



Merry Go Round Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY287735
Inspection date	25 May 2005
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
Setting Address	Merry Go Round Pre School, 1 Jubilee Road, Sandwich, Kent, CT13 0QP
Telephone number	01304 614425
E-mail	
Registered person	Merry Go Round 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?

Merry Go Round Pre-School opened in 2004, it is overseen by a committee and is non profit making. It operates from one room in a single storey detached property in Sandwich, Kent. The group serves the local area.

There are currently 20 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. This includes 15 funded 3 and 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has experience of supporting a number of children with special needs and children who

Speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.45.

There are four members of staff employed to work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level III.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, which contribute to their good health. They move with confidence, coordination and good spatial awareness, for example, they especially enjoyed playing instruments in a noisy marching band. Children enjoy outdoor activities which help them develop control of their bodies, for example they had fun blowing and chasing bubbles, collecting for the nature table and playing on ride on toys. Outdoor games help to improve children's physical skills; however there is a lack of planned outdoor activities to challenge the children, particularly the more able children. The children are becoming aware of the way activity affects their bodies and know when they need a drink. They are able to help themselves to water from a cold water dispenser whenever they are thirsty.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They take turns to help prepare snack which gives them the opportunity to use tools and talk about healthy choices. However some of the good measures put in place to ensure snack time is sociable and promotes healthy are no longer in place. These issues are being addressed and on day two of the inspection children were benefiting from a more relaxed sociable experience with healthy choices.

Children understand the importance good hygiene and personal care. Their understanding of why they must wash their hands after handling the rabbit, using the toilet and before snack reduces the risk of cross contamination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained indoor environment; they are able to move around safely, freely and independently because of effective classroom set up and good staff deployment. Staff work well together to identify and minimise risks to keep children safe. However the outdoor area has not been maintained adequately, a number of nettles are growing through the fence and the grass is long. Clear procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children ensure they remain safe and do not leave without their parents or carers.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. Staff check toys and equipment regularly to ensure they remain in good repair. Staff safeguard the children's welfare by having all the required procedures and documents in place. For example, allergies are posted in the kitchen, an adequate number of staff are trained in first aid and all staff have a secure understanding of the child protection procedures, which are in line with those of the local Area Child Protection Committee.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the classroom confidently. They quickly settle, selecting from the wide range of activities on offer. Staff carefully prepare the environment so that children may self select and are able to clean up after themselves, promoting their independence. For example, sweeping the spilled sand and mopping up splashes of water. They enjoy feeding and handling the pet rabbit, and hand washing takes place routinely afterwards. The Birth to three matters framework is used to adapt activities to promote the younger children's learning. For example, they enjoyed the tactile experience of playing in the shaving foam. All children spend their time purposefully. They enjoy a wide range of experiences which promotes their learning and helps to develop their concentration, for example the children enjoyed collecting for the nature table, and then spent time exploring the items with magnifying glasses and other tools. Children cooperate well with each other. They enjoy exploring a wide range of activities that contribute to their creativity, such as painting, model making and playing instruments. Children were heard singing as they play showing they were happy.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and the children's learning are good. The staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. They plan interesting activities which children anticipate with excitement, some waiting at the appropriate table for the key staff member. Children are confident speakers and good listeners. Some opportunities were missed by staff to extend their language and thinking further with the use of open ended questioning. For example, while they played in the shaving foam and discovered a bug on the nature table. Children are developing a love of books and reading. They have access to a good range of books in a cosy reading area and were observed reading stories both independently and with an adult. Children enjoy using tools such as tape measures; they compared measurements deciding whether items were bigger or smaller than the last. Children have regular opportunities to use mathematical language and count confidently. Children use their imagination well during role play and enjoy the changing role play area. Children eagerly play with the art activities staff provide and enjoy gluing, cutting, painting and mixing paints.

Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is recorded in children's work and in written observations which link to the stepping stones. Records of children's achievements are filed and plans to regularly share them with the

parents have been made. They are used to inform the future planning however the staff do not always include adaptations in the planning to show they are adequately planning for and meeting the children's individual interests and needs to extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Staff provide a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. They have a variety of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity and gender. However posters that reflect positive images are limited as are materials and resources that reflect positive images of disability. Staff have planned to take the children out into the local community and take photographs that can be displayed for the children to relate to. Children are beginning to learn about a sense of time by the consistent routine and language like this morning and yesterday, however there are some missed opportunities for more able children to use timers and look at the clock rather than be told 'in a minute'.

The setting has effective arrangements to care for children with special needs although there are none currently attending. Children show care and concern for each other, and play together harmoniously. Staff use lots of positive reinforcement and praise and the children respond by behaving very well. Children confidently decide what to do, helping themselves to drinks and independently visiting the toilet.

Partnership between parents and staff is good. Parents feel informed about the setting and their children's learning. Communication through newsletters, daily chats and detailed notice boards helps staff and parents work together. Additionally information has been sent home about sharing the children's developmental records and parents meetings are scheduled to further develop their understanding. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are comfortable in the well-organised environment, although some daily house keeping is not in place, for example the sharpening of pencils. Induction training, policies and procedures work in practise to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The committee members are aware of their responsibilities and support the staff well.

Staff have a good awareness of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and how to apply this to support the children's development. They are developing a strong team and have successfully identified areas to improve the setting such as individualising the planning further. The leadership and management of the group is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to devise a system to monitor and evaluate how information is shared with parents. This was to ensure they are kept well informed of all issues relating to the group's policies, procedures, their children's developmental progress and matters that affect the smooth running of the group. The provider has invited the parents to view their children's records and has devised a system to ensure they are always available to parents. Parent meetings have been scheduled. Staff are available to speak with parents both in the mornings and at the end of each session. Parent newsletters are sent home regularly with a copies of different policies or procedures attached each time. All parents spoken to felt informed about the setting and their child's progress.

In addition the provider agreed to ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature. This has been done. The temperature is monitored to ensure it is comfortable for the children throughout the year.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received a complaint about this setting in January 2005 following a dispute over unpaid fees which resulted in the exclusion of a child. The conduct of a committee member to the complainant was also questioned. The complaint relates to Standard 12 - working in partnership with parents and carers and the group were asked to investigate and report back to Ofsted. Following receipt of this report, Ofsted is satisfied with the actions taken by the group and confirm that the providers remain qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure that the outdoor area is suitably maintained to ensure children are able to play freely and safely
- provide regular opportunities for the children to take part in a range of challenging physical activities to develop their gross motor skills.

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 planning includes differentiation and evaluations of activity sheets include details of children who need extra support or challenging
- extend children's language and thinking skills by the use of open ended questioning.

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