

# Marsh Gibbon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 131131           |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 15 May 2007      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sonjia Nicholson |

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Setting Address</b>    | Village Hall, Clements Lane, Marsh Gibbon, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX27 0HG |
| <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01869 277710 01869 277362                                                  |
| <b>E-mail</b>             |                                                                            |
| <b>Registered person</b>  | Marsh Gibbon 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marsh Gibbon Pre-School opened in 1976. It operates from three rooms within a community hall in the village of Marsh Gibbon. The pre-school is managed by a committee of parents and serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The group is registered to care for 32 children aged from two and a half to four years; there are currently 63 children on roll. This includes 25 funded three year olds and 24 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties/disabilities and who speak English as an additional language, although none currently attend. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 to 14:45 on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 09:30 to 12:00 on Tuesday.

Twelve staff work with the children, all of whom are part-time. Five staff have relevant early years qualifications and two are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from the Buckinghamshire Early Years Development and Childcare Service and are members of

the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They have successfully gained the Buckinghamshire County Council Early Years Development and Childcare Service Quality Assurance Award.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Staff give high priority to ensuring children access a wide range of activities that support their good health. They provide physical equipment inside each day, such as tunnels, cubes and steps and opportunities to play outside in the garden on trundle toys, weather permitting. Children enthusiastically take part in a highly active Physical Education (PE) lesson where they listen and follow instructions to move in different ways, for example, to 'shuffle' and 'step'. They think about moving in different directions around the hall, such as 'sideways', and enjoy exploring the parachute.

There are a number of substantial procedures in place to ensure children's good health, for example, staff maintain excellent records for children with medical conditions. They have a transparent folder that contains their health care plan, photograph, medication and information about what constitutes an emergency; this ensures children receive prompt and appropriate treatment. Children are proactive in developing good personal hygiene habits; they enthusiastically use a series of step by step photographic prompts which demonstrate how to wash and dry their hands using anti-bacterial soap and paper towels. Staff provide good role models for children by consistently washing their hands before handling food, following proficient nappy changing routines and wiping tables before mealtimes to prevent cross infection. Children independently access tissues to wipe their noses which further prevents the spread of infection. Children stay safe in the event of a minor accident as the majority of staff are trained to administer first aid. There is a fully stocked first aid box available which meets current requirements and staff record details precisely in the accident book which they share with parents.

Snacktime is highly successful in promoting healthy eating; children self-select a plate and beaker then they choose from the two choices available each day, for example, cheese and pear or grapes and banana. Accurate information is in place regarding children's food allergies and intolerances along with comprehensive procedures regarding children's party food and cooking activities. This means children do not have food or drink that will harm them. The setting is registered as a low risk food business. Staff fully implement the guidance regarding food storage and handling to ensure children's good health, for example, they systematically record food purchases, check and store food appropriately and keep daily records of the fridge temperature.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in bright, spacious premises where space is used very flexibly so that children can work and play in both large and small groups. Staff set out the main hall each day to create a stimulating environment with different areas including a home corner, messy area and book corner. Children move freely and make independent choices about what they want to do. There is a vast array of high quality toys, equipment and resources. Staff undertake a visual check of toys each day to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm children and complete a more thorough check each year.

Staff are vigilant in their management of the children and conscientiously strive to create an extremely safe and secure environment. They place a high priority on ensuring visitors and unvetted adults are supervised, for example, they must wear a badge, sign the visitor's record and alert staff if they wish to enter the toilets so they can check if children are present. Children's security is particularly good at the beginning and end of the session with established collection procedures in place that staff vigorously enforce. Daily risk assessments take place to make sure children play in clean, safe surroundings. Evacuation procedures take place in a methodical way so that all children practise the drill and know how to leave the building safely.

Children have good protection from possible abuse or neglect as staff have a thorough knowledge of safeguarding children procedures. They have an excellent understanding of their role and responsibility to observe and report concerns about children's well-being so children are safe at all times. Staff have access to a range of relevant child protection information including the group's own comprehensive policy.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time within this stimulating setting which puts them first. They are extremely busy and interested in what is going on and make independent choices from the huge range of well-organised activities and play opportunities on offer. These include making playdough, imaginary play on the large equipment, making snowy pictures, free painting at the easel, role play in the home corner and small world play with teenage dolls. The atmosphere is calm and children play and work harmoniously in mixed age groups. They enjoy enthusiastic interaction from the staff who talk constantly to them, asking questions and commenting freely. Children receive excellent levels of care, for example, staff notice when children hurt themselves and offer reassurance to make them feel better. Staff plan effectively for children under three years using the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Staff create a highly stimulating and welcoming environment for children. They have a first rate understanding of the Foundation Stage, are very confident in their delivery of the curriculum and knowledgeable about the aims and learning objectives. The planning tool is exceptional in detailing the intended learning objectives linked to all six areas of learning and includes the role of the adult, evaluation of the activities and differentiation for more and less able children. All aspects of children's learning are planned for, including daily sessions and the 'preparation for school' group. This is a vibrant and interesting time for children where they access three activities, for example, exploring numeracy and literacy concepts, mark making/writing own name and mixing colours. Each child has their own folder containing purposeful examples of number, colour and shape work.

Staff rigorously monitor children's achievements during their time at the setting. They constantly make a variety of meaningful observations, gain parents' views about what their child can do and use photographs to complete the child's progress record. Staff use this information skilfully to inform and plan the next stages in children's learning. Children benefit from staff's involvement and interest in their play; they ask open ended questions such as, 'where are you going?' and extend their imaginary play by suggesting they make tickets for their journey. Staff speak

respectfully to children on their level; they genuinely listen and are interested in what children have to say. Children's behaviour is managed consistently by staff using suitable strategies. Children listen attentively at small and large group times and actively respond to staff instructions, for example, to tidy away the toys.

Children are highly motivated, extremely keen to learn and eager to participate in the wide ranging activities on offer. They show high levels of independence during the daily routine, for example, they select their own beaker and plate at snacktime before choosing their snack and pouring their own drink and dress and undress for PE with little or no adult support.

Children have daily opportunities to make marks using a wide variety of tools, including their finger to trace letters in the air, pencils, tracing paper and sand. More able children are beginning to form recognisable letters as they independently write their names on their work; staff ably support this by providing name cards. Children write for a purpose as they use telephones to take orders and make lists. There are plentiful opportunities throughout the session for children to link sounds to letters with a big emphasis on planned activities linked to the letter of the week, for example, they talk about items beginning with 'P'. Children excitedly add their own examples, such as 'puppy'. Other opportunities are more spontaneous, for example, a member of staff makes the letter "L" with coloured pegs and asks the children if they recognise it and what the initial letter of their name is.

There are considerable opportunities for children to talk in both large and small groups, such as, registration time and 'show and tell' sessions where less confident children receive adult help to express themselves to talk about items brought from home. Children confidently initiate conversations with adults and show high levels of curiosity and interest, for example, 'I'm staying all day, are you?' and 'What are you doing?'. Children use a wide variety of methods to communicate within the group, for example at snacktime they use sign language to say 'milk' or 'water' and say 'bonjour' or 'yes' in English or French at registration time. Staff encourage children to recall and discuss past events, for example, what they have drawn in their homework book which they eagerly share with one another. Children handle books confidently; four-year-olds enjoy choosing books to share at home and all children help select books relating to the planned theme from the mobile library van. Children show immense interest as they explore books in the role play area, turning the pages and following the print with their fingers. Within large groups they listen attentively to a story read by an adult, entitled 'Storm Cats'; afterwards they express their feelings and emotions as they discuss what makes them feel frightened.

Children successfully count accurately to 10 and beyond. At registration time they count how many children are present and independently select two pieces of fruit at snacktime. Children make simple calculations as they play board games, such as 'Ludo' where they think about how many more moves they need to make. Displays of numbers around the room help children learn to recognise numbers to 10 and consolidate their learning. Children precisely match dominoes and make patterns using computer programs. Staff use mathematical and positional language, for example, asking children to take 'big' steps around the room and move 'backwards'.

Children competently use simple technology equipment, such as the computer. They show high levels of concentration, control the mouse accurately and display good hand/eye co-ordination. Staff support children in the use of real equipment during their play; they provide a tape player and telephones in the home corner to represent a lounge, which helps children learn how things work. Children capably use a range of tools, for example, pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and

observe change as they make playdough, where they measure out ingredients and mix them together. They use tools, such as rollers and cutters to squeeze, roll and push the playdough.

Children learn about the weather as they complete the weather board and discuss the well-resourced display table containing items such as an umbrella, ski boots and Inuit dolls dressed in furs which reinforces children's learning. Children make excellent links between home and the setting through 'Beattie Bear' who spends time with a four-year-old each week. Parents complete a diary about what adventures and experiences they have with him; children excitedly share this with their peers and staff.

Children animatedly participate in an innovative music session where they have great fun singing a range of original and familiar rhymes and songs. They keenly join in the words and dance and jump around the room freely. Children explore a range of percussion instruments to make 'high' and 'low' sounds and go 'faster' and 'slower'. Staff place a high emphasis on children learning how to handle the instruments properly. Children enthusiastically experiment with mixing colours and naming them, for example, "I've made brown!". Children have daily opportunities to freely express themselves creatively; they paint at the easel and draw at the mark making table.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an excellent knowledge of the local community as they use the mobile library that visits regularly to choose books relating to the planned theme. They visit the church and go to the local school where they develop sound relationships with the class teacher who reciprocates by visiting them within the pre-school in an environment that is familiar to them; this helps them feel secure and ready to make the transition to school. Children learn about the roles that men and women have through themes, such as 'People who help us'. They enjoy visits from a nurse, policeman and the fire service. There is a wide range of dressing up outfits to extend children's learning.

Children learn about the wider world as they celebrate a vast range of religious world festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Yom Kippur and Hanukah; there are extensive resources to support staff in delivering these experiences, such as prompt sheets, labels, photographs and posters. Children play with a broad range of resources that reflect diversity, such as a doll in a wheelchair, a blind doll with a guide dog and books about disability. Other resources linked to a display table about the weather include male/female Arab dolls and an Inuit doll in traditional dress; this helps children further develop an appreciation of other cultures. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties/disabilities receive highly effective support from the group's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), a role that two members of staff share cohesively. They attend relevant training, go to Cluster Group meetings and receive support from the Area SENCO who visits regularly. Staff monitor children and meet with parents to discuss any concerns; they share observations made and urge them to seek further advice and guidance from health professionals, such as their doctor or health visitor. Children receive appropriate support to meet their individual needs, for example, one to one assistance from a dedicated member of staff and help to practise exercises from the Speech Therapist.

Children are totally engaged in what they are doing, showing high levels of interest; they listen attentively and respond eagerly to staff instructions. Children follow the group's 'Golden Rules

for Behaviour' which they help to devise; these are set out in a simple way that helps them learn right from wrong, for example, 'what makes us happy' and 'what makes us sad'. Staff consistently implement these rules and as a result children's behaviour is exemplary. Children's self-esteem flourishes in this environment where staff offer plenty of praise, instantly reward good behaviour with stamps on their hands using an ink pad and encourage them to appreciate others efforts during small group times.

There are excellent strategies in place for staff to build exceptional relationships with parents and carers which contributes significantly to children's well-being. Staff provide extensive information to parents both on entry and throughout their time at the setting through newsletters, a detailed notice board and a comprehensive range of policies and procedures relating to all aspects of the provision. All necessary records and parental consents are in place which means staff offer children appropriate care. The staff and committee seek parents' views through an annual questionnaire. They use this information to respond effectively to improve the service on offer and discover children's interests at home, for example, their favourite television characters, which they incorporate into planned themes. Parents spoken to during the inspection particularly like the atmosphere, find the staff approachable and think the feedback meeting is very useful.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

Parents of children receiving nursery education funding are fully involved in their child's education. They are encouraged to send their child with items from home for a 'show and tell time' relating to the letter of the week and four-year-olds have a homework book which also relates to the letter of the week, for example, they draw a picture of a 'nut' or 'necklace'. Parents contribute significantly to their child's education as they complete an initial child profile form. Staff update this information every term at a parents' meeting where they discuss children's progress. Staff keep superb records of the children's achievements during their time at the setting using a variety of observations and photographs; they use this information effectively to inform and plan the next stages in children's learning. Parents are proactive in joining the daily rota of volunteers so they involve themselves in the group and gain an understanding of what their child is doing. There is excellent written guidance available for parent helpers which clearly sets out staff expectations, such as encouraging children's independence and getting down to the children's level during their play.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for by an extremely professional team of motivated, enthusiastic and hard working staff. The committee gives high priority to training and all staff have on-going opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills through courses, such as 'Birth to three matters' framework, 'Manage your team', Child Protection, 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' and 'Stories for Everyone'. Children benefit from this increased knowledge which staff implement into their daily practice to enhance the care and education on offer, for example, successfully including principles of the 'Birth to three matters' framework into the planning tool.

Recruitment procedures and suitability checks are robust in ensuring staff are suitable to work with children, for example, candidates attending an interview for the Deputy pre-school leader role give a ten minute presentation so the committee and pre-school leader can assess their organisational skills and childcare knowledge. A comprehensive induction programme means staff develop consistent practice and rigidly adhere to the group's policies and procedures, for

example, the evacuation drill; this means children's safety and welfare remain paramount at all times.

Staff meet regularly to plan an exciting curriculum for children which includes French lessons and a music session. Children are very familiar with the consistent daily routine and are happy and settled within the group. Staff work very well together as a team; they are clear about their role and responsibilities set out on meticulous plans and communicate effectively throughout the session to ensure it runs smoothly. The setting has successfully gained a recognised Quality Assurance Scheme Award which means the staff and committee constantly review their practice, for example, they have recently introduced a 'rising fives' lending library and organised the deployment of staff to ensure a 'floating' member of staff is available for observation purposes. Staff willingly share good practice with other settings, for example, they welcome staff and committee members from other settings into the group and allow access to their policies and procedures in order to support them.

Leadership and Management are outstanding.

The pre-school leader is inspiring to others and provides an excellent role model to her staff; she is animated and enthusiastic about her role and works to a very high level in all areas. She is ably supported by an active committee of parents who monitor and evaluate the provision effectively to ensure children are making progress; they raise funds for new equipment through events, such as the Easter Extravaganza which are fun for all the family and raise the profile of the setting within the village. There is clear guidance in place for committee members about their role and responsibilities; this ensures everyone works to the highest standard in managing the setting. The committee highly value the staff and recognise their individual skills through annual appraisals, committee meetings and regular contact within the group.

There is an abundance of meaningful documentation covering all areas, that exceeds requirements. It is professionally presented, accurately completed and stored confidentially to protect children's identity. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection it was recommended that good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing, children have appropriate resources, particularly when using scissors and that appropriate crockery is used at snacktime.

Staff have effectively met these recommendations to improve children's care; they now ensure the bowl of water used for children to wash their hands after activities in the main hall is changed regularly and children are encouraged to wash their hands using photographic prompts after toileting. Staff provide antibacterial soap and paper towels to prevent the spread of infection. At snacktime children use individual plastic bowls and beakers; they select their own snacks and pour their own drinks. When using scissors, left-handed children have access to appropriate left-handed scissors.

No key issues were raised relating to the nursery education but staff were asked to consider the following points: ensure the more able three year olds are provided with similar opportunities as the rising fives to extend and build on their learning and continue to review and implement the programme for parents to share their children's development records and discuss their child's progress with staff.



Three year olds attend a 'Preparation for School' session on Thursday afternoons where they further develop their numeracy and literacy skills through a range of well-planned activities. They also work with staff at the mark making table on a daily basis where they practise writing their name and writing for a purpose, for example, making a shopping list. Parents are now actively involved in contributing to their child's developmental record; they provide information on entry about what their child can do and this is updated every term when they meet to discuss progress with the Pre-School Leader or Deputy Pre-School Leader.

### **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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)