

# Meare Moles Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	143022
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jan Healy
<b>Setting Address</b>	Meare Village Primary School, St Mary's Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9SP
<b>Telephone number</b>	07870 773537
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Meare Moles Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Meare Moles Playgroup has sole use of its own building, which is situated within the grounds of the village local school. The premises consist of a playroom with kitchen and office area. The toilets include facilities for the disabled. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children at any one time. There are currently 25 children on roll, 14 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The group is open Monday to Friday from 08.45 to 12.30 during term time. The majority of children attending the setting come from the surrounding area and will move on to the school when they reach the appropriate age.

There are currently three members of staff, two of whom hold a relevant qualification, with the third member of staff currently working towards a recognised certificate in early years. The group is managed by a committee of parents and receives input and advice from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The children benefit, as the staff have accurate knowledge about how to prevent the spread of infection. The children sing a song about the importance of washing the germs off their hands. Posters in the bathroom reflect images of germs, which helps the children to understand that although they are unable to see a germ, they still exist. Liquid soap and individual paper towels are readily available, at the children's physical height, which they help themselves to. Paper tissues are within the children's easy reach, which they are taught to discard after a single use. The staff hold a current first aid certificate and are confident to deal with an accident. All accidents are recorded and are shared with the parents, so they are kept up to date about any injury to their child. Staff ask the parents for their written consent for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. This helps to prevent a delay in the children from receiving appropriate medical attention.

The children have the advantage of being offered a healthy and nutritious mid-morning snack. They sit together, making for a sociable occasion, as they chat to each other about events that are important to them. This not only aids the children to further their vocabulary, but also helps to extend their social skills. However, the children are not involved in the preparation of the snack or drinks, which retards their independent skills. The staff are aware of the children who suffer with a food allergy or intolerance and protect their good health by prohibiting the swapping of food. The children are taught about the foods that help to keep them healthy and the foods which are not so good for them and to differentiate between the two.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The children have the advantage of playing in a bright and airy playroom, where their artwork adorns the walls, making for a child friendly environment. The staff ensure the playroom is kept to a comfortable temperature, with the help of a thermometer, aiding the children to play in contentment. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area, where the children take part in physical play, including climbing and riding wheeled toys.

The furniture and equipment is safe and is checked regularly for any damage. If any toys or resources are in disrepair, they are discarded, for the good of the children's safety. There are child sized tables and chairs, which aids the children to sit and play happily and in comfort. Child sized toilets and sinks enable the children to make use of the bathroom, without adult supervision or help. The premises are easily accessible, as there is a ramp fitted and a toilet specifically for the disabled.

The staff ensure the children in their care remain safe at all times. They keep the premises secure, to prevent the access of unwanted visitors. Exit routes remain clear and are clearly visible. The children participate in regular emergency evacuation procedures, so they are familiar with the routine to leave the playroom swiftly in the event of a fire. Guards surround the low level heaters and spills from the water tray are quickly mopped, to help prevent slips and falls. 'Tiger Play' safety surface helps to prevent accidents when the children are playing in the outdoor area.

The staff have strong knowledge about child protection issues, therefore, they are able to protect the children in their care from abuse and neglect. One member of staff has overall responsibility for this area, however, all the staff receive on-going training. Therefore, they are up to date about current legislation. The staff have good understanding about the signs and symptoms of abuse and know the children in their care very well. Therefore, they are in a position to quickly notice a significant change in a child's behaviour or appearance and to take the necessary steps to protect their health and welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The children share a warm and affectionate relationship with the staff, so they are happy and confident learners. They have the option of working alone, with their friends or with the staff, depending on their choice of activity. The staff encourage the children to attempt experiences that are new to them, such as planting flowers in the garden and digging for insects. Planning is adapted to incorporate the younger children to participate in all the play opportunities available, so they have the benefit of a rounded education.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The effect of the teaching methods in place has a positive impact on the way the children play and learn in a harmonious and happy fashion. The teaching methods meet the individual needs of the children, including the differentiation in their age and their stage of development. The children work on a one to one basis with the staff, in small groups and in large groups, depending on the activity in place. The staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning, having completed relevant and on-going training. Planning covers all six areas of learning and is based on the children's interests. Each activity is adapted according to the children's needs, so they all have the opportunity to participate in all the activities on offer. Each activity is evaluated, which informs the staff about the next step the children are to take to further their progress. The staff build on what the children already know, with the aid of the information received from the parents.

The children are making strong progress in their communication, language and literacy, as they have ample opportunities to make marks on paper. They attempt to write their name and are helped to recognise their written name during the registration process. The children's language is clear and is easily understood, with the staff teaching them new words daily, to further their vocabulary. The children have access to a reasonable range of picture, story and resource books, however, their love of literature is not extended during story time, for example, the teaching of the concept of a book.

Good progress is being made in the children's mathematical development. The children have the benefit of learning to count on numerous occasions, including the counting of the amount of children in attendance. There are numbers displayed around the playroom, aiding the children to learn and to recognise numerals. Practical activities aid the children to solve practical problems, particularly when playing with sand and water. The children are learning to use mathematical language, for example, when discussing whether an item is 'heavier' or 'larger'.

The children are making consistent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They arrive confidently and are ready to begin play. They have a good relationship with their friends and the staff, greeting them with glee at the beginning of the session. They are self confident, helping themselves to the resources on offer, without requesting permission from

the staff. Adults visiting the group, such as the local lollipop lady, helps to teach the children about the people who help them within their community. The children are learning self care skills, including the putting on and the taking off of their coat during outdoor play.

Effective progress is being made in the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. They investigate natural material, such as clay, using their senses as appropriate. They look closely at similarities and differences in patterns and are learning about how to use a computer, through interesting and exciting games. They design and build models, adapting their work until they are happy with their finished product. When playing with dough, they choose from a wide range of small tools, which they use with increasing dexterity. A digging area in the garden helps the children to find out about the insects that live in the ground.

The children are making good progress in their physical development, as they have plenty of opportunities to take part in moving their bodies with control and coordination when playing in the garden. They travel around, under, over and through the climbing frame. They are learning to balance and to throw a ball with increasing accuracy. The children are recognising the importance of keeping healthy, discussing foods, such as bananas, which are good for their growth and development.

Effective progress is being made in the children's creative development. Visitors to the group help the children to find fun and excitement in the playing of musical instruments, including the violin and harp. The children extend their imagination through role-play when they act out their own experiences. They explore colour during painting activities and have the opportunity to feel a wide range of materials and textures.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The staff take the time to get to know the children in their care, so they are able to provide for their individual needs before their attendance begins. There are plenty of opportunities for the children to learn about their own community, through visits made by local workers, such as a surveyor. They also learn about how children in other countries live, for instance, in Japan the children sleep on 'tatami' mats and in India they have a net around their bed to protect them from mosquitoes. They celebrate various festivals and have the benefit of accessing a broad range of resources which reflect positive images of diversity, including books, jigsaws and posters.

The staff are aware that there are some children who have individual needs and work in partnership with the parents in their identification. Written details are retained and the staff work with outside agencies if required. This also enables the staff to plan carefully when giving consideration as to how certain activities can be adapted to allow all the children to participate. The welfare of the children is a priority for the staff, who ensure their happiness is paramount at all times.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children's behaviour is exemplary, because they are occupied with age appropriate, exciting and challenging activities. They witness positive role models, as the staff behave respectfully towards each other and visitors, which the children emulate. Explanations are given to the children when praise is given and the staff avoid situations when the children receive adult attention when displaying unwanted behaviour. The staff work closely with the parents when writing the behaviour management policy, so consistency applies, which avoids the children receiving mixed messages.

The staff work in partnership with the parents, to meet the needs of the children in their care. Careful consideration is given to each child's needs, with regard to a settling in procedure, which is flexible. This enables both the child and parent time to adjust to the transition from home to the provision. A prospectus provides the parents with relevant information about the provision. The parents are made to feel welcome within the group and may act as volunteers if they wish to do so. Regular newsletters keep the parents up to date about forthcoming events and inform them about the dates and the times of attendance.

Partnership with parents is good and it has a positive effect on the children's development and progress. The parents have the provision of easily accessing copies of policies and statements, so they are kept up to date about the provision and its aims, objectives and ethos. The staff seek parental views about the children's learning and work with them to plan their next step of learning. There is an on-going exchange of information about the children's progress or about any concerns noted. Support is regularly given, to help support the children to continue their learning at home. The children are encouraged to bring in items from home to discuss at group time. This not only forms a link between the home and the setting, but also provides the staff with the opportunity to discover the children's interests. Such information is then used when planning activities. The parents are helped in their understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and about how the staff assess the children's progress. Records of achievement are shared with the parents, who are able to approach their child's keyworker at their convenience.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management are good. The leader creates an effective and improving setting, where the children are happy and extend their confidence and self-esteem. The leader is enthusiastic and clearly enjoys her work, which makes for a happy and harmonious atmosphere. She has a clear vision of the improvements she would like to make and about how she is able to achieve these goals. Her knowledge about early years learning and development inspires the work of her staff and she has a positive influence on the quality of teaching. The staff work together as a team and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Good time management allows the staff to attend training courses, to keep themselves up to date about current thinking and about any changing of legislation.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The leader and the staff have strong knowledge about the National Standards and are able to put them into place. They hold relevant qualifications and are adept at making suitable decisions about the children's learning. The adult:child ratio is maintained at all times, so the children receive good quality care and education on a daily basis. There is a register in place, which contains the times of the children's arrival and departure, so they are accounted for in an emergency. Staff and committee details are kept up to date and the parents are welcome to become members of the committee or to help, for instance in fund raising. The children are supervised at all times for the good of their health and safety. All records are easily accessible for inspection, so historical checks can be made. All children's records are stored confidentially, to protect their personal details.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection, the staff were requested to develop their written induction procedures for new staff and for volunteers. This is now in place, to prevent any misunderstanding and to provide clear details about the group's policies and procedures. The

staff were also requested to develop a system for using observation to influence planning, particularly for the more able or older child. This is also now in place, with the staff observing the children's play, noting their interests and writing the planning accordingly.

### **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):

- improve the children's independence during snack time

#### **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 children's interest in books

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)