



Maple Grove Community Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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, Q V S H F G W L R Q 08 February 2008

, Q V S R U F W Denise May Smith

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Maple Grove School, Maple Grove, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8JT

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01354 660543

(P D L O

mgcg@tesco.net

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Maple Grove Community Group

7 S R I L Q V S H F W L R Q Integrated

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Full day care, Out of School care

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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.

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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.

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On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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Maple Grove Community Group opened in 1994 and moved into its present building in 2001. It operates from three rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated within the grounds of Maple Grove infant school in the Fenland town of March, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 72 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. The pre-school is open each morning and afternoon with the option of wrap around care at lunch time, term time only. The group also offers an out of school club which includes a breakfast club, an after school club and a holiday club. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 124 children aged from two to under five years on roll in the pre-school. Of these, 100 children receive funding for early education. There are currently 92 children on roll in the out of school club. Children who attend the pre-school, breakfast and after school club mainly come from the local area. Children who attend the holiday club attend from a wider catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

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The provision is outstanding.

Children effectively learn about keeping themselves healthy as they consistently wash their hands thoroughly before meals and after using the lavatory. They confidently use liquid soap and paper towels for hand washing and drying which helps to prevent cross-infection. The setting is proactive in protecting children from each other's germs as children who are sick, infectious, or who become unwell during a session are requested not to attend. At snack time a member of staff thoughtfully explains to a child that although it is kind to want to share an unwanted party cake with a friend, it is not a good idea as any germs may make her tummy poorly. Children are exceptionally well cared for in the event of an emergency as all of the staff are qualified in first aid. The first aid boxes are well maintained and accessible and thorough procedures are in place to ensure children's health needs are known and met. All children who have any medical needs, however small, have a care plan in place which is backed up by the child's doctor. This ensures that the setting is effective in meeting individual children's needs. Systems are in place to ensure that any information that needs to be conveyed to parents either from the mid day 'wrap around care' or the out of school club is consistently passed on and staff ensure that parents sign to say they have received this information such as any accidents that have occurred or medication administered.

Children enjoy the snack and lunch times in the pre-school and the breakfast and tea in the out of school club. A wide variety of snacks are provided, this includes fruit that parents contribute to the setting together with a range of other snacks. Food tends to be linked to topics so children often sample food from other cultures. Children who attend the breakfast and after school club help to devise the range of menus which ensure they like the food on offer and want to eat it; these menus are displayed for parents so they know what their children will be offered. Children attending the lunch time wrap around care bring a packed lunch from home. Children sit together in social groups and happily eat the food provided for them by their parents. Good information is provided which informs parents of what can safely be stored and what not to include. All children, in each of the groups have free access to fresh water from a water chiller in their room which prevents them from becoming thirsty and keeps them hydrated.

All children enjoy the daily opportunities to play in the fresh air, with resources which are plentiful, age appropriate and offer challenge depending on the age and abilities of the children using them. They develop their large muscles as they operate wheeled toys, throw and catch, and run about outside in the pre-school's play area. They also have access to the school fields for whole group activities which further develops their enjoyment and physical strength. Indoors the staff devise creative activities to encourage exercise linked to the current topic. For example, the children eagerly take part in a lion dance where six or seven children work together under a large lion costume, which they have made and decorated, and dance a 'lion dance'. They move slowly and then faster, following the beat of the drum and dance around the room providing a fantastic finale to the end of the Chinese New Year topic party.

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely bright and welcoming environment. They enjoy excellent facilities both indoors and out. Children are grouped according to their age and move through the rooms as they develop and grow. Children often come together for play and to celebrate special occasions such as a birthday presentation for a member of staff. All children enjoy a secure and safe outside play space. This is positioned so that children are able to move easily from the indoors to the outdoors. Children play with a vast array of superb toys and games. These are attractively presented and are all of excellent quality. Staff set out the toys that the children are going to focus on using, but alternative resources are easily accessible should children prefer.

Children are kept safe in the setting as regularly completed risk assessments identify and address hazards. Children are kept safe in the event of an emergency as there is a clear evacuation procedure and children are secure in following it. They are also kept safe in the setting as the premises are secure and there is an excellent system for monitoring access. Staff are vigilant about rigorously recording when children, adults or visitors are on the premises.

Children benefit from staff's thorough understanding of the child protection procedures and are ably led by the settings designated person. Training and the updating of knowledge is given a high priority ensuring that children's welfare is given the utmost priority.

The provision is outstanding.

All children quickly settle into the routine of the session and happily separate from their carers. They eagerly enter the setting and enjoy the security of having their own base rooms, where they make themselves very much at home. Children have opportunities to meet with different age groups as they join together for key activities, at the lunch time wrap around care session or sometimes when playing in the garden. Children throughout the setting learn from first hand experiences. They are encouraged to use all of their senses as they touch, feel and taste developing their desire to explore. Art, craft and messy play is a strength which runs through all of the rooms in the pre-school and in the out of school club.

Staff interact well with the children. They have, and are all familiar with, the 'Birth to three matters' framework which they refer to when supporting the youngest or less able children. Staff are skilled at getting involved with the children's play when appropriate, offering support and care where needed. Children in all rooms are comfortable to approach staff and make their needs and wishes known. All children are able to identify with a key person who coordinates their care and learning.

Children in the out of school club are provided with a wide range of interesting activities. Children are involved in deciding what activities they wish to be involved in providing them with lots of fun and exciting play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is outstanding. All staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones children take in order to achieve them. They understand how children learn and apply this as

they support children with the rich blend of learning opportunities provided. All staff interact extremely well with the children and skilfully know when to let children develop their play on their own and when to offer support. Staff competently assess the children's starting points and build effective plans for them. They continually observe children's achievements, record this information and update the children's computerised records so that they are always up to date and reflect children's progress. These assessments are effectively used to identify children's next steps of learning, which are printed from the computer so they can be used as tools to help the staff support the children on a daily basis. The room leaders collate the next steps of learning and ensure that a variety of interesting opportunities are woven into the daily plans so that children have opportunities to achieve and develop. Plans are clearly linked to clear learning intentions and the early learning goals, these plans include the use of the outdoor area in supporting children across the six areas of learning.

The children are making very good progress. They listen carefully, use good concentration skills and enjoy the ability to make choices in their play. The children are able to fully express themselves as they confidently paint, make and create in a comfortable, bright environment where they feel at home and at ease. Children are eager to participate; they enjoy the activities and squeal with delight as they join in some of the group games.

Children are able to be independent. They visit the toilet and attend to their personal needs as required. They confidently dress up in a vast array of dressing-up clothes, helping each other as they put them on. The role play area in each of the rooms is a key strength of the setting and underpins the current topic or theme. For example, while studying the culture of China, the role play area is changed between a Chinese home, shop, restaurant and camp site. Resources are very well used to transform these areas with staff giving great attention to detail in order to give the children the best possible experience. Along side this role play experience children enjoy acting out stories in the life size puppet theatre where they use wooden masks to take on the role of animals. Children confidently stand and perform to their audience, which includes staff, who encourage the children and extend their play helping to develop the children's stories. The younger children become engrossed in their home play as they carefully take a tray of cakes out of the play oven, reminding each other to be careful as they may be hot. They proceed to feed all of the adults in the room, making pretend tea to go with the cakes to stop the adults getting thirsty.

Children enjoy good relationships and listen to each other speak about their ideas and experiences. They sit together and play a group game where they have to decide which of the twelve Chinese animals have magically disappeared and hidden themselves in their clothes. They laugh together and the member of staff leading the activity ensures that all the children can contribute to the 'guessing' if they wish. Children thoroughly enjoy taking 'travelling teddies' home with them or on an adventure. The teddies come complete with a suitcase of accessories, which has grown over the months as parents, aunts and grandparents have knitted hats and made extra clothes for them. They complete a record of their adventures using text and photos with their parents' support.

Staff ensure that as they embark on new topics, each area of learning is woven into the topics. Art and craft activities encourage children to freely express their creativity and develop their skills. Activities are very well supported and children busy themselves making hats, kites, fans and contributing to a group dragon all tied in with the Chinese theme. Mark-making opportunities are evident throughout the setting. Children note and record, label and mark make throughout activities. They carefully copy and trace Chinese symbols to make banners and text for the walls and doors. Books are used effectively throughout the setting. They are

suitable for the various age and stage of the children and encourage children to develop an interest in books. Children learn that text carries meaning. They use reference books to support their activities and absorb the text displayed throughout the setting making it a word rich environment. Children listen to an end of topic story. The member of staff uses a porcelain bowl depicting the 'willow pattern' to support the telling of the story which led to this famous design.

Mathematical language is introduced through activities, general play and through daily routines. Children learn to sequence, complete puzzles and to sort objects. Staff introduce mathematical concepts and language as they support children to build and construct with a range of resources. Technology is integral to children's play as is routinely used throughout the setting. Children confidently use the mouse to manoeuvre through software on the computer and use calculators, cameras and tills to underpin their play.

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The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs N s

further foster their independence. Different systems have been introduced and the impact on the children fully evaluated. The setting has in place a very sound system which is full of opportunities and learning experiences for the children.

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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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No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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