

Little Marlow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	116728
Inspection date	22 January 2008
Inspector	Margaret Moffat
Setting Address	The Pavillion, Church Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 3RS
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Registered person	Louise Adaway
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 satisfactory. 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?

Little Marlow Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from the Cricket Pavilion in Little Marlow recreation ground. The group have the use of a hall, kitchen, cloakroom, toilets and outside play area. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens four days a week Tuesday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:00.

There are currently 28 children from two to four years on roll. Of these 19 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate relevant childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene routines. Older children deal with their own care needs without prompting and visual displays in the toilet area remind younger children of the tasks to follow as they visit the toilet. They develop independence as staff encourage them to look at the pictures and say what they have to do next. Parents give prior written permission to administer medication, however consent to seek emergency medical treatment is not in place for all children. All staff hold first aid certificates and receive specialist training to administer invasive medicines such as epipens. This ensures children receive the appropriate care if there is an accident.

Children enjoy daily physical exercise in the indoor environment that contributes to keeping them healthy. Access to outdoor physical play is limited. They are aware they need to 'warm up' before they take part in music and movement activities and an obstacle course. They balance, jump, crawl, catch and throw balls with confidence and follow instructions as they listen to the music and follow the actions as they take part in music and movement.

Children receive a range of healthy snacks including fruit, vegetables and oatcakes encouraging healthy eating practices. Children have milk or water to drink at snack time and fresh drinking water is available at all times and children confidently help themselves. This encourages children to think about their personal needs. Staff gather all relevant information regarding diet and medical history and ensure children's individual needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure environment and there are procedures in place to ensure the premises are safe for them. For example, a daily risk assessment is carried out before the session begins and safety features such as socket covers and door stops are in place to minimise risks. A chain is used on the door of the main hall to prevent access to unwanted visitors and staff can see who comes into the building through the windows and doors.

Children are kept safe on outings as staff ensure permission is obtained from parents before the event and enlist extra staff and parents to ensure they remain within ratios. Children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves safe as staff gently remind them not to run around indoors, and not to walk around carrying pencils. Staff talk to the children when they are mopping up the water by the tray informing them why they are doing this, so they will not slip when they stand on the mat.

Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned to ensure they remain safe for purpose. Staff set up the room before the children arrive with a range of toys and resources readily available for the children. These cover all areas of learning and are suitable for children's ages and stage of development.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to child protection and understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. There is a policy in place and includes all relevant contact numbers. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive at the setting eager to participate in the activities on offer. They find their names in the tin and place these in the pockets where they put the items they have brought in for show and tell. Children say goodbye to their parents and go off to the play with the toys and activities available. Staff are aware of the children who are unsettled and are available to step in when parents decide to leave the setting. They are sensitive to the children's needs and comfort and distract them helping them to settle quickly. Children are asked what they would like to do and staff go with them to the particular activity and sit with them as they participate, providing reassurance until the children are happy to go off on their own. Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children in the pre-school. They learn to cooperate and work well together. Children are independent as they see to their own personal needs such as dressing, undressing, visiting the toilet and confidently ask staff for help when they need it. For example, when putting on dressing up clothes or painting aprons, children ask staff for help to put them on. Children enjoy their time in the pre-school and make independent choices about what they wish to play with.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals and use the stepping stones as the aim of the activity linking to the different areas of learning. Observations are completed on the children and these are used to update their records. However, the evaluation of the activities are general and observations do not clearly show the next steps in individual children's learning. Staff know the children well and during activities use effective questioning and explanation techniques to extend children's language and thinking skills. For example, at registration time they ask children 'What month are we in now? What day is it today? What day was it yesterday?'. They discuss the letter and shape of the week with children and encourage them to find something in the room which either begins with the letter or is the shape. Children point to a circle on the wall and inform staff 'the thing that tells you where England is', staff inform the children this is called a map and it is a circle.

Although children have ample opportunities to develop their physical skills in the indoor environment there is limited opportunities for them to play in the fresh air and extend the curriculum outdoors on a regular basis. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They use a range of small tools and equipment, such as scissors, glue sticks and various cutters and rolling pins in play dough activities, with confidence. Children are confident speakers. They chat happily to each other during their play and as they participate in large group times. They learn to recognise and write letters and older children label their own work. Children are beginning to link letters and sounds as they spell out their names and the letter of the week further enhances this for younger children. Children can count to ten and beyond as they clap out the number in attendance at registration time. Older children recognise numerals between one and nine, in and out of sequence and are beginning to understand simple calculations and use mathematical language in their play. For example, when making play dough cakes the children share the play dough with others and talk about having enough, and bigger and smaller pieces. They count the number of children and the number of cakes they have made and then say two more. Children use interlocking rabbits to measure themselves and as they hold up the tower they have built and say 'look it's up to my chin'. They then proceed to count the number of rabbits they have used so far and continue adding more until it is the same height as them. Children use their senses to explore objects in activities such as sand and water play. Children

use their imagination and express their ideas in a variety of ways, such as dressing up and playing with the puppet theatre. As they play with the puppets they act out their own scenarios to the audience. They make the animal noises and use their voices to talk differently. They make up songs and sing them to the tunes of familiar songs they know such as 'three blind mice' and 'the farmer's in his den'. Children have fun and enjoy themselves in the pre-school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children talk happily about their home life and things that are important to them. Staff treat children with kindness and respect helping them to feel good about themselves. There are effective procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children develop an awareness of other cultures and traditions through planned activities and a variety of toys and resources, which promote positive images of the wider world such as small world people, dressing up clothes and books. Visitors to the setting, such as the local farmer, policeman and nurse, and outings in the local area help children become aware of the local community and people who help us.

Children are well behaved and polite. They show kindness to each other and they share and take turns in activities. Older children encourage younger children to join in their play when they are upset. Children benefit from the consistent praise and encouragement they receive from staff and are rewarded with stickers for being kind to others and following instructions. Children show delight as they receive a sticker and this positively promotes their behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and culture development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are asked to complete an 'all about me' form before their children start at the pre-school and this helps staff get to know the children. Notice boards and newsletters ensure they are aware of policies and procedures and activities their children will be involved in during their time in the pre-school. Staff are available at the beginning and end of the session to share information with parents. There are no formal systems in place for discussing children's development with parents, however parents are aware they can access their children's records at any time and have opportunities to do so at open days. Parents report they are happy with the care and development of their children within their pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting are in breach of regulations as the certificate of registration is not displayed, however the manager intends to rectify the situation immediately. Although staff files are available they do not all contain all relevant information, for example confirmation of qualifications and checks.

Children are happy and settled within their environment and receive good support from staff who know them well. Space is organised effectively to maximise the play opportunities for the children and allow them to move around and play comfortably in a safe environment. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place, however there are some areas for improvement.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education. A planning system to take into account the early learning goals

and stepping stones has been introduced and the manager is aware of the need to improve the system for recording children's next steps in learning. Staff work well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses to improve the quality of care and education they offer to the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the setting were asked to conduct a risk assessment, identify action to be taken to minimise risks and maintain a fire log and develop staff knowledge and understanding of the child protection procedures and update policy to include relevant detail and ensure there is a trained member of staff responsible for child protection.

Annual and daily risk assessments are now carried out, which ensure action is taken when risks are identified and a fire log book is in place. The manager is responsible for child protection and has attended relevant training with another member of staff and this has been cascaded to the other staff. The policy is linked to the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards procedures and contains all relevant details. This promotes the safety and welfare of the children within the setting.

At the previous nursery education inspection the setting were asked to increase opportunities for children to count and calculate in practical activities and everyday situations, use a range of simple technology equipment, dress up to encourage role play and imagination, access junk modelling, and learn about other cultures. They were also asked to enable staff to contribute to the planning of activities to increase their skills and knowledge of the stepping stones and the early learning goals.

Staff are now involved in planning of activities and their knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals is increasing as a result of this. The opportunities for children to count and calculate, use simple technology, their imagination in role play, access junk modelling and become aware of other cultures have been addressed through free play, planned and everyday practical activities

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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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 written parental permission is in place for the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice for all children
- ensure certificate of registration is displayed at all times
- review the organisation of staff files to ensure all required information is available for inspection.

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 system for evaluations of activities and observations to show children's next steps in learning
- increase opportunities for children to have access to the curriculum in the outdoor area.

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