



## Marshfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	136034
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kay Roberts
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Community Centre, Hayfield, Marshfield, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 8RA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 891900
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<b>Registered person</b>	Marshfield Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marshfield Pre-school Playgroup, established 42 years ago, operates from purpose built rooms attached to the Community Centre in Marshfield. The playgroup is registered to provide full day care for a maximum of 24 children from the age of two to eight years. The playgroup operates Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:00 throughout the year. School aged children who are siblings of those attending the playgroup are welcome to join the group in school holidays. There are currently 49 children on roll all of whom are under five years. There are eight funded four-year-olds and 31 funded three-year-olds. The provision caters for children with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, as well as children who use English as a second language. It is owned and managed by a committee of parents. They employ eight members of staff, six of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support on the education programme from a South Gloucestershire Teacher Advisor.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are aware of the importance of hygiene. Children know that they should wear slippers rather than shoes indoors so that they "do not make footprints and make it dirty". More able children help themselves to tissues and when they have finished throw the used tissues in the bin. Children learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine and know that they must wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet. They are independent in reaching the wash hand basins and recognise their own hand towel, placed on their individual pegs which are identified with a symbol. The risk of infection is minimised as staff follow hygienic procedures and the policy for excluding children who are sick is shared with parents. There are good procedures for managing accidents and all staff are qualified to administer first aid, so that children's welfare is promoted. However the system for recording details of medication administered are not fully detailed. Children are protected from the elements. In the summer sun screen is applied, children wear hats and play in the shade of the gazebo. In winter children wrap up warm in hats, coats, scarves and wellies.

Children are able to play in a fully enclosed garden; however access during the winter months is limited due to the condition of the ground. In the summer the garden operates as an additional room as children are engaged in a range of activities; sand, painting the fence with water and making dens. Children develop large muscle skills indoors as they dance to music and follow the actions of staff. They benefit from having access to a large hall for exercise which they run up and down. Children enjoy moving around in a variety of ways as they pretend to be tigers, snakes, elephants and mice. More able children demonstrate how they can hop for some considerable distance. Through discussion children become aware of how their bodies respond to exercise. Some children benefit from access to a local park where they have opportunities to extend their skills as they use larger equipment, such as slides. Children do not get overtired as they are able to sleep peacefully in a separate, slightly darkened room so they are not disturbed by others engaged in play. After lunch all children relax as they watch a video about 'Bob the builder'.

Snack times are a social occasion as children talk about what they are eating and foods which are healthy. Healthy eating is also reinforced as children take turns to visit the fruit and vegetable van and select items for the following week. Children eat a variety of healthy snacks, the menu for which is reviewed on a regular basis. They are provided with good opportunities to develop independence as they pour their own drinks and spread marmite onto their crumpets. At other times children make bread and pizzas. Children do not get hungry as they are able to help themselves to as much as they want. At midday parents are able to choose whether they provide a packed lunch or for children to have a cooked meal, which takes into consideration special dietary requirements.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The new building is decorated and maintained to a high standard. Before entering the premises children are able to view the colourful mural of a country scene, which is adjacent to the main door. Children benefit from having access to premises which are for their sole use so their work can be displayed. There are two adjoining rooms which can be opened up to provide more space for children or closed at lunch time to make it cosier for younger children. Provision of child sized bathroom facilities and low level coat hooks gives children the opportunity to develop independence. There is space between furniture and activities so that children move around freely. Activities are organised into specific areas, on tables and mats so that children play undisturbed by their peers. Children self-select from a broad range of clean, safe resources which cover all areas of learning, however they do not access all equipment, such as craft materials.

Children play in a secure environment and explain that staff keep them safe by not allowing them out of the building. There is a good system in place to ensure children are protected from people not vetted and only released to authorised adults. Most staff are aware of local safeguarding procedures. The risk of children having an accident is minimised as the high number of staff are appropriately deployed. A detailed risk assessment of the premises and activities are completed on an annual basis. Staff are proactive in reviewing accidents and addressing potential hazards. Children are reminded of the safety rules, such as sitting against the wall when entering the hall. In the event of a fire, children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they practise the drill six times a year. On outings, for which there is a safe procedure, children are reminded about the importance of road safety.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are confident to enter the premises and separate from their main carer with ease. Children who find the separation more difficult are supported with one to one support from a member of staff who diverts their attention to the various activities, for example sharing a book. Those under three years quickly learn from the example provided by older children, and most answer their name at register. They recognise the consistent symbol for their coat hook and name card so begin to understand that print has meaning. Staff make regular observations of children under three years which they record against the Birth to three matters framework. This information is then used to determine children's next steps in learning so that children make sound progress.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although staff have some knowledge of the Foundation Stage and at times actively encourage learning, at other times children's learning is inhibited as they are not provided with an opportunity to reinforce the skills they already have, or provided with appropriate resources. Staff make regular observations of children against all areas of learning, but there is no system for ensuring children are making progress against all aspects within each learning area. The information is supported by photographs and

collated in well presented learning diaries which are regularly shared with parents. However the diaries include no details about children's starting points or the progress children are making against the stepping stones. Information obtained from the observations is fed into planning together with children's interests so that they are motivated to learn. However planning is not fully effective. Planning only includes learning objectives for mathematical development and communication, language and literacy, so that the curriculum is not balanced. Planning is for all children from the age of two years and focuses predominately on the needs of younger and less able children. Although paperwork lists adaptations for individual children, this has not been sufficiently thought through as more able children are not sufficiently challenged.

Children participate in a number of planned activities. Children use fine muscle skills to pick up small pieces of crepe paper, feathers and hay to stick on their picture of a chick coming out of an egg. Staff encourage children to feel the different textures and alert to their senses one child comments that the hay "feels so horrible". However the activity was also designed to increase children's knowledge of life cycles, but as this was not discussed, their understanding was not extended. One activity involves children drawing pictures of sheep and a sheep dog but children do not necessarily know what they are drawing, as no pictures are available for guidance. Children do not understand the role of a sheep dog because there is no discussion. More able children are not consistently encouraged to use the skills they already have; to write their name or to cut a slot in the paper for the sheep dog to move along to herd the sheep. However another activity specifically focuses on developing children's scissor control. On other occasions staff actively encourage independence; with regard to children dressing themselves and at snack time, so children are receiving mixed messages.

Children are sociable and are keen to greet all parents and visitors. They talk about the future and detail the dress and jewellery they will wear for a party. As children pretend to paint their nails on both hands with felt tip pens they develop co-ordination. A more able child organises a card game with four peers. She explains the rules and her friends comply. They recognise when cards are identical. Staff introduce children to counting at register time when everyone counts the number of name cards so that eventually children are able to count on a one to one basis up to eighteen. Children are able to name two dimensional shapes which they use to create pictures of houses and a dog's bone. A few children participate in measuring their height; they know who is the tallest and who is the shortest. Children use coloured beads to make patterns and know that they are in lines. Children use problem solving skills to create a very good replica of a church from good quality construction.

Children understand that print has meaning and young children begin to recognise their name. More able children are able to sound and write the letters in their name. When one child draws a recognisable octopus, which he knows must have eight legs, staff write the word. Children are curious and want to know what is written on a computer screen. When children show an interest in highlighter pens, staff meet children's needs by providing resources so that children can explore how they work. One child listens to an adult read part of a sentence and then a number of words on stickers. As they look at the adjacent picture, they select the correct written word. Children show respect for books as they turn the pages and go from front to back. They sing 'It's raining, it's pouring' to themselves. There are many opportunities to develop pencil control as children draw recognisable people with a face, hair, body, arms and legs. They are encouraged to consider what needs to be included at the end of the person's arms so that

learning is extended. Children draw on the wipe clean board and are independent as afterwards they wipe it with a rubber. After drawing around animal stencils, children take care to try and keep within the lines as they colour. Children particularly like using the small note pads which they attach to small clip boards.

Children use their imagination as they dress up and pretend to be grandma. They interact with staff who are the grandchild. Children ask staff to tie scarves (bandages) around their damaged arm, leg and head. Aware of the world around them they say that they must go to hospital. Play is parallel and although children keep referring to the adult no encouragement is given for children to interact or to extend their play. Aware of information and communication technology children take turns as they pretend to use mobile phones to call mum. Children enjoy exploring the different sounds of the various musical instruments. They watch the beads in the rainmaker as they turn it one way and then the other. Co-ordination is developed as they try to hit the keys of a xylophone with a stick. They know how to make a loud noise and recognise that they must be gentle if they want the sounds to be quiet.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children develop confidence as staff praise each achievement. Each child has a special week when they share with the group their favourite things from home and photographs. All children are valued and included. Staff have experience of meeting children's additional needs by following the Code of Practice and working in close partnership with other professionals.

Children are well behaved as they follow the example provided by staff and are rewarded for positive behaviour. Staff are proactive in resolving possible conflict situations before they escalate. Children know the rules and explain that when going to the hall they must not run off. They are able to share, to take turns and older children are considerate to those younger than themselves. Children show respect for the environment by tidying away toys. Children's appreciation of diversity is limited, for although they have access to some resources reflecting positive images of diversity, the range is limited and not always available, particularly for age, disability and gender. They begin to understand both their own culture and that of others through specific planned activities. For example, for Chinese New Year children look at, and sample traditional Chinese food. They study Chinese writing and look at the globe to see the location of China in relation to the United Kingdom. Links with the toddler group and school help children to have some understanding of the local community. The partnership with the school also facilitates a smooth transition for those children who will later attend the village school. Children are visited by people in the community; an optician, librarian and farmer with some lambs.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents comment very positively about the provision; the friendly welcome from staff, good communication and children's enjoyment. The attractively presented, detailed prospectus and information handbook provide parents with details of practices within the setting, as well as the education programme. There are regular updates via newsletters and on a daily basis details of activities and the menu are displayed in the porch. Six times a year parents have access to their child's well presented progress records,

to which they add their own comments. Parents are encouraged to continue their child's education at home through the library system. Children's learning is enhanced as parents sometimes visit the provision to share their knowledge with children. As part of this children have recently had an opportunity to look at a tractor and large transport lorry.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. There are rigorous recruitment procedures and a clear induction procedure. The ongoing suitability of staff is checked via appraisal. Although staff are generally aware of their role and responsibilities they are not always clear about the expectations with regard to nursery education. The high adult to child ratio facilitates a high level of support and staff are appropriately deployed. Keen to extend practice staff have undertaken much training such as Birth to three matters and menu planning, in addition to NVQ child care qualifications. Staff provide an environment for children where they have space for relaxation as well as physical exercise. Children are allocated to key workers who are responsible for monitoring children's progress and ensuring their needs are met through planning. However in catering for such a large age range from two to five years staff sometimes have difficulty in adapting activities to the needs of all children. Although children are organised into groups according to ability for physical activity, there is no other small group work. Twice a week sessions are held specifically for children who will commence school in the following September. Staff offer a broad range of activities but are inconsistent in their approach so that on occasions children's learning is positively encouraged, but at other times their education is not sufficiently supported to extend children's skills. Paperwork is well organised, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents. Although documentation meets regulatory requirements, the medication records are insufficiently detailed to ensure children's wellbeing should medicine be required.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leaders are suitably qualified and work in partnership with the committee. Leaders encourage staff to extend their skills by attending regular training, but do not effectively evaluate the impact of the training or monitor the education programme. As a consequence leaders are not fully aware of weaknesses within the provision. Some areas for improvement within the provision have been identified, for example, outdoor play and children's access to craft materials and leaders are seeking to address this shortfall. Leaders believe that the key strength with regard to planning is that staff follow on from children's interests.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Limited progress has been made against the two recommendations made at the last care inspection in January 2003. Previously play materials were left in boxes on tables. Staff now take resources out of the boxes, but resources are not always attractively displayed to encourage use by children. Occasionally children have access to books which reflect positive images of disability and gender, but images are not extended to other resources or consistent within the environment. As a consequence children are less likely to embrace diversity.

There were four key issues raised at the last education inspection also held in January 2003. Staff agreed to extend the opportunities for children to write and to encourage greater use of the book corner by making it more attractive and comfortable. Children have many opportunities for mark making as writing materials are readily available. The book corner has been enhanced with the purchase of a rug and large cushion. Books are now displayed, rather than being placed in boxes so that the front covers are clearly visible to children. However there is scope for improvement to encourage greater use of this area. The second key issue required staff to develop practical activities for children to begin to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction, combining two groups of objects and taking one away from the other. Although not witnessed the inspector has been informed that children do participate in mathematical activities, such as counting the baubles on a Christmas tree as well as counting the number of remaining baubles when some are taken away. No progress has been made against the requirement to extend short term planning to include the full range of learning outcomes for children, the language to be provided in the activity and how to extend or adjust the activity to the needs of individual children, so children's learning is inhibited. Short term plans do not include the full range of learning outcomes but focus on mathematical development and communication, language and literacy. Language to be provided in the activity is not included on planning sheets and although there are some adjustments for individual children, these do not sufficiently meet the needs of all children, particularly those who are more able. The final key issue required that a written evaluation be undertaken of key activities to promote improvement in the provision for all children. Although there is evaluation of some activities they are not always fully detailed because completion is retrospective, rather than at the time, so improvements to the education programme are limited.

### **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 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 satisfactory.

### **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 medication records are fully detailed, so that they include information about why medication is required, and once administered the amount given, time and who administered are recorded and countersigned by parents
- further improve the environment so that children are motivated to learn, including the development of the outside area.

### **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):

- ensure children's records clearly show progress made against the Foundation Stage and include details of children's starting points
- further develop and monitor planning to ensure there is a balanced curriculum, that activities are fully supported with suitable resources, including those reflecting positive images of diversity, and more able children are provided with opportunities to extend their skills.

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