groups or as a whole group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The manager uses the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan a range of activities across all six areas of learning. Written planning shows what children are expected to learn and the purpose of the activity. Most children arrive happy and settled, showing an eagerness to involve themselves in the activities offered.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is developing as a result of the positive praise they receive from staff for their efforts, attempts and achievements. Children show good levels of concentration and persevere at activities, such as colouring and building train tracks. They are becoming independent as they make choices about their activities during free play, and as they deal with personal tasks, such as putting on and taking off outdoor clothes. Children are beginning to develop good relationships with one another, which is observed as a small group of boys play happily together with the trains and cars, making up stories. Children understand the need to share and take turns with toys, equipment and activities, for example, one child waits patiently for a favourite coloured pencil. Children are excited as they are involved in different and interesting activities, for example, as they add water to dry sand, practise their Christmas nativity and use a real camera to take photographs. Children's behaviour is good overall, taking turns with toys and equipment and sitting quietly whilst others speak, however, on occasions children are distracted. Children are becoming competent communicators as they describe what happens when water is added to dry sand, and what they would see looking through a window at Christmas time. Children learn about keeping themselves healthy through general discussion and themes. For example, a nurse visits the setting to talk to the children about hygiene and keeping themselves healthy, and in particular hand washing, children wash their hands and then place these under a special machine to check whether there are any germs left. Children consider their local community and take part in various community activities, for example, helping to raise money for a road safety charity. Children's pencil skills are developing well, some children show great skill in keeping within lines when colouring in. Children make

marks using a variety of implements including pencils and by mark making and writing in sand with various implements. Children are beginning to learn about the different parts of a book, they are able to use books correctly and listen well to stories. Staff take opportunities when reading stories to develop children's language, thinking and concentration by asking questions about the story, encouraging children to think about what might happen next. Children successfully identify their name as they arrive each morning. The manager encourages staff to talk to children during activities and at other times within sessions developing children's language, vocabulary and confidence.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding of number and number operations and, with assistance, are able to count the number of children lining up prior to going into the main hall, and as they use number jigsaws. Children have access to a variety of number charts and number lines and other mathematical equipment to develop their understanding of numbers. Plans show children will begin to look at mathematical concepts such as how many more, and positional language such as in front, behind and next to, when they have a better grasp of numbers and number operations. Planned activities show children consider shape and size when involved in a bean bag activity, and symmetry and similarities when looking at 'ourselves'. Children's early science is well promoted through planned activities and access to a variety of resources. For example, children look at what happens to ice mountains, consider what sinks and floats, watch bubbles and what happens when colours are added to the liquid. During a theme on 'ourselves' they look at fingerprints; they also consider 'melting' and 'dissolving' and make jelly. Children have great fun when using a real camera to take photographs of one another and staff. Children are developing a good understanding of the wider world through varied themes of work, for example, as they celebrate a range of festivals throughout the year, such as Diwali. Children have access to a good range of resources that promote their understanding of diversity. Children are interested when using a globe, talking about different countries they have visited on holiday. This interest is further developed by the manager, who encourages the children to think about other people and how they live as they read a book about what people in other countries eat. Children have access to and competently use a variety of construction equipment to build three dimensional models, and build road and train layouts.

Children's physical development is provided for through access to a range of activities and equipment, promoting both large and small skills. Staff make good use of the hall to provide children with access to large physical play on a daily basis, where children competently use bicycles, the climbing frame and slide and are beginning to develop balancing skills. Children use bean bags during a planned activity to develop throwing and catching skills, concentration and balancing skills as they walk with these on their heads. Children are developing good manipulative skills and hand-eye coordination as they build train tracks, thread, complete jigsaws and use a variety of craft materials and tools when creating pieces of work. Children's imagination is developing through access to a range of resources, for example, a group of boys create a story whilst playing with trains and toy cars, and children use 'under the climbing frame' as a picnic area. Children access a range of creative resources and materials, enabling them to produce interesting and individual pieces of art and craft work. Children have regular opportunities to listen to music which is played throughout the session.

Activities are well planned and involve the children in a range of interesting and stimulating activities across all areas of learning. The manager is experienced and has a good knowledge

of the Foundation Stage curriculum, newer staff members are less familiar with this. The manager completes long and medium term plans and formulates weekly activities from these, along with specific activity plans. Activity plans show the aims of the activity, the process and resources. These activities are evaluated generally by the manager, other staff are encouraged to take part in this process, and the next steps are formulated from these evaluations. The manager responds well to children's spontaneity and involvement, for example, adding water to dry sand to instigate play. The setting use the local authority developmental records to record children's development and achievements, however, some of these are not dated or clearly completed. Staff make observations of children's achievements, but this is not consistently done on a regular basis either at focused activities or spontaneously. Children's developmental records are available for parents and carers to view at any time, and the manager produces a written report at the end of the academic year.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are included and have equal access to the activities offered. Staff obtain relevant information on children's individual needs and circumstances enabling them to make appropriate arrangements where necessary. Children are developing a good understanding of the wider world through various themes, for example, through the celebration of various festivals throughout the year, such as Diwali, and through a variety of other themes. Access to a good range of resources promotes children's understanding of diversity well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Staff work with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure that children who have particular needs are appropriately cared for and given support to enable them to participate fully in all activities. Staff supervise children with particular needs through observation and support on a daily basis, including children in all activities. Verbal feedback on children's progress is given regularly to parents and carers.

In the main, children's behaviour is good as a result of the high staff to child ratios, however, on occasions some children's behaviour is distracting. Children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from all staff for their efforts, attempts and achievements, which fosters their confidence and self-esteem. Staff consistently talk and listen to children throughout sessions, encouraging children's good language and confidence. A positive behaviour management policy is in place, but strategies for dealing with particular behaviour are not yet established and consistently applied by all staff.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from good partnerships with parents and carers. Parents and carers speak positively about the care and education their children receive. They value the staff and the way they have enabled their children to settle well into the routine of the group. Parents and carers have access to policies and procedures, and plans are in place to develop a welcome booklet. They have access to some introductory information on the Foundation Stage, however, this is limited. Parents and carers regularly receive letters regarding themes and activities, and are aware that staff keep developmental records on their child's achievements. Parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in the pre-school through a parents' rota and by taking an active part on the committee.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management are good. Children's learning and development benefits from the good leadership and management of the pre-school. The staff team is relatively new, and they are beginning to work effectively together to ensure children are provided with an environment that is conducive to their good learning, development and enjoyment. The manager is supported by the pre-school committee who act as the registered person. The manager is well supported by a deputy and staff team, and is committed to the ongoing improvement and development of the setting, responding promptly and appropriately to suggestions and recommendations. The manager is aware of the changes in the process for the vetting of staff and therefore there are procedures in place to address this change.

A high ratio of staff work with children on a daily basis; they are aware of how children learn and develop, and interact well with the children within their activities. Staff communicate well with children, effectively questioning them, seeking and obtaining good responses. Staff meet briefly before the start of the day to discuss the session, the activities on offer and their individual roles and responsibilities.

The premises are well organised with space effectively planned, offering children many and varied play opportunities. Activities and equipment are rotated well across the week to engage children's interest and enjoyment. All legally required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place.

A policy document is available to parents and carers within the entrance area and plans are in place to produce a welcome booklet.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last combined inspection, four recommendations were raised in relation to care, and one in relation to funded nursery education.

'Being healthy' outcomes have been improved by the formulation of an appropriate system for the seeking of parental consent for the administration of any medication and the accurate recording of any medicines given. Children's safety has been improved by ensuring electrical installation checks are up to date, providing a first aid box, and by amending the child protection policy to show the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. The organisation of the pre-school has been improved by the accurate recording of daily attendance.

In relation to the funded nursery education, the registered provider was asked to provide children with more opportunities to develop their existing skills of personal independence. Children have many opportunities to develop these skills, for example, as they pour their own drinks at snack time, put on and take off outdoor and dressing up clothes, and self-select toys and equipment.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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):

- amend the sick child policy to include the procedure to be followed in the event of a child becoming ill during a session
- devise an uncollected child policy, and ensure that the central heating radiators do not pose a hazard to the children
- devise strategies for dealing with aspects of children's behaviour and ensure these are consistently applied by staff.

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 staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to enable them to evaluate activities and make observations of children's development and achievements, and consider the formulation of a system to regularly record these observations
- develop further the existing information available for parents and carers on the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk