

# The Mulberry Bush Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 311296  
**Inspection date** 21/01/2009  
**Inspector** Anthony Anderson

**Setting address** Fernside Avenue, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD5 8PQ

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

The Mulberry Bush pre-school opened in 1989 and is a private organisation. It operates from the gatehouse at Almondbury High School, near Huddersfield and serves the needs of the local community. The group has access to open plan play areas, toilet and kitchen facilities and a fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school is open from 08.15 to 12.15, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and offers a lunch club until 13.15. On Mondays and Thursdays, the pre-school is open from 08.15 to 15.00. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It may care for up to 26 children at any one time. There are currently 42 children, aged from two years old to five years old on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning disabilities but does not have any children on roll who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs seven part time staff, of whom four hold appropriate qualifications. Madame Lambrou attends for one session per week, offering the children the opportunity to learn French. The setting receives support from the local authority and holds an Investors in Children Quality Assurance award.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school is effective in ensuring children make good progress in all six areas of early years learning. The environment of the setting is safe, secure, warm and welcoming. Children demonstrate happiness and enjoyment in this very inclusive provision, which is set up invitingly for learning and play. Strong leadership and reflective practice are closely linked to children's learning and progress. Safeguarding systems are in place, but vetting checks on staff are not reviewed on a defined renewal date. Risk assessments are done daily internally and externally but the internal checks are not consistently recorded. The setting demonstrates good capacity to improve. It has successfully implemented the recommendations of the last inspection and taken positive steps towards conducting regular self evaluation, although the leadership does not yet document its actions sufficiently well, to show its continuous improvement. Excellent partnerships with parents and other agencies, strongly support children in their development as individuals.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the self-evaluation system so that it more effectively supports continuous improvement
- include a definitive renewal date for vetting checks on staff and ensure that they apply by the designated date
- ensure that daily risk assessments of the whole setting are recorded together on one form.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The staff work as an extremely effective team under strong, determined and dedicated leadership. Communication between the leader and her staff is good. Regular staff appraisals encourage them to communicate their aspirations and ideas for the future and to identify individual training and development needs. Team working is of the essence. Senior management values and consults with staff and has successfully established a highly professional and effective partnership of dedicated early years practitioners. All are involved in evaluating the setting's effectiveness, but although this practice is developing well, it is not yet fully documented or supporting continuous improvement. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures, ensure that all adults are suitable and have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge of how young children learn. However, there is not yet a definitive renewal date in place, for rechecking the suitability of existing staff. Staff reflect on their recorded observations of children and assessments of their progress, as they share the planning of activities designed to support individuals' next steps of development.

A highly effective key person system, means that staff get to know individual children and their families well so that together, they ensure that children's needs are met. The setting works extremely closely with parents, valuing the vital role they play in their child's progress and development, particularly their involvement in recording their children's learning journeys. Recently, the management responded very positively to parental comments concerning the apparent lack of external play resources. Parents' partnerships with the setting's management and staff are outstanding. The setting also has good links with other agencies, including students on placement from a local high school. Another excellent link is the frequent visits of a community police officer, who provides the children with support and advice towards their own personal safety and well-being.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

High quality planning and organisation, ensures that every child enjoys their time in the setting and is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided. Children are confident, happy and well settled. They make choices throughout the sessions, as they independently select the resources and activities they prefer. They make good use of the available space, actively taking part in role-play adventures and adapting well to the free-flow access, which includes outdoor activities. They build positive relationships with staff and their peers. Older children help their younger friends, for example, when putting on coats and gloves. Staff encourage the development of children's communication skills, as they actively listen to and take a genuine interest in what children say and do. Many activities, such as agreeing today's day and date, are linked to words and numbers. Children learn to respect the local environment and each other. They explore differences and similarities, as they discuss and take part in a range of festivals and use resources that promotes positive attitudes and an understanding of diversity. The eagerly anticipated weekly visit of a French teacher, helps to widen children's knowledge of other cultures. On a daily basis, leaders' encouragement of the

children to sing and to share their experiences with their peers, promotes their confidence most effectively. Children develop their physical skills, as they balance, climb, slide and pedal around the adjacent outside play area.

Children thrive in this safe and supportive environment. The suitably qualified staff treat them with good care, if they are unwell or have an accident. Written parental permission is sought before administering medication and parents are asked to sign any entries in the accident book, which are linked to their own child. Staff conduct daily risk assessments but do not record these as required. However, they do record the regular fire evacuation drills. At snack time, staff encourage children to choose from a healthy range of food and drinks, after washing their hands. The consistent promotion of positive attitudes and behaviour from staff, means that the children learn respect for others in a relaxed, calm and caring environment. As a result of the consistent support and positive promotion of learning through play and enjoyment, children contribute well to their own learning and personal development.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met