



Mollington Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY255969
Inspection date	26 September 2005
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	Old School Building, Grove Road, Mollington, Cheshire, CH1 6LG
Telephone number	01244 851642
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Registered person	Mollington Pre-School
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?

Mollington Pre-School was registered in 2002 and is managed by a parents' committee. It operates from one room in the 'Old School Building' which is situated in Mollington near Chester and is adjacent to St Oswald's County Primary School. Children attend from the village and surrounding areas. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children from 2 ½ years to 5 on roll which includes 11 children who receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports a small number of children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language. There are five staff working with the children who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from Early Years teachers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from becoming ill as all required policies, procedures and documentation are in place and they are understood and followed by all staff. Clear procedures are in place in the event of an emergency and accidents are dealt with calmly and efficiently. Staff have current first aid certificates and regularly update their knowledge of first aid in relevant training. Good health and hygiene routines are followed to reduce the risks of cross-contamination and infections, and sickness policies give clear guidance for parents and carers to protect everyone attending. Children are encouraged to become independent in their self-help skills as older children confidently follow good routines and look after their own toileting needs. Younger children are gently encouraged and supported in their personal care as they are reminded to wash off all the bubbles and dry their hands properly in case they get sore. Every child attempts to put on their own coat with appropriate prompts and guidance from staff such as helping a child to secure the bottom of the zip or pull out a sleeve to enable a child to proudly complete the task. Children are learning to accept responsibility for their own health needs and to understand why they need to wash hands before eating as they talk with staff about washing off all the dirty marks and removing germs.

Daily access to a good range of outdoor play equipment enables children to have fun and make good progress in their physical development. Activities are planned to provide variety and to enable children to gain confidence as they learn to move with control and use their bodies in different ways. Children enjoy balancing bean bags on their head or knock down skittles with hoops. They learn to manoeuvre and negotiate a large circuit on bicycles, cars, scooters or pushing trucks. The benefits of keeping fit and healthy are introduced to children as they are encouraged to 'stretch up tall', shake their arms and legs or touch their toes in daily warm up sessions. Children experiment and manipulate different materials and consistencies such as playdoh or sand and improve their fine motor control as they cut and stick or learn to use the mouse with the computer.

Children learn about choosing healthy options and the positive effects of a healthy diet in topic work and regular discussions. Parents provide their child's snack items each day and are asked to support the pre-school policy to provide healthy items. This is naturally reinforced as staff act as positive role models when they sit with the children to eat their own snack. Everyone chats together and compares items or remarks on how many children and staff have the same piece of fruit or cereal bar. A choice of fresh water or milk is available at snack time and children are consulted and given time to decide which one they would like each day. Good manners and kind

actions are praised and encouraged as children help to give out the snack boxes and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' to everyone.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure in the friendly environment where everyone relates well to each other and children and their families are actively welcomed. A high staff ratio enables each child to move about freely and safely in a supportive atmosphere and within well-organised surroundings. Children are protected as adults identify potential risks and follow agreed procedures to minimise dangers in, for example, keeping children away from a newly discovered hornet's nest and arranging for its removal. However, some hazards and potential risks in the outside play area such as access to poisonous plants or low-level drains are not clearly identified and present a danger to young children. Staff and children share stories and join in discussions about recognising and responding to dangerous situations. They learn how to keep themselves safe as they talk about only playing in safe areas and staying with a friend when playing hide and seek. Children are made aware of the consequence of their actions when they are reminded not to run too fast and to watch where they are going as they ride a bicycle in case they hurt themselves or others. Children's wellbeing is protected in clear policies and procedures on child protection issues and in the staff's good knowledge and understanding of relevant issues from recent training.

Good quality resources and play equipment are stored at a low level for children to help themselves and make their own choices in play activities. Areas are clearly identified and labelled for different types of play with, for example, a wide range of dressing up clothes on hangers or in pockets for children to experiment and initiate imaginative games in the 'home corner'. Children of all ages enjoy looking at books they have selected from the quiet area. Toys and equipment are cleaned and regularly checked for safety and are made from different materials such as wood, soft fabrics and natural objects. There are a wide range of resources to meet the needs of children across the age and ability range and extra equipment such as tactile numbers or pencil grips are available for children with additional or sensory needs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school happily as they rush to join their friends and share their latest news with staff. They are confident and outgoing and warmly welcome everyone into the circle at the start of the day. The 'Good Morning' song and saying hello to everyone, including visitors, creates a strong sense of belonging for each child which is reinforced throughout the morning. Children listen politely and intently to staff and each other as they decide what day it is or count the number of children and adults. Younger children quickly develop a sense of time and awareness of past and future as they learn what happens next in familiar daily routines and focussed

events when the group gathers together for a song or game. Visual timelines of the daily events are used to help children who have communication difficulties and to reassure new children who anxiously ask when their mother is coming back.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress because staff have good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and of how children develop and learn. Individual strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified as staff know the children well. Children's progress is regularly observed and recorded in comments such as 'painted series of arches and said it is a rainbow' or 'can cut along a line'. Weekly planning meetings are held to review and assess individual progress and activities are adapted to build on what children already know. This creates effective links between planning, observation and assessment to predict the next steps for individual children's learning. Children's progress is recorded in observations and on the Cheshire Step by Step profile. However, the progress of children under three is not clearly recorded to form a baseline as they start on the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage.

Children benefit from the staff's infectious enthusiasm and positive attitudes which inspire each child to respond with similar energy and interest. This creates an atmosphere where children are confident and eager to learn and try out new skills. Opportunities are available for children to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves with a good balance of free play and structured activities. Staff are aware of when to stand back and allow play to develop or when to skilfully introduce new ideas to redirect or progress ideas. For example, a small group of children happily fill containers with sand, pour and play imaginatively with a 'digger' until sand is thrown and an adult intervenes and introduces a new skill to make sand pies. Children enjoy using all their five senses with different tactile materials such as mixing and experimenting with gloop or exploring sounds with musical instruments. They learn how to complete computer activities and become familiar with technology as they play with telephones or checkout conveyor belts and tills. Exciting new opportunities are introduced in topics which encompass all the early learning goals. Children develop a strong sense of self as they proudly lie down for a life-size portrait to be drawn by staff and other children. They count their fingers, arms and legs and carefully create their facial features which includes the glasses that 'help them see better'. They confidently write their own name to identify the portrait and enjoy making connections as they compare their image with other children's work.

Language and communication is promoted throughout the session and children confidently chat to each other and initiate conversations with adults. Children's speech and language is enhanced by introducing rhymes, songs, rhythms and gestures as they sing and clap the syllables of each child's name or enthusiastically join in lively actions songs. Children invent and direct their own imaginative games where they dress up in space suits and organise others in a trip to the moon or sing 'Humpty Dumpty' together and laugh as they fall off the wall. Children's imagination is developed and enhanced in dramatic adult initiated 'journeys' where children are challenged as feelings and emotions are explored and new language introduced. They are delighted to be actively involved in developing and sharing ideas in extended sequences of group role play. Children develop a good understanding of

mathematical concepts, calculations and numerals as they are naturally introduced in meaningful activities and practical experiences. They calculate how many grapes are left as they eat their snack, count back from five as the rocket takes off or make three sausages out of playdoh to match the number on the plate. Children confidently find their own name each morning and learn to identify initial sounds and letters as they play games of 'I Spy' or proudly realise that Monday starts with the same letter as their name and Mummy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well behaved and considerate towards adults and each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect where everyone is valued as an individual. They play happily together and thoroughly enjoy each other's company. A child is enthusiastically welcomed back by the whole group and asked by other children if they have enjoyed their holiday with genuine interest. Another child who tells everyone that she is about to go to the moon is greeted with 'have a good time' by a friend at the other side of the room. Older children happily share, take turns and play cooperatively in free play and younger children are gently reminded and encouraged to share and consider the needs of others in the group. Every child proudly takes their turn to hand out snack boxes and children respect rules and understand boundaries as they help to tidy away toys or put the rubbish in the bin. Minor disagreements and squabbles are skilfully and sensitively dealt with by staff as they quickly intervene and respond according to the individual child's level of understanding. Staff talk quietly and calmly to older children about the possible outcome and consequences of their actions when they both want the same toy. They encourage children to consider the physical or emotional impact their actions have on staff or other children when they throw sand. Younger children are gently redirected or guided and supported from an adult's knee to enable them to continue in the game. Regular enthusiastic praise and encouragement from all staff promotes a positive attitude where children respond to and follow the adults' calm, consistent and respectful example. Success and individual achievements such as learning to hop for the first time are celebrated enthusiastically. Children are familiar with routines as they happily form an orderly line before they go outside when singing 'Sally the camel has 15 humps' or following instructions to touch their nose or stand on one leg.

Every child is valued and actively involved in the inclusive environment. Individual strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified and appropriate support offered to enable children to make progress in all areas of their development. Information is shared between staff, parents and relevant support agencies before children with special needs join the group which promotes a positive and effective attitude for the child and their family. Action plans with achievable targets are agreed and reviewed on a regular basis and success is enthusiastically shared and celebrated to develop children's confidence and positive self-esteem. Staff identify and attend training on subjects such as Makaton sign language or supporting children with visual or hearing impairment or English as an additional language to promote equal access for a wider range of children. Links are fostered with children's own language and culture by involving parents in the group and introducing French phrases in a game of 'Simon

Says'. Children have access to a broad range of resources, play opportunities and activities which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There is a good partnership with parents and carers. Notices and half-termly newsletters provide information on current topics and activities to encourage parents to offer suggestions and become involved in their child's education in meaningful ways. Parents comment on their overall satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided and are particularly happy with the friendly, homely environment where they feel involved and included in their child's life at pre-school. Parents are actively involved in management decisions as committee members and are able to participate as parent helpers in the group. Information is shared on children's progress in daily informal chats at the beginning or end of the session and in open days to promote good continuity of care for everyone involved. Good settling in procedures reassure parents and enable children to develop confidence and gradually adapt to being a part of the group.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The supervisor and deputy are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the pre-school and receive invaluable support from the parents' committee. The management regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of care and education that is offered and identify and implement improvements such as buying a digital camera to record children's progress. Staff roles are clearly defined in job descriptions and followed in practice. The team is well established and everyone respects and supports each other with effective communication in informal daily discussion. Meetings are held weekly to share information, evaluate and highlight current good practice or discuss methods for improvement. Topics and themes are chosen to suit the wide range of children's interests and adapted to include every child.

Annual appraisal systems are used effectively to review progress and identify training needs. Staff are experienced and all qualified to a recognised early years standard. They are committed to continuing their own professional development as they attend courses and share their new knowledge. There are strong links with the local community and the adjacent school with weekly singing sessions when the local vicar brings his guitar and joint celebrations with the school at Christmas or autumn. Early years teachers visit regularly to offer advice and support. Documentation and records are used effectively to support the care of children and comply with regulations to protect children. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and shared with parents. Space, time and resources are effectively organised to promote children's care and learning. Overall, the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the management agreed to provide documentation to

verify the safety of all electrical equipment and to display a current public liability insurance certificate. Both documents are in place to improve the overall safety for children.

An agreement was made to make amendments to the complaints policy documentation. The complaints procedures for parents now include Ofsted's contact details to continually improve the quality of care for children and families.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- remove all hazards to ensure the outside play area is safe for children.

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 current practice in establishing a baseline for children entering the Foundation Stage by building on what children under three years already know, for example, by using the Birth to three framework (also applies to care).

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk