

Walton Pre - Preparatory School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY349307
Inspection date	02 May 2008
Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
Setting Address	The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Walton Hall, MILTON KEYNES, MK7 6BB
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Registered person	Milton Keynes Preparatory School Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Walton Pre-Preparatory School Nursery is one of three nurseries run by Milton Keynes Pre-Preparatory School Ltd. It opened under the present registration in 2007 and operates from several rooms in a large converted house, with an additional classroom annex. It is situated near a residential area, close to Milton Keynes. A maximum of 120 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 46 weeks of the year and operates a play scheme during holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 123 children aged from six months to under eight years on roll. Of these, 45 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider residential areas. The nursery employs 28 staff, including a cook. Of these, 15 staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are eight staff members who are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. They learn about healthy living, playing outside several times a day with further activities often taken outside for additional periods of learning. Children follow and understand simple good health and hygiene practices, for example, washing their hands before eating, after using the toilet and playing outside. Staff are good role models, washing their own hands regularly. However, on occasions, staff do not always use individual cloths for wiping young children's hands to prevent cross infection. Matron administers medicines throughout the day at specific times advised by individual parents, with evidence of administration clearly recorded. The staff further protect children from the spread of infection by following clear sickness policy and using anti-bacterial sprays to clean surfaces and changing mats. Nappy changing takes place in accordance with each individual child's needs, with nappies disposed of appropriately and immediately after changing.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because the staff work well with parents. They ensure they meet parents' wishes and children's preferences, together with any religious or dietary requirements to nourish children in their care. For example, allergies and dietary requirements are displayed and known by staff in each room, who take care to ensure all children receive appropriate diets at meal times. Children benefit from healthy menus and are well nourished, as they receive a wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables during their meals and snacks, which are freshly produced on the premises. Regular drinks throughout the day ensure children remain adequately hydrated. Babies receive cuddles while feeding from bottles and good interaction from the staff when eating in high chairs. Children of all age groups receive encouragement to develop their independence during meals and young children are learning to feed themselves, with help from the staff when required.

Children enjoy their physical play, having many opportunities for developing their skills to bounce, kick and catch; balance, climb and run in the spacious gardens. Staff interact well with the children and offer lots of encouragement to help children develop their skills and play group games. For example, some three year old children can successfully throw and bounce the balls and others are learning to catch and kick. In warmer weather, external room doors are propped open securely for fresh air. Babies have outdoor play in the garden area on large playmats and rugs, also going out for walks with staff in the buggies around the local area. Children use the garden daily with large grassed play areas, a spacious patio and developing gardens and secure greenhouses for planting and seed growing. They have free access to a good supply of equipment such as balls of various sizes, see saws, slides and cars, together with a range of balancing and climbing resources. Children rest and sleep according to their needs and parents' wishes in named cots or on mattresses, which are prepared with individual bedding for young children in each room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm and welcoming premises, where they move around freely under appropriate staff supervision at all times. The staff provide a secure and safe indoor and outside environment, which is clean and well maintained. They ensure children remain secure by keeping areas children use child friendly and risk assessing individual rooms, together with outside

areas. Safety stairgates on all young children's internal doors and at top of the stairs prevent children accessing busy or hazardous areas.

Children use a good range of suitable and safe equipment, toys and resources, which are easily accessible and carefully checked for wear and tear regularly by staff. Rooms have appropriate safety precautions, such as smoke detectors, socket covers and cupboard locks, with all hazardous items stored out of children's reach in suitable areas. Secure entry systems include CCTV at the main entrance and a secure door with double locks to prevent unvetted adults from entering the premises unobserved. However, there are some occasions when parents freely enter the building without staff's knowledge, such as when the door is not appropriately secured during busy periods.

Children are protected because the staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff have a good awareness of their responsibilities and know the importance of recording information confidentially and management have clear awareness of the procedure to follow if allegations of abuse are made against any of the staff. Parents are aware of the staff's role and their responsibilities to protect children because this is included in the nursery policy. The staff help to further protect children by discussing pre-existing injuries with individual parents, although any discussions are not yet recorded to enable staff to monitor any potential concerns or issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence, independence and self-esteem, responding to the challenges the staff provide. They show interest in what they do and use their initiative to acquire new knowledge and skills. The staff plan activities to ensure children of all age groups have a variety of experiences that will challenge their learning. For example, young children experiencing body painting are encouraged to use their hands, feet and a variety of brushes to express their imagination with different coloured paints. Older children use sand and measuring resources well, learning to compare wet and dry sand and the different ways they both handle, pour and mould. Children receive consistent individual support for their needs in all areas of the provision. They are confident, asking questions of adults and each other and use their initiative in selecting their choices of freely available toys, resources and equipment. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong and understand the nursery rules and routines, for example, taking turns with age appropriate resources and washing their own hands before eating snacks or meals.

Children mix well within their age groups making positive relationships with each other and with the supporting adults. For example, four year old children quickly settle with newer members of staff and younger children often hug each other while following daily routines, such as when lining up to go to the garden together. Children are confident and engage in conversation easily with adults and their peers. They explore new words and extend their vocabulary enthusiastically, together with developing their communicating and listening skills during group time. Children have their individual needs met, because staff take time to get to know the children well as individuals and speak to parents on a daily basis.

Children participate in activities which further develop their existing skills and encourage new ones. They are developing confidence and self-esteem, for example, there is a wide variety of children's artwork on display in the nursery, increasing children's self-awareness and willingness to participate in activities. Children take pride in personal care and achievements and are

learning to become independent. They have opportunities to help others, such as pouring out drinks together at snack time or helping others to listen to their heartbeat using the stethoscope in the role play area. Children show interest in what they do, enjoying the relaxed and secure atmosphere, which encourages them to increase their independence and make choices in their play. They enjoy the nursery and its activities and behaviour is generally good, with staff providing consistent and effective behaviour management strategies.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, enabling children to make good progress across all areas of learning. Children enjoy their time at the nursery, making enthusiastic use of suitable opportunities to extend and reinforce their learning. Senior staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage which they share with all staff to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals. They challenge children and expect the most from them, using various methods to help children learn. Staff assess children's progress regularly and individual records are well organised to show development. Evaluation of structured activities takes place daily and planning effectively covers activities within the areas of learning. However, plans do not currently demonstrate how the activities help children who are more and less able to learn, or how the plans link to the stepping stones and to children's next steps of individual learning.

Children have access to a spacious garden and safe greenhouse areas for planting seeds and bulbs. They also cook, use nature trails and computers, and enjoy music and movement groups regularly. Children have good opportunities to become familiar with their written name around their rooms, together with effective use of namecards. They are developing their own writing skills through some activities and have opportunities to write in everyday situations, such as in the role play areas. Children access a range of equipment to enhance their learning and develop their technology skills, such as regular use of the computer room.

Children are beginning to understand and use language to describe position and size through practical activities, such as in front of, behind, through, under and over when using outdoor equipment. They experience both structured and free learning opportunities to develop their counting skills and learn about simple calculation. Children explore shape, colour and texture through art and craft based activities and freely access books and stories from a good range of quality fiction and non-fiction resources in each room.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of wider society and understand the wider world through the wide range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. For example, staff provide a good range of books, play figures, small world play, role play resources within the children's individual rooms. Children learn about their local community through walking around the local areas; following the nature trail in the grounds; or by visiting the company education centre called the 'farm', for computer technology, environmental studies or music and drama classes, where they regularly mix with other nursery children and staff. Children of different cultural backgrounds attend the premises and all receive equal attention and access to the wide range of toys, resources and equipment. The children feel a sense of belonging in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere, showing they are content and developing their growing confidence. Children make choices and take decisions in their play; toys and equipment are accessible to all children. For example, age appropriate resources are stored in

each room in drawers, trays and boxes at children's own levels, which are freely accessible. The staff treat children as individuals but with equal concern, meeting their individual needs. They encourage children to play and co-operate with each other and to treat others with respect and kindness from an early age.

Children receive appropriate support and all children are valued as individuals. There are good systems in place to support those children attending with special educational needs and those who attend with English as an additional language. These systems include parental support and assistance from trained staff, all working together with children's individual play plans. Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour, with older children knowing and understanding the nursery rules. Younger children quickly learn the nursery rules and show their eagerness to please staff by repeating them at registration time. Children's behaviour is generally good and their behaviour management is verbally agreed with parents and in the nursery's policy. Strategies in use are, time out with the nursery staff, with distraction and explanation as appropriate to the age or stage of the child. For example, young children who argue about a toy are asked to share and apologise to each other if they have shown any aggression. Staff use positive praise and encouragement to children of all ages throughout the nursery. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children benefit from the developing two-way relationship between parents and staff which helps to create continuity of care. For example, parents freely ask questions to staff in each room or to senior staff on arrival and collection if they have any concerns or worries, or to give information about their child. Staff in the baby rooms write individual diaries to share with parents to exchange information, such as records of individual food intake, sleep patterns, nappies and daily activities. Staff also invite parents to make comments on their child to keep a two-way flow of information in place. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child through child profile forms at their child's induction, which staff use to assess the child's level of development. Children are cared for according to their parents' wishes, ensuring continuity to meet the child's needs. The staff encourage strong communication to meet children's individual requirements, gathering sufficient information from parents on arrival and making time to talk at the end of the day. For example, staff ensure they complete a detailed verbal hand over with the parent or carer as each child is collected. Parents are aware of Ofsted contact details through the complaints procedure and the parents' poster is on display. A record of complaints is in place, which is available to parents on request.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. Staff ensure parents receive quality information regarding activities through inviting noticeboards, displays of photographs and regular newsletters. Parents have access to all their child's records on request and can observe many areas of children's artwork, which are on display throughout the nursery. Children's profile forms are evaluated each half term and a record sheet is made to share with parents regarding each child's individual learning. Parents are well informed of their child's achievements and progress during open evenings throughout the year and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning through room newsletters for each age group. For example, a recent newsletter to parents details a future visit from Guide dogs for the Blind, a music workshop and the Easter bonnet parade.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery in the homely atmosphere, which develops from the relaxed family environment. Friendly staff teams with a calm attitude work together across the

different age groups to provide children with continuity of care. Staff show they have high regard for the welfare and well-being of all children, taking care to ensure they meet children's needs and encouraging them to develop self-confidence. Good systems in place to ensure children receive a balance of indoor and outside activities.

Children benefit from a good range of activities and experiences that extend their learning and aid their development. Staff help them to feel secure and confident in all areas of their development by ensuring children are cared for by adults with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and appropriate experience and qualifications. Nursery routines are well established and staff use time, resources, and accommodation well to provide children with quality learning opportunities.

Clear and comprehensive policies and procedures work in practice and are easily available to parents. All relevant parental permissions are obtained and children's individual records and documentation is up to date. Confidentiality is maintained with individual families; attendance of children and staff is clearly monitored; with any accidents, incidents and medication records shared appropriately with parents as required.

Leadership and management is good and contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Matron and her registrar effectively lead several strong teams working across the provision as good role models, effectively motivating both staff and children. They work together to ensure all children have the best available care, with the company management team easily available for support during any concerns or worries. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the levels of education and assess children's development throughout the Foundation Stage. The company has a strong commitment to the improvement of education for all children who attend the provision, producing a range of published books under a variety of topics, together with several photo packs, giving staff a wealth of information and ideas that can be effectively linked to each area of learning. Clear systems are in place to monitor the provision and the staff, together with their training needs and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children attending.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 building security systems to ensure non vetted adults cannot access the building without staff's knowledge and further develop child protection procedures to record pre-existing injuries
- improve the hygiene routines used with younger children to include the use of individual cloths or wipes to prevent cross infection at all times

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):

- improve the planning for nursery education to demonstrate how the activities help children who are more and less able to learn and how the plans link to the stepping stones and to children's next steps of individual learning

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