

Mayfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109464
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Inspector	Joanne Wade Barnett

Setting Address	King George V Playing Field, Court Meadow, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6PJ
Telephone number	01435 872523
E-mail	
Registered person	Mayfield Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mayfield Pre-School was registered in 2001 and is run by a parent committee. The pre-school is situated in the village of Mayfield, Kent. It operates from a mobile classroom adapted for pre-school use, adjacent to Mayfield Church of England School. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day from 09.00 to 15.00 during term time. Children attend from the local and surrounding area for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The committee employ five members of staff. Of these, four including the supervisor hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The environment is clean and tidy and children receive good support to develop good personal hygiene. There are effective procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. Staff monitor hand washing after toileting and before snack and staff explain the need to wash hands. More able children are able to describe why they wash their hands by following picture instructions.

The snack time introduces children to a range of healthy choices such as, apples and bananas, although plain biscuits are also given. Even the youngest children help prepare the snack for their friends and learn how to help share cups. Fresh drinking water and milk are available during snack time, however not during the session.

Clear records and procedures are in place for the administration of medication and very careful thought has been given to allergies and records of snacks. Up-to-date first aid training has been undertaken by every practitioner and parents' permission is obtained to enable practitioners to act in the best interest of children if they become ill or have an accident.

Children enjoy physical play through music and movement sessions indoors and the use of large equipment outside. Children have opportunities to explore, even in the inclement weather the woodland path that surrounds the pre-school. They investigate mini beasts and enjoy nature trails.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure. Staff wear a uniform that quickly identifies them to children and visitors as a safe person. Careful consideration is given to arrival and collection times to ensure children are protected. For example, staff supervise the door. Fire drills are carried out periodically and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building. Consequently, children's safety is promoted in the event of an evacuation.

There are regular risk assessments both indoors and out that enable staff to identify and quickly address any potential hazards. Toys and equipment are clean and in good condition. Toys are rotated to provide children with a variety of experiences that meet their developmental needs. The environment is welcoming because staff work hard to develop defined areas for children to play, for example, a writing area and a book area.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children's welfare and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures staff quickly recognise when a child is in danger and can act in the child's best interest.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at pre-school. Children have access to a range of resources that cover most areas of development. Practitioners working with younger children do not undertake regular observations to establish where children are in their learning. Consequently, the current system of planning is not based on what children need to learn next. The simple planning is

prepared by the supervisor. Practitioners have not implemented the Birth to three matters framework, therefore this has not been effective in planning appropriate activities for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. As a result, children are making satisfactory progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children clearly enjoy their time at pre-school and readily talk to and play with their friends. Activities are generally organised to enable children to play together and as a result positive relationships are forming.

Children have the confidence to know that practitioners allow them to initiate their own learning experiences, for example, playing with play dough develops into making sausages and capturing their imagination. The role-play area is popular amongst the children; they prepare a meal by laying out the various utensils and using the cooker to cook food. Children dress up as fire fighters or princesses to explore what it is like to be someone else. The display boards in all areas of the room show the children's own representations of their unique perceptions of the world.

Children respond positively to practitioners who are kind and caring in their approach towards them. Children have a variety of experiences at pre-school; they delight in mark making which features regularly throughout the session; children make marks in the dough as they push patterned rollers through it and printing shapes with fruit in the paint. However, practitioners focus children's learning too heavily with work sheets and not through everyday play experiences. Children make choices from the range of activities set out by the practitioners and independently self-select resources, although on occasion some activities are too adult led. Children learn to take care of their environment through tidying away as they stop and listen to instructions from the practitioners.

Useful questioning techniques are applied by practitioners to make children think. Children are confident speakers. For example, at lunch time they sit together with their friends and compare their lunches commenting on what is the same, matching the colours of their cups and the contents of their sandwiches. Children readily approach practitioners to ask for assistance or share information; practitioners respond by crouching down to the children's level to respond to them. Children receive opportunities throughout the session to see print in the environment and choose their names. For example, they select their names when sitting down at snack time. The book corner is defined with easily accessible books and large floor cushions. Consequently, children are frequent visitors to the book area and are supported by practitioners in finding out how a book works.

Children receive sufficient opportunities to develop their awareness of technology and understand how things work, for example the use of programmable toys. Children can use a range of tools and materials well that promote their small muscle skills through the daily activities such as paint brushes and scissors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at pre-school and immediately go off to play at a chosen activity at the start of each session. Children learn about right from wrong because practitioners remind them of how to behave. Most children respond well to practitioners' praise and encouragement and are generally well behaved. They are encouraged to show appreciation of other cultures and beliefs, for example children have a map showing them where different foods come from, resources and posters further support children's knowledge and understanding of the differences in our society. Children find out about the local and wider world through visits to the local shops, and regular visits to the library and surrounding area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents are happy with the care provided at the pre-school. They are greeted warmly by friendly practitioners and are welcomed into the setting. The reception area is prepared each day to welcome parents and the notice board displays information for parents. Parents are provided with a prospectus informing them of the educational programme. Systems have not yet been established to enable parents to contribute towards children's development records and to establish children's starting points so that they are fully involved in their children's education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The provider keeps Ofsted fully informed of relevant changes and the recruitment procedures ensure that all adults working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and qualifications to work with young children. The attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration and the certificate is displayed to keep parents informed of the conditions of registration.

All the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and understood by practitioners to promote the welfare and care of children. Careful consideration is given to confidentiality and the storage of records to protect children's welfare, although this is not the case for the accident record. The pace and routine is generally well balanced to include times that children can play quietly or engage in active play.

The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. Practitioners are a happy team and work hard to provide children with a range of experiences. The supervisor has a clear vision of the setting and is developing systems to monitor, review and evaluate practice to identify strengths and weaknesses to improve the pre-school education. Many systems have already started to develop, such as planning and observations. Practitioners meet regularly to discuss the educational programme. Planning and assessment continues to evolve. Observations are made on each child but they are not yet used to inform the planning based on children's interests and next steps. Planning identifies all areas of learning and includes a learning objective but does not yet include differentiation to provide appropriate challenges for children and practitioners are not always familiar with the learning objective. As a result, they are unsure of what the children are expected to learn from the planned activity.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision were asked to obtain details from visitors and written parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment. The visitors' book is in place and includes a record of visitors to the setting and consent forms are included on the registration details prior to children starting.

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.

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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 children are given opportunities to independently access water during the session.
- ensure accidents are recorded one entry per page to ensure confidentiality.

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):

- continue to develop the use of observations to inform the planning so that it is based on younger children by the use of Birth to three matters framework [this also applies to care].
- ensure that activities for children are not adult led and devise systems other than work sheets in children's learning environment.

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