

Manley and Mouldsworth Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305181
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Inspector	Valerie Craven
Setting Address	Manley Village School Playfield, Mobile Units, School Lane, Manley, Cheshire, WA6 9DU
Telephone number	07743 271 715
E-mail	
Registered person	Manley and Mouldsworth Pre-School Playgroup
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?

Manley and Mouldsworth Pre-School is managed by a committee and operates in a mobile unit on the playground field of Manley Village School. The pre-school has been open since 1972 and has been operating in its current premises since February 1999. The pre-school caters for children from the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 17 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes six funded three-year-olds and 10 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school provides four morning sessions a week (closed Wednesday) during term time only. During the summer term a rising five session is run on a Wednesday morning in partnership with the local primary school. The hours of opening are 09.15 to 12.00 except on Monday when a lunch club is held until 12.45.

Three part time staff work directly with the children. Three hold a relevant qualification in child care, with one currently working towards National Vocational Qualification level 3. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing in the happy and inviting environment of the play group, where they are warmly welcomed. Children are confident and enthusiastic to attend and are developing a sense of security and belonging. The environment is warm, well lit and has sufficient space to enable children to move around freely between activities. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices, because staff encourage them to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. At snack time, children's health is protected well, as staff have a sound knowledge of food handling and hygiene and implement good procedures, such as cleaning surfaces with anti-bacterial spray. Some members of staff have current first aid training and there are appropriately stocked first aid kits to enable staff to meet children's needs appropriately in the case of an accident. However, accident records are not always appropriately maintained to promote children's welfare. Policies and procedures, such as the sick children policy, are well implemented to minimise risks to children.

Children learn to recognise which foods are good and bad for them, through topics and discussions with staff. They are offered a very good variety of healthy snacks such as toast, crackers and fruit during the morning session. On Mondays, a lunch club operates and children enjoy packed lunches, which ensures that their dietary requirements are well met. During each session, children are offered drinks of milk and water. Additionally they have access to their own water bottles, which are available at all times, ensuring that children are well hydrated.

Daily physical exercise and outdoor play contribute towards children's health and physical development. Children pedal bicycles and enjoy rolling tyres on the hard track, which helps to promote good coordination and strength. They climb enthusiastically on the climbing frame and are able to run on the large playing field as they enjoy fresh air and exercise. Fine motor and manipulative skills are promoted well through playdough and activities such as balancing blocks and painting. When children are tired, they are able to rest in the quiet corner, where they can sit on soft cushions and look at books.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and stimulating environment. The mobile unit is light and bright and the children are able to access a variety of activities, which are suitably organised to meet their needs. Access to the building is restricted to parents and carers and all visitors are requested to sign a visitors book, to promote children's safety. The door is kept locked at all times and a coded key pad is used to prevent unauthorised entry. Children have access to a securely fenced outdoor area, with a safety surface for the climbing frame and hard surface to pedal bicycles, which minimises the risk of injuries. Children are also able to play on the school playing field and staff ensure that the gate to the road is closed to fully promote children's safety. Children are closely supervised both indoors and out and good staff ratios are maintained, which minimises the risk of accidents.

Indoor areas are well organised and are clearly defined to ensure that children have access to a variety of age appropriate activities. This provides children with opportunities to develop independence as they make choices about where to play. Some toys are stored at low level and children learn responsibility as they access toys and tidy away safely. Many resources are stored

in a large cupboard, in order to maximise the play space in the mobile unit and children confidently request things which they like to play with. All toys and equipment are in good condition and are appropriate for the age of the children, which means that they can be used safely.

Children move freely around the setting and are reminded to 'find their walking feet' if they become too enthusiastic. Children's safety is promoted through sound procedures, such as accurately maintaining registers and implementing risk assessments. On outings, many children are accompanied by parents and staff assess the risks as they plan each visit. Staff are developing a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and undertake regular training, which is used to promote children's health and safety. Fire drills are practised and recorded, to promote children's safety in the case of an emergency. Most staff have an awareness of child protection and are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of child abuse. They are aware of the correct procedures in the case of a concern, which promotes children's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very keen to attend the playgroup. They develop confidence and self-esteem because staff value what children have to say and praise them for good behaviour and achievements. Children show interest in what they do because the learning environment is organised to support all areas of learning, development and play. Children are familiar with the organisation of the setting and make choices from a variety of free-choice activities.

Children ask questions and engage in conversation with the supportive staff. Their ideas are valued and children enjoy sharing experiences, for example, looking at the shells that were found at the beach. Younger children have their needs met as staff plan activities which present an appropriate level of challenge for different stages of development. Staff are trained to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and make observations of children's activities to record their achievements.

On arrival each morning children are exceptionally happy and involved as they develop social and communication skills in the 'café,' whilst making toast and serving meals. They enjoy making choices from activities, such as free painting, using the computer, building with blocks to make caves for dinosaurs and making playdough bugs. They play cooperatively together and are well-supported by caring staff.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children acquire new knowledge and skills because staff plan activities for them to learn new skills as well as to consolidate skills which they have already acquired, such as blow painting to make coral. Staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and plan themes which focus on particular areas of learning. Planned activities help children to make good progress and activities are evaluated regularly.

Staff are well informed about children's needs before entry and work hard to provide an inclusive environment to meet all children's needs. Regular observations are made to record children's learning in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, they are not yet used to record developmental progress or clearly inform planning to meet children's individual needs. Staff know children very well and during the pre-school term, a rising fives group is held once a week, which enables children to become familiar with the local primary school. Activities are

planned to promote all areas of learning and detailed weekly records are used to inform the school about children's progress. During each session, children benefit from a variety of teaching strategies, including well-supported free-choice activities, small group guided activities and whole group times for stories.

Children become engrossed in self-chosen activities and are developing good concentration and perseverance as they use the computer and paint pictures of flowers. They negotiate plans and use their imagination as they play in the café and home corner, or fly aeroplanes, which successfully promotes social skills. Staff skilfully contribute to the busy atmosphere by providing activities which motivate children to learn. However, children sometimes lack focus during transition times which leads to boisterous behaviour. Children take turns and share as they play in the different areas available to them and are developing independence and responsibility, as they help to tidy up when they have finished.

Through positive staff interaction, children are developing good communication skills and are becoming confident communicators. Children enjoy looking at books with friends and are learning to handle them carefully. Reading is well promoted as children find their pegs, recognise their names at circle time, use menu's in the home corner and listen to stories. They enjoy making marks and using a variety of chalks and pens in the writing area and playground and many children are able to write their names independently. The weekly topic table helps them to identify initial letter sounds and develop an understanding of phonics. Children develop an understanding of number as they sing rhymes and count during everyday activities, such as snack time. Many children are able to recognise and sequence numbers as they illustrate rhymes. Children are developing a very good understanding of space, shape and measure as they explore sand with a variety of spades and scoops, use pebbles in a builders tray, talk about the height of a tower of blocks to make a dinosaur's cave or draw two dimensional shapes with playground chalks.

Children learn about the wider world through a variety of planned themes, a good range of resources and a stimulating environment. They have fun wearing traditional Chinese hats, dressing up and eating noodles with chopsticks as they learn about festivals from other cultures. Children learn about their local area as they walk to the farm shop, where they are able to collect eggs, dig for potatoes and buy their snacks for the week. Children learn to care for living things as they look after caterpillars and grow sunflowers in the garden. They competently use the computer and enjoy using construction kits as they design and make things.

Children's imagination is developing well and is enhanced by good role play and small world opportunities. Creative development is promoted through painting and drawing and children are able to express themselves freely, as they paint flowers and chrysalises from real observations. Children enjoy singing songs and joining in with finger rhymes. They demonstrate good fine motor skills as they make bugs from playdough and carefully colour pictures using felt pens. Outdoor activities are provided daily, enabling children to make good progress with gross motor skills and to enjoy physical exercise as they run, climb and roll tyres in the well supervised playground.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are actively involved in the inclusive environment, where individual needs and preferences are identified and acknowledged. Children become increasingly aware of wider society as they learn about celebrations and festivals, such as Chinese New Year. They enjoy

activities, such as dressing up and eating noodles with chopsticks, or painting dragons and making lanterns. Staff and children relate warmly to each other with many hugs, cuddles and words of reassurance. All children develop confidence and self-esteem as they are offered consistent praise and encouragement. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported as staff liaise well with parents and local agencies, to ensure that their needs are met accordingly.

Children's behaviour is usually good throughout the setting. All children are well motivated and busy during play sessions and benefit from a well planned and resourced environment which offers opportunities for children to make independent choices. However, during transition times children become restless as they lack focus, which can result in boisterous behaviour. Staff adopt effective strategies in behaviour management and children are aware of consistent boundaries and expectations of the setting. Children learn to share, play cooperatively and take turns. Any minor disagreements are dealt with in a way which is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development and which enhances children's understanding of right and wrong. Staff are good role models and promote good manners and behaviour throughout the setting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Information is shared in informal chats at handover times between parents and staff, which helps to promote continuity of care for children. Parents and carers are offered clear information about the setting and regular newsletters and notices keep them informed of topics and special events. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are available. Profiles are kept using observations in relation to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum, although they do not clearly record children's developmental progress to share with parents. Plans are displayed relating to the Foundation Stage and parents often contribute objects for the 'theme table' to enhance children's learning. During the summer term, most children attend a rising fives group, to help to prepare them for the transition to school. Staff discuss children's progress with parents and teachers on an informal basis. Parents are invited to help at the setting on occasion and are involved in trips and fundraising events, such as the Big Toddle. Parents spoken to are very complimentary about the care which their children receive and state that their children are very happy to attend.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Most staff are suitably qualified and the manager is working towards an appropriate qualification in childcare. Staff are enthusiastic and well motivated and show a commitment to on-going training, which has a positive impact on children's learning, development and welfare. An appropriate vetting system is in place to ensure the suitability of staff working with children. Staff are conscientious and are working together to develop their roles and responsibilities within the team.

The curriculum for nursery education is planned and evaluated by the manager, to provide a well-resourced environment and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for children. During the summer term, a rising five session is planned and delivered by a qualified member of staff, who liaises closely with the local primary school staff, to ease children's transition to school. The premises are well organised and available space well planned to maximise play opportunities for children, both indoors and outdoors. Time is generally managed effectively throughout the session to provide a good balance of activities. However, the access to resources and the deployment of staff and space during transition times does not fully promote children's

interest and involvement. Good staff ratios positively support children's care, learning and play during activity times.

All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's well-being, is well maintained and available for inspection. Records are appropriately stored to ensure confidentiality. The manager is aware of the records, policies and procedures, which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision.

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 was required to carry out a risk assessment of the nappy changing facilities and to ensure that suitable protection is in place when using large apparatus. New nappy changing facilities and rubber matting have since been purchased to address both of these issues. Additionally the provider was required to provide opportunities to develop children's independence at snack time and to further develop the writing area. Children are now involved in handing out plates and pouring their own drinks at snack time. They also make choices about what they like to eat, which successfully promotes their independence. The writing area offers a variety of materials and a range of paper and pictures for children to access independently.

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 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):

- maintain an action plan to demonstrate how staff will meet the qualification requirements
- ensure that accidents and incidents are appropriately recorded to ensure children's well being.

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):

- develop the use of observations further, to inform planning and to record children's developmental progress
- organise resources so that they are readily accessible to children and deploy staff effectively, to support children's play and learning during transition times.

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