

Milford Pre-School Plus Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY350734
Inspection date	12 July 2007
Inspector	Penny Wood
Setting Address	Milford C of E School, Lymington Road, Milford on Sea, LYMINGTON, Hampshire, SO41 0RF
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Registered person	Milford Pre-school Plus Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Milford Pre-school Plus Limited opened in 1980. It is a company limited by guarantee. It operates from a dedicated building within the grounds of Milford Primary School and has access to outdoor play space. Children from the local and surrounding area attend.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under eight years at any one time. There are currently 50 children on the pre-school roll, of these 30 receive funding for nursery education. There are currently 50 children attending the after-school club, of these, 32 are under eight years. The number of children attending the holiday club fluctuates each holiday.

Pre-school sessions operate from 8:50 to 11:45 and 12:40 to 15:10, with a lunch club between. After-school sessions operate between 15:15 to 18:00. Pre-school and after-school sessions operate term time only. The holiday club runs from 8:45 to 18:00. There are 11 staff who work with the children, of these, nine have relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children willingly participate in the group's hygiene routines. They regularly wash their hands throughout the sessions, particularly prior to eating, with gentle reminders from staff to wash their hands after visiting the toilet. Younger children understand that washing their hands stops the germs from going onto their food and into their tummies. All children are encouraged to be independent in their self-care, with resources, such as tissues and water available to encourage children to see to their own needs.

Staff follow good procedures for maintaining high levels of cleanliness within the premises. The regular cleaning of equipment and the toys, which at times involves the children and parents, ensures children access clean resources.

Clear procedures protect children from the spread of illness, with exclusion times to limit the risk of cross-infection. Children benefit from the medical support they receive from staff that are trained in first aid. Most of the documentation for recording accidents and medication administered to the children are completed in appropriate detail. Parental consent allowing staff to seek further medical attention in the event of a serious accident or illness ensures children's medical needs are met.

Daily opportunities to be physically active promote a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy access to the school's playing field, which is equipped with an excellent range of balancing and climbing equipment. Combined with the provision of further equipment, such as balls and hoops, children are developing very good skills in moving in a variety of different ways. For example, they are able to co-ordinate moving forwards and sideways along a balance beam.

Children enjoy social snack and meal times where they sit together to eat. Children's good health benefits from daily opportunities to eat healthy options, such as fresh fruit. Displays in the entrance hall offer parents information on how to promote a healthy diet. Throughout the day children enjoy access to fresh drinking water, with additional drinks of milk available at snack time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter a welcoming, child-friendly environment. They enjoy sufficient space to move between the areas of play and the table top activities. Children enjoy access to a good range of resources which are regularly checked for hazards. Throughout the sessions, children are developing an appropriate understanding of maintaining their own safety. For example, staff remind older children not to rock back on their chairs when sitting at the computer station.

Children benefit from the staff's attention to reducing hazards within the premises and outdoor area. For example, daily visual risk assessments highlight any hazards or issues that may cause harm, with a more detailed assessment taking place regularly. The premises are secure at all times, with a security gate at the entrance and doors secured whilst children are on-site. When using the outdoor area, children are clear on the boundaries of their play areas, with cones used to depict the play area for the younger children. Reviews of the accident record highlight the causes of accidents, enabling staff to take necessary action to reduce any risk of harm to children.

Pre-school children benefit from regular opportunities to practise the fire evacuation procedure. However, within the out of school clubs, children and staff do not participate in practices of the fire evacuation procedure, putting them at risk of failing to know how to evacuate the premises effectively in an emergency situation.

Appropriate procedures promote children's welfare with particular regard to child protection issues. Staff are aware of the group's procedures to identify signs and symptoms of abuse and the action to take in order to protect the child from harm. However, the system for recording injuries which children arrive with does not maintain confidentiality.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children within the pre-school and out of school clubs are happy and confident within the staff's care. They enter with ease and quickly settle into their play and routines. Children engage well with the staff, who listen and value what they have to say, with children obviously enjoying the staff's company and input into their games. The staff have a very calm approach within their provision and as a result, children are happy and relaxed.

Children enjoy a good range of play opportunities, with an emphasis on children within the out of school clubs taking the lead in choosing activities. Staff ensure the older children are familiar with the range of available resources in order to aid their free choice. Children of all ages display high levels of self-esteem and are confident in requesting specific resources to play with.

Staff move effortlessly to support children of all ages, leaving those children who are appropriately occupied to explore their own play and activities. Children benefit from high levels of praise and encouragement, particularly when they play well with each other and achieve in new areas, such as completing a large jigsaw.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good with children making steady progress within their individual learning journeys. They experience a wide range of activities and play opportunities which cover all areas of learning. However, not all areas within the room are attractively presented to encourage children to access them on a regular basis.

Planning of the curriculum is based on children's records of achievement and staff's knowledge of children's abilities. During the delivery of activities, children enjoy the freedom to explore at their own will. For example, during an activity based on making sea creatures with clay, children clearly enjoyed making their own creations, with staff acknowledging that children continue to learn despite deviating from the original theme.

The evaluation of activities and observations, both planned and spontaneous, inform children's records of development and the future planning of activities. Staff maintain individual education plans for children in order to focus on specific areas of development according to the individual child's stage of learning. Staff are pro-active in observing children within their key worker groups in order to assess new achievements, such as playing with clay for the first time. The celebration of children's achievements at the end of sessions boosts children's confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy receiving acknowledgement of their successes and taking certificates of achievement home to show their parents.

Children are keen to participate in the activities because of the attentive staff who engage the children well. Good techniques are in place to capture children's attention, such as the use of a tambourine and intonation during stories. Children persevere at chosen tasks, such as threading long necklaces of pasta. They are gaining good control of the computer mouse, enjoy using scissors for cutting and tongs for serving their snacks, all of which help them to develop their small muscle control. When using the computer and the group's digital camera, children are gaining a good understanding of how to use technology. They enjoy looking at the photographs they have taken of their friends. When appropriate, staff adopt the use of an egg timer to ensure that all children receive an equal turn at popular activities.

Throughout the session, children enjoy relaxed discussions with each other and the staff. They enjoy singing, particularly the alphabet song at the end of the session. During activities staff use good questioning techniques to encourage the children to use their thinking skills and to verbalise their thoughts. Children are acquiring good skills in linking sounds with letters. They are able to recognise letters at random, linking those letters with familiar words and names. Within the classroom, children enjoy plenty of opportunity to develop their pencil control, for example through colouring and naming their pictures.

Children are developing good mathematical skills, particularly those based on counting and calculating. Staff seize opportunities to count to high numbers with children. When counting each other at the snack tables, children are able to assess which table has more children and by how many. Through singing popular songs, such as 'Five Speckled Frogs', children are developing skills in counting backwards. Staff utilise their individual skills within the group, such as playing musical instruments, with children clearly enjoying singing along to the guitar.

Children are developing their imaginations. They enjoy making items with Stickle Bricks, playing games with trains and tracks, and at times they play in the role play area. When running around outside, children actively join together to play games, such as pretending to be an assortment of different animals. During activities, the children are happy; they enjoy their friends company and have fun.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children take an active role within the group, for example they help to tidy up and self-register on entry to the setting. Children within the pre-school are developing a strong sense of belonging to the group through the provision of named coat pegs and the singing of welcome and goodbye songs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing an appropriate understanding of diversity through the celebration of a range of cultural festivals, wall posters and toys which depict positive images of race, culture and disability. Good systems ensure children have their individual needs met. For example, those children with additional needs are fully supported by staff to ensure they are included within activities and play opportunities.

Children behave well and are forming strong bonds with each other and the staff. Children willingly engage each other in discussion and play. On entry, the older children enthusiastically commence playing, welcoming each other into their games. Throughout the setting, clear boundaries, many of which are reinforced with children at the beginning of the session, ensures children are clear on the rules of the group. When required, staff ensure children take

responsibility for their actions and say sorry to those who have been affected. At the end of the pre-school sessions, children celebrate their good behaviour, with thumbs up to having not run inside the classroom and to sharing the toys with each other.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the group at the beginning and end of each session by the approachable staff. They receive good information about the group through regular newsletters and the notice boards. The policies and procedures are available to all parents, offering an insight into the group's role and responsibilities. The provision of open evenings enables parents to discuss children's progress with staff and to look through children's records prior to them being sent on to school. For those parents who are unable to make the event, the staff's adaptable provision enables parents to attend at a more convenient time.

Within newsletters, staff include information on current topics and how parents may extend children's learning at home. Detailed information is available to parents of pre-school children which includes information regarding the provision of the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the effective deployment of staff, the majority of which are qualified in early years care and education. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are aware of their role and responsibilities. Staff work very well as a team, effectively moving amongst the children offering support and extending children's learning opportunities.

The group are continually seeking to improve their practice and willingly initiate new ideas in order to assess if new procedures may enhance their already high quality provision. For example, allowing children to freely access the outdoor play area for activities throughout the session in preference to set times.

All regulatory documentation is in place with most containing the required detail. Good systems for taking the daily register ensure accurate records of staff and children's attendance are in place. However, this system does not include the routine recording of students working in the group. Records are stored securely and most maintain confidentiality. All documentation is available for inspection.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff work exceptionally well within their key worker groups. Management recognise and value the commitment of staff and the time it takes them to effectively maintain children's records. As a result staff are allocated time within the sessions to update children's records of achievements and individual education plans.

Staff benefit from attending training opportunities based on the Foundation Stage, cascading information and good ideas to colleagues within the group. Regular meetings with other local providers enable the team to benefit from sharing professional expertise. The group welcomes support from outside agencies, such as a development worker and an advisory teacher in order to provide children with very good play and learning opportunities.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- instigate emergency evacuation practices within the out of school clubs
- ensure all records are suitably completed, shared with parents and maintain confidentiality, with particular regard to the visitors book, records of existing injuries and the accident and medication records

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):

- improve the learning environment with particular regard to the book corner, writing and role play areas

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