

Marldon Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106172
Inspection date	26 March 2008
Inspector	Juliet Eileen Hartridge
Setting Address	Marldon Village Hall, Village Road, Marldon, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 1SJ
Telephone number	07977 797 768
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Registered person	The Trustees of Marldon 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marldon Pre-School was registered in 1972 and during opening hours has sole use of various rooms within Marldon Village Hall in Marldon, near Paignton. There is no outside play space attached to the hall, however the group make use of a meadow and playground which is located nearby. The pre-school is registered for 26 children aged three to five years, and is open during term time only. However in the summer holidays the pre-school is open two days a week, numbers permitting, for 26 children aged three to seven years. Children may attend in the term before their third birthday when they are accompanied by their parents and carers. The pre-school is open every morning from 9:15 to 11:45, and is open until 15:15 on Tuesday. A daily lunch club is available from 11:45 to 13:15, and 11:45 to 12:45 on Tuesday. There are currently 32 children on roll of whom 25 are funded to receive nursery education. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee of parents who employ a manager and four staff members who work directly with the children, three of whom are qualified, supply staff are also available. The pre-school has support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles through the regular discussions with staff before snack time of the importance of careful washing and drying of their hands. This is reinforced when they readily sing the wash hands song, or talk about having tummy ache if they eat with dirty hands. Children's health is further supported by the use of detailed documentation, including medication and accident records, and records of children's specific health needs. The hazards of cross infection are minimised as parents and carers are reminded about the sickness policy and exclusion times in the newsletters as well as during discussions with staff. Individual towels and liquid soap are available when children wash their hands and packed lunches are safely stored in the large fridge. Children benefit from the provision of healthy snacks, including cucumber and apple slices, orange segments and bread sticks, all attractively served in individual bowls on the children's own table mats. Children are well hydrated as they have access to drinking water during the session and can choose milk or water to drink at snack time.

Children are developing good manipulative skills when they learn to use scissors, or spread glue and use pens and pencils as they play. They also benefit from regular physical play indoors when they balance on a beam, pedal trikes or link up hoops to make imaginary trains circle round their track. Parachute games provide good opportunities for children to develop their throwing skills. Although the pre-school does not have an outdoor play area, children have occasional access to fresh air outdoors when they go on interesting outings or visit the nearby meadow and park. Sand and water is also set up in a very small outdoor area at the rear of the building in the summer months.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff work very hard to create a friendly and most welcoming environment. Interesting displays and posters as well as an excellent range of well organised resources are used to transform an empty village hall into a stimulating and safe play space where children enjoy playing together. High staff ratios ensure that children are safe and well supervised at all times, and the security of the premises is most vigilantly monitored as all exit doors have safety alarms and are carefully monitored by staff at the start and end of the session. Visitors to the setting are also clearly recorded. The very detailed risk assessment process for indoor activities, resources and safety of the premises as well as outings, further support the safety and wellbeing of children, and the fire evacuation plan is very regularly practised and carefully recorded.

Children's safety and welfare is further supported due to the most vigilant approach of the staff regarding their responsibility to safeguard the children in their care. Key staff as well as the child protection co-ordinator have a confident and clear understanding of their role, as well as current child protection procedures. This is very effectively supported by a comprehensive range of documentation, and the child protection policy is available for parents and carers to read.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and arrive eagerly in the morning, when they quickly settle to activities of their choice. Staff care for the children with warmth as well as very good humour, talking readily to children about what they are doing and encouraging them to express their ideas. There is laughter and fun whilst children play and learn. Children have good choices from a wide range of free play and more structured adult led activities set out on the tables. Innovative strategies are in place which enable children to consider and choose alternative activities to extend their play. For example photos of resources in storage are available on a display board, and are easily identified by children, who can then ask staff to access them. Children feel secure as they are aware of the familiar pre-school routine, readily helping to tidy up, or sitting quietly to listen at circle time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and children are progressing well towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good understanding of the principles of the Foundation Stage of education, and they effectively plan an interesting and stimulating range of activities which cover all areas of learning. Staff confidently diverge from planning if an interesting unplanned opportunity arises, for example during an unexpected visit from the community police officer, when the children subsequently enjoyed a spontaneous road safety session. Staff observe the children at play, and these observations are used to complete the passport records of children's achievements. This information is then taken into account when staff plan activities, when they also consider the differing abilities and stages of development of the children which ensures each child receives sufficient challenge. Staff meet with children's parents and carers when they start at pre-school, and full discussion takes place regarding the children's interests and stages of development. However the links between the starting points for children, targets for their development and how children make progress towards the early learning goals are not fully developed at present.

Children's creativity is very well promoted through a wide variety of interesting activities. They enjoy playing musical instruments and singing familiar songs or playing circle games together. They have good opportunities to use a variety of media when they explore sand and dough, stick a variety of scrap materials on their sea creatures or create large communal pictures together at circle time. Many children particularly enjoy drawing, and most are able to write their names on their work when they have finished. Children are successfully making the links between writing and words, when they recognise their names on their mats at snack time or choose their name card at the start of the day or use writing for purpose in their play. Children are imaginative and enjoy role play in their hairdressing salon or post office, when they write appointments and confidently answer the telephone. Children are confident counters, and opportunities are taken to explore number when they sing 'Once I Caught a Fish Alive', count and subtract the number of fish together at circle time, or play a number line game. They confidently use words such as longer, shorter, bigger during their play. Children learn about the world around them when they discuss and identify sea creatures during the current sea life theme; visits to the beach or the local field to observe mini-beasts further extend their experience.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive a very warm welcome at the pre-school. The carefully planned settling in system where parents or carers stay with the children until they are three or ready to separate, as well as the effective key worker system means that staff know the children well and children feel secure. All children are valued and included, and strategies including pictorial timetables are effectively used. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is experienced and confident regarding her role in ensuring all children receive appropriate support, including those with specific needs. Children learn about their own community including when the hall is set out like the village, or visitors such as the community police officer visit. Children celebrate festivals including Christmas and Easter when they enjoy performing in the nativity play or Easter bonnet parade. They sing a thank you song when they have eaten their snack, and learn about other cultures in a meaningful way when they dance the dragon dance and taste noodles at snack time or sing French songs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are extremely well behaved, they happily choose their play activities, and play harmoniously together, sharing resources and helping each other or suggesting play ideas to their friends. They listen attentively at circle and story time, and concentrate intently whilst they draw or carefully arrange pegs on the peg board. Staff are clear about their expectations and reminders to 'walk with your walking feet' or 'listen with your listening ears' are used with the children as gentle and humorous reminders of what is expected of them. There is a list of golden rules displayed in the circle area, and children's confidence and self esteem is very well supported when they proudly display their drawing on the board, or wear their achievement sticker. Children happily stand up in front of their friends to sing their favourite songs at circle time.

Partnership with parents and carers is good and consequently children enjoy enhanced continuity of care between their family and the pre-school. Parents and carers are well informed about the pre-school, and receive regular newsletters which keep them up-dated about the pre-school planning, current theme and what is available for their children. There is clear information in the policy pack about the pre-school curriculum, and the plans and learning intentions are displayed in the hall for parents and carers and as well as staff to read. Information about the six areas of learning is displayed in the lobby. Parents and carers are encouraged to help during the sessions, and this provides a valuable insight into the pre-school routine and the play opportunities for their children. Parents' and carers' meetings are held and provide good opportunities for staff to further discuss the needs and progress of the children and to look at examples of their work. A weekly book loan scheme further involves the children's families.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the pre-school environment effectively promotes the safety and learning of children. Staff work well as a team to ensure the hall is set out safely for children at the start of the morning. The layout of the room is carefully planned every day to ensure all areas of learning are covered, and room dividers and resource trolleys are effectively used to ensure the space is manageable and suitable for children. Documentation including detailed information and consent forms ensure that children are cared for according to the wishes of their parents and carers. Staff and children's attendance is carefully recorded and the registration

certificate is displayed which further promote the safety of children. All documentation is confidentially stored.

Leadership and management are good. There is an effective and most enthusiastic management structure and a firm commitment to regularly monitoring, evaluating and improving the provision for the children as well as fundraising for further improvements. The regular staff meetings ensure everyone is well informed about the needs of the children. There is a firm commitment towards staff training, for example one member of staff is working towards a foundation degree, whilst another has almost completed an NVQ3. Regular staff appraisals are undertaken by the chairperson and play leader. Strong links exist with the local primary school including helpful visits for the rising five age children, or visits from the school to pre-school performances. Staff also meet with school staff to share practice issues. This contact is most beneficial for children and supports a smooth transition to school. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the pre-school was asked to improve child protection records by ensuring existing injuries are recorded. This information is now carefully maintained which has improved the safety for children.

At the previous nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to increase staff knowledge of how young children learn, in order for staff to make more effective use of planned and free play activities to promote children's learning. They were also asked to monitor the educational provision to ensure that children have sufficient access to resources which promote learning in all areas, particularly knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. The detailed action plan clearly indicates how staff training has been implemented and planning systems improved to clearly indicate required resources as well as the learning intentions for all areas of learning. These changes have resulted in an improvement to the educational provision for children.

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):

- further consider how opportunities for outdoor play and activities can be extended

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):

- further develop the assessment and planning system in order to clarify how children are progressing from their starting points and their individual targets are identified.

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