

# Milton Mount Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113602
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 July 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Steer / Janet Marie Thouless
<b>Setting Address</b>	Milton Mount Community Centre, Milton Mount Avenue, Pound Hill, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 3DY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 884312
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Milton Mount 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 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?

Milton Mount Pre-school is a community group managed by parents whose children attend the setting. It opened in 1992 and operates within Milton Mount Community Centre which is situated in the Pound Hill area of Crawley. The pre-school has the use of a large hall, with toilet facilities and a kitchen area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:00 during school term time only. The pre-school offers additional afternoon sessions as numbers increase during the academic year. All children have access to an outdoor area.

There are currently 37 children aged from three to under five years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for early education. Children come from local and surrounding areas and attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three members of staff on a full time basis. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a level three qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the many opportunities they have to learn about developing a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. Large apparatus is available which enables children to practise and develop good co-ordination and balance whilst the small outdoor space is well used to provide fresh air as they run up and down carrying colourful streamers which wave behind them. Some topic work helps children understand the positive effects physical activity and good diet have on their bodies.

Snacks are healthy as they consist predominantly of fresh fruit. Children sit at the table together with a member of staff, who discusses the benefits of a healthy diet as they eat. Jugs of water are available for children to pour themselves a drink throughout the session, and a choice of water or milk are provided at snack time. Children therefore remain hydrated and learn that certain activities stimulate their thirst, requiring them to drink more frequently.

The organisation of the space enables all children to manage the routines of hand washing for themselves, climbing up on to the step and reaching the soap dispenser, explaining to the Inspector to copy washing, and then how to dry their hands. Even the youngest children can explain they are washing their hands 'to get rid of them germs', demonstrating their understanding of good hygiene. A clearly written sickness policy explains to parents when to keep their children at home and all accidents are recorded in a new book which ensures confidentiality is maintained.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play together in an environment which has been made welcoming and safe. Some signs and notices are displayed at child height which provide interest and provoke discussions. Activities are provided in a large hall which is organised into different areas within which children can choose where they play. For example, they may prefer to spend time in the large role play area, the craft activity or sit relaxing in the quiet, reading area. They are unable to select exactly what they want to play with due to shared use of the premises and all resources being stored away, but a wide range of interesting activities are prepared for them from which they have free choice.

The premises are secure with the main door to the hall kept locked so all visitors must wait to enter, so keeping the children safe. Daily risk assessments around the premises and outside area ensure hazards are identified and reduced before children arrive. Clear guidelines help children learn to keep themselves safe as they play. For example, a visual prompt reminds them that only four children may be on the large apparatus at one time. Staff closely supervise children and are therefore on hand to offer gentle reminders and advice such as walking rather than running indoors.

A reviewed and updated policy provides staff with clear guidance on how to proceed if they have concerns that any child may be abused. It details how to help children become confident within relationships and to have a positive self image so they can begin to make decisions about how they are treated. Staff understanding of the procedure to follow and where to seek advice

ensures children are safeguarded. All injuries sustained by children either at home or within the setting are clearly recorded in a manner which ensures confidentiality.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

On arrival to each session children happily separate from their parents and choose what they would like to do. Staff are on hand to guide and suggest, helping all children to settle well and become involved in well prepared activities. Some children are able to concentrate for extended periods as they focus on favourite activities such as completing jigsaw puzzles. Staff are always close by to interact and become involved in children's games as and when required, demonstrating good relationships are developed within which children feel secure and can learn.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum due to staff's developing knowledge on how children learn through play. Staff use the range of resources and activities on offer to promote children's learning. They spend time talking to children, supporting them in their play. Staff are beginning to question children effectively during play to help them extend their thoughts and ideas. The curriculum plans in place, cover a range of activities that cover all six areas of learning. They show links to the stepping stones and ensure staff are aware of the role of the adult, children's learning intentions and resources to be used. Staff make individual observations of children which include their interests, possible learning outcomes and next steps in children's learning. However, these curriculum plans and children's observations are in the early stages of implementation and require further development to ensure children are offered a more varied learning programme and meet individual learning needs.

Children are happy and settled within the pre-school setting. They self register on arrival confidently selecting their name and placing it on the board. They greet staff and friends warmly on arrival and make choices in what they would like to play with from the range on offer. Children's independence is developing well although staff are still in the process of developing more opportunities for them to self select resources. They go to the toilet independently and know they must wash their hands to wash the germs off. However, although children help themselves to water throughout the session, at snack time opportunities were missed to promote independence in preparing own fruit and pouring own drinks.

Children have opportunities to scribe in role play. Children write down items they intend to buy at the shops. Staff ask children their preferences around food items being sold in the shop area. 'I like tomato sauce' 'I like milkshakes' comes their reply. Staff support spontaneous counting; discuss how many items have been bought and change given to extend learning. Children are beginning to recognise the link between sounds and letters. Staff reinforce letters sounds, through role play by asking children to sound out letters on items sold in the shop. More able children confidently identify their individual names on their craft folders. Children sit and listen to stories read by staff members and delight in repeating familiar parts of the story line. Staff introduce reference books to extend their knowledge and help them with themed activities. The staff team have displayed low level boards around the hall. A board contains lots of everyday signs, for example, underground maps, menus, signs of local shops and places of interest. This helps children begin to understand that print carries meaning.

Children thoroughly enjoy completing puzzles happily working together. Staff encourage them to identify size and shape and express their thoughts and ideas when constructing. They became excited when they identified a puzzle piece and remained focused at this activity for sometime. Children count confidently and enjoy number activities during free play.

Staff and children happily sit and discuss magnetic picture cards on the radiators of things that go together. They match the lollipop lady to the school crossing, fire fighter to the fire engine and paramedic to ambulance. This provokes lots of discuss on people that help us within our local community. Children use their imaginations well in role-play. They dress up as police officers, wizards and doctors. They enjoy singing nursery rhymes, move confidently to music and use musical instruments to support play. They thoroughly enjoy drawing and painting activities creating detailed pictures of their thoughts and ideas.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Many planned activities help children begin to learn about the wider world and the differences and similarities between people. They celebrate some festivals and parents visit the setting to share information about their own cultures, such as clothing and foods which may be different to the children's own. Notices are displayed welcoming children in Tamil, Turkish, English and Hindi so they may identify their own language and see how others' may differ. Local outings provide an opportunity to study children's own environment and community within which they all live together. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well as they are gainfully occupied and interested in the activities. A clearly written policy advises staff on how to behave as positive role models whilst offering praise and endorsements for good behaviour. However, some staff continue to use negative language and without explanations to help children learn why their behaviour is unwanted. For example, saying 'no, don't do that'.

The planning clearly shows how all children are included and activities are suitable for all abilities. Individual needs are considered and staff work with outside agencies if required to ensure children with additional needs receive the required levels of additional support.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children are valued as individuals as staff seek from parents' children's individual care needs and likes and dislikes. This contributes considerably to children's well-being whilst at the playgroup. An updated prospectus includes information on the Early Years Foundation Stage which includes the six areas of learning. A notice board provides additional information for parents such as the certificate of registration and details of how to contact Ofsted. Parents are informed about their children's progress through daily discussion with the staff team and attendance at consultation meetings with management and key worker staff to view and discuss their children's individual assessment records. Newsletters keep parents informed of forthcoming events. However, weekly planning is not displayed to keep parents fully informed about topics and activities provided which would enable them to support children's learning at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a team of dedicated staff who are committed to providing a continually improving learning environment. They have thoroughly explored their weaknesses

and implemented a detailed action plan for improvement. However, there remain several areas which have yet to be addressed to meet all the required improvements. The staff team work well together to ensure children are suitably supervised and additional staff attend to ensure the ratios are maintained at all times. However, although additional staff are recorded in the attendance register, it does not include individual names as a clear record of who is present.

Staff recruitment procedures include systems for ensuring all staff are suitable to work with children and ongoing training needs are identified and facilitated to ensure personal development needs are met. For example, several staff have recently completed both First aid and Early Years Foundation Stage training. Each member of staff supervises a separate activity so children are encouraged to participate and benefit from their interaction. All required documentation is in place for the safe management of the setting and a clearly written set of policies underpins the improving practise. Policies have all been reviewed and updated to ensure they comply with the latest guidelines and standards.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Management work in partnership with staff to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school. Management have a strong commitment to develop the learning environment and procedures are being developed to monitor and evaluate the deliver of nursery education. On-going training ensures the staff team are motivated and build on their current knowledge of the Foundation Stage, which contributes to the planning of the curriculum and identify the next steps in children's learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection 15 actions were set to improve practice for both Care and Nursery Education. How these Actions have been met is detailed in the main body of this report.

Assess the risks to children in relation to the use of large apparatus and take action to minimise these. Improvement detailed in the Being Healthy part of the report.

Improve the use of time, space and resources to promote children's learning and use knowledge of individual children and information gained from assessment to plan for their individual needs; Develop the child protection procedure and implement procedures to record and discuss injuries children arrive with. Improvements detailed in the Staying Safe section of the report.

Plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs; Improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning; Develop effective systems to plan and deliver nursery education and to observe and assess children's ongoing progress towards the early learning goals; Introduce systems to monitor and evaluate teaching, the curriculum and children's individual progress ensuring effective learning takes place. Improvements are detailed in the Enjoying & Achieving part of the report.

Increase staff's understanding of how to promote equal opportunities within the setting and provide effective support for children with English as an additional language; Develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour consistently, taking into account their age and stage of development, and introduce systems to record incidents of behaviour sharing this information effectively with the parents; Ensure parents are provided with the correct contact details for Ofsted and keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken; Introduce systems for parents to be informed

about the Foundation Stage curriculum, their child's ongoing progress and achievements, next steps for development and how they can help support this at home. Improvements detailed in the Positive Contribution section of the report.

Develop procedures to recruit, appoint and induct new staff and improve systems to ensure the ongoing suitability of those already working in the setting; Complete an appropriate first aid course; Improve the deployment of staff, organise space and resources effectively, to ensure the safety, welfare and development of all children. Improvement detailed in the Organisation part of the report.

### **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 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 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):

- continue to develop positive methods of managing children's behaviour
- clearly record names of all adults present
- further increase opportunities for children to be independent
- continue to review and implement the action plan for improvement

#### **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):

- continue to improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning
- continue to develop effective systems to plan and deliver nursery education and to observe and assess children's ongoing progress towards the early learning goals
- share curriculum plans with parents to help them support children's learning at home

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)