

Moorside Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290423
Inspection date	25 January 2008
Inspector	Ann Marie Lefevre
Setting Address	Moorside County Primary School, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 4HT
Telephone number	01524 66516
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Registered person	The Trustees of Moorside PreSchool
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?

Moorside Pre-School opened in September 2004. The setting is approved to provide places for a maximum of 24 children at a time who are aged from two to under five years, however, children are currently admitted from their third birthday. The group supports children with learning difficulties. Children who have English as an additional language are also supported. There are currently 24 children on the roll. The group is participating in the Foundation Stage of learning and all children attending are in receipt of early years funding. Children attend for various sessions and generally reside in the local area.

The premises are situated within Moorside Primary School. Childcare is provided in a designated unit which includes three playrooms, toilets and a kitchenette. There is also an office, a sluice room and a staff toilet which are not accessible to children. The school hall, the enclosed outside play yard and the school field are also available for more active play. Childcare sessions are held during term time from 09.00 until 11.30, Monday to Friday, a lunchtime club is also available.

Overall responsibility for the group lies with the management committee. There are three regular staff members, including the care manager and deputy. One member of staff is suitably qualified and others are working towards gaining qualifications. There is also special educational needs coordinator support when required. The group has strong links with the school.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to be aware of health and hygiene; they have many very good opportunities to develop this awareness during their daily routines and activities. They learn about dental health during discussions, gain an understanding of how their bodies react to exercise during energetic group activities and also learn about dressing appropriately for the weather. Children wash their hands before handling food, after going to the toilet and after messy play. They use liquid soap and paper towels which helps to prevent cross infection. Children are encouraged to help keep their play areas tidy and respond enthusiastically to tidy up prompts to put small play items away. They are also happy to help wash toys.

Children's health requirements are highlighted in the detailed and very well maintained recording systems. There are accident and medication records in place and staff are fully aware of what to record. Other documentation, for example, individual details-registration sheets ensure that parents and staff are kept fully informed about any issues. Various staff have completed appropriate first aid training as well as food related and EPI pen courses. Written parental consents are obtained, for example, for using sun cream during hot weather. There is a well stocked first aid kit which is checked and replenished when needed; a designated staff member takes responsibility for checking. Staff are keen to ensure that children benefit from being cared for in a healthy environment.

There is a healthy eating policy in relation to the school and the pre-school. Children may join the lunch club which is run in addition to the pre-school group. Parents provide food boxes for their children if they stay for lunch. Children may have a meal provided in the school dining hall as they are nearing their transition to the school; this gives them valuable experience of school life. Children have a selection of fresh fruit, which is provided by parents, at snack time. They learn about how food arrives on the table as they do regular baking, when they can follow recipes, measure and mix ingredients. They join in activities that inform them about good and bad food and prepare healthy options, for example, they make fruit kebabs to eat at snack time. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children gain the necessary nutritional balance for positive growth. Effective steps are taken to ensure that any special dietary needs are met and staff are aware of children's requirements when food is prepared and served in the setting during activities.

Children develop their physical and emotional well-being through a wide range of stimulating activities. They are able to participate in energetic games which strengthen their bodies as well as develop their thinking skills, for example, as they participate in planned group activities in the school hall doing exercises. They are able to benefit from being outdoors in the fresh air in the school grounds or when going on local nature walks with the staff to collect items to use in subsequent projects. They use a wide range of play equipment to promote a healthy body as well as having lots of fun as they socialise with other children and adults.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are very welcoming, clean, well organised and comfortable for children to use safely. Children benefit from being able to access the designated childcare areas with close, age appropriate supervision and support. Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure. Many effective safety measures are in place, for example, there is a very good security code system for access to the early years rooms, sockets are covered and finger safe strips are in place on doors. Appropriate fire fighting equipment is in place, fire extinguishers are secured. However, fire exits in the school hall are partially covered by equipment. Fire exit notices and evacuation procedures are in place. Regular fire drills are organised by the school; additional drills are undertaken in the pre-school and records are maintained in relation to these.

Children are encouraged to be aware of safety, both in and outside the building, in daily routines and activities, such as being informed that playing with sticks in the outdoor play areas can be dangerous. They also learn about road safety. Staff take steps to ensure that children do not gain access to any potentially hazardous areas or items and continue to develop their awareness of safety issues. Formal tick box risk assessments are undertaken each day and ongoing visual checks are done in relation to the premises and resources. Staff ensure that the play resources, equipment and furniture are in a safe and clean condition for the children attending. Children are able to choose from a good selection of easily accessible playthings and equipment, such as craft materials, construction toys, books, games, dressing up clothes and large activity equipment. Staff ensure that the toys and play resources are appropriate for the age and stage of development of each child.

Children benefit from very well organised and maintained documentation in relation to the setting. Current public liability insurance has been obtained and recording systems are used in conjunction with detailed written parental consents to ensure consistency of care for each child. Children are safeguarded as the staff continue to develop their awareness, knowledge and skills. Various staff members have participated in health and safety training; they plan to complete a child protection course. There is a child protection policy in place and, although staff have had no concerns to date in relation to the children, they have a clear understanding of what to be aware of, who to contact and what to record. Therefore, children are protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive and develop really well as they attend the group. Staff members have the experience, skills and knowledge to care for the children effectively in the nurturing environment. All children are able to participate in a wealth of stimulating activities and projects in keeping with their ages and stages of development. The overall planning ensures that children are provided with good quality childcare. Staff have participated in various training initiatives relating to the care and education of children and this is reflected in the childcare provided. The playroom is carefully prepared prior to children arriving to ensure that all materials and resources are in place to provide very attractive and interesting areas to promote learning.

Children may work and play together in large or small group activities or enjoy completing individual projects. All children are provided with appropriate levels of challenge to help them progress without undue pressure being put upon them. There is a good balance of adult and child- led activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Overall, children have a very positive experience during their early years education in this setting. Staff have strong links with the school, they have opportunities to work with teaching staff in relation to appropriate educational activities and children are taken into the school to join pupils in a range of school-led events. Various staff have participated in training relating to the Foundation stage of learning. Planning is in place in relation to the six areas of learning and this is reflected in the careful organisation of the playroom, the resources and in the education of children. Staff monitor and assess the children's achievements effectively and these are used to inform future planning and practice.

Staff are adept in explaining, guiding and supporting all children as they learn through play and gain practical experience. Good teaching methods and tools are used. Staff are skilled in using clear and simple language which helps children to develop their communication skills and learn new words. There is consistent use of letter case for each child's name labels and for other labelling around the setting. Attractive wall displays are used to inform and lots of lovely examples of the children's work is arranged around the playrooms. There are many meaningful ways for children to explore and gain awareness of numbers, the written and spoken word, colour, shape and dimension.

All children are able to enjoy a wide range of stimulating and educational activities and projects in a calm, warm and affectionate environment. They develop their awareness and skills in many exciting and fun activities which promote their awareness and understanding. Children are confident as they access the play areas and resources. Their personal, social and emotional development is very good; this is a strength in the setting. Children concentrate well as they join group activities and discussions with their peers and adults. They listen carefully and enthusiastically contribute during storytime as they join in discussions at appropriate times. There are many opportunities to practise mark making and formative writing skills using many different tools and materials. Children join in lots of exciting activities which incorporate letter and word recognition, for example, children happily practise copying their names.

Creative development features highly in the setting. Children are keen to participate in a wealth of imaginative art and craft projects as they use lots of different materials to make wonderful pictures and mobiles. Many art activities are used to extend their knowledge of colour, for example, they learn about mixing colours to create new ones. They develop their understanding of pattern and shape. Children participate in lots of movement, music, song and rhyme activities which help consolidate learning as well as being lots of fun.

Most children are independent when they attend to their physical needs, for example, when putting on coats before going outdoors; staff give sensitive assistance to others as they develop their skill in this task. Children move in all designated areas of the school confidently as they participate in more strenuous activities in the playground or in the school hall. They have many opportunities to develop their skills in the use of a variety of large and small tools and resources. However, the duration of some large group activities may be too long to sustain the interest and concentration of all children attending.

Children develop their awareness of number, dimension and concepts of time during circle storytimes and through lots of discussion as they participate in many exciting table-top and floor activities. They gain awareness and knowledge of the world. Children learn about modern technology. The computer is turned on each day and children have regular planned opportunities to navigate the screen during learning programmes or independently; they are able to confidently

access it themselves. They also develop their understanding of the natural environment. They are encouraged to appreciate nature and growing things, for example, as they go on nature walks or watch caterpillars grow into butterflies and then release them.

Children benefit from the way the staff team values them and from the staff's excellent understanding of how children learn and develop; this is evident in the way the childcare areas and resources are organised, and in the actual care of children. Staff have a sound knowledge of the children and the wishes of parents to ensure there is consistency and continuity so that each child can progress and learn effectively at their own pace. Children are very settled and at ease with the staff and in the pre-school setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual and differing needs. There are many good opportunities for children to develop their awareness of their local and wider communities. They participate in activities relating to Christmas as they join the school for the nativity event or make cards and calendars to take home. They are able to experience celebrations, such as Chinese New Year when the children participate in related food awareness and art activities. They have made lanterns for the festival of Diwali. There are many resources that reflect different backgrounds and abilities.

Children are polite and very well behaved; they learn about sharing and valuing others from the very good role model provided by the staff. Staff gently and sensitively support, praise and encourage children in their daily routines and activities which helps them to develop their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. Children are keen to show how they can help tidy up and take responsibility for undertaking helpful tasks. They are able to make choices in their play and daily routines. The staff team are adept at encouraging children to share their opinions and take an active role in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. There is a strong sense of community in the setting. Parents are able to participate in planning for their child's placement, are actively involved in their children's learning and participate in the exchange of information necessary for their child's care. They are kept fully informed about daily issues. There is an informative induction pack for the parents of new starters. A detailed file of policies and procedures is readily available, including complaints and the Ofsted contact details. Guidance about the service is provided in regular newsletters and through verbal updates. Parents are extremely positive in their comments about the staff and the pre-school group, they are informed of planning and topics and feel they are able to take a very active role in the care of their children. Staff have prepared children's development files to ensure parents are aware of progress. Children also take lots of their art and craft work home to show what they have achieved.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management are good. Staff are professional, focussed and affectionate in their approach to the care of children. This is reflected in the very well organised childcare areas in the setting, in the many safety measures taken and in the range of good quality resources and equipment provided. Clearly defined and sensitive daily routines enable children

to settle well and feel secure. There are informative files, noticeboards and other means available to inform staff and parents. A wide range of policies and procedures, such as child protection, complaints, behaviour management, inclusion and equal opportunities are in place.

There are robust recording systems in place, including individual child details; staff continue to maintain these to ensure the safety of the children and adults attending. Very good attendance registers are kept to monitor child and staff attendance. Parents sign in the times of arrival and departure of their children. Staff in the pre-school group and in the school are vigilant in ensuring that visitors to the setting sign in immediately on their arrival and sign out on their departure.

Children benefit from the really good standard of care provided and from the staff's positive attitude towards training and personal development. Staff have completed a wide range of appropriate courses relating to the health, welfare, safety and educational needs of the children and continue to be aware of future training initiatives.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation made at the last care inspection in relation to nappy changing facilities meeting environmental health standards. This has been addressed appropriately, for although children are now only admitted from their third birthday, there are strategies in place for hygienic and sensitive nappy changing in the event of an accident occurring.

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 the 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

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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):

- ensure that the fire exits from the school hall are kept clear

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):

- ensure that the duration of large group activities reflects the differing levels of concentration and understanding of the children participating.

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