



Milstead Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY305618
Inspection date	09 November 2005
Inspector	Annie Williams
Setting Address	Milstead Village Hall, Rawling Street, Milstead, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 0RX
Telephone number	07799513488
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Registered person	Milstead Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Milstead Pre-school opened in 2004 and operates from a village hall in Milstead, Sittingbourne, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The pre-school is open on a Monday and Wednesday from 09.00 to 15.00 and on a Thursday and Friday from 09.00 to 12.00 term time only.

There are currently 17 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll; of these, 9 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school staff have experience

of supporting children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three members of staff. All staff including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The premises are clean. Children learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine of hand washing. They know when to wash their hands and why. There are effective practices in place to sustain levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection, such as staff wearing a disposable apron and gloves for nappy changes. Accident and medicine procedures, an easily accessible first aid kit and staffs up to date first aid training helps staff to act in the best interest of children should they become ill. Children are protected from the sun because of staffs' attention to healthcare. Children know to wear a hat and apply sun-cream that they call slip slap slop!

A policy about food helps staff to promote healthy eating amongst children. Parents are asked to provide a healthy range of food in their child's lunch box. Children are introduced to healthy eating at snack time, such as warm buttered toast and fresh fruit. Although children are offered milk and water at snack time, staff also offer blackcurrant and apple squash. As a result, most children tend to choose the less healthy option of squash.

There is no outside area attached to the setting. However, staff compensate by providing time for physical play each session. Children clearly enjoy this play and have regular opportunities to be involved in rigorous physical play; for example, children first of all are involved in a directed physical activity of pretending to travel around the world on different transport, and play the parachute game. In addition, children enjoy the less structured session of riding on wheeled toys, playing with bats and balls, rocking on a rocker and crawling through a tunnel playing. During fine weather staff take children to the nearby field to enjoy physical play. Occasionally resources for climbing and balancing are borrowed from a local toy library, but overall children lack opportunities for climbing and balancing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure. There is a good range of toys and equipment that are clean and in good condition because staff regularly clean and check toys. As a result, children are able to play safely with a range of toys that promote their development. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed, understood by staff and practised regularly so staff ensure that children are safe.

Effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children and safe procedures understood by staff, such as procedures for outings contribute to keeping children safe. Children are protected from harm because staff are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are aware of whom to contact and the procedures to follow should an incident occur. However, the child protection policy is not clear about what happens if allegations are made against staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled, because staff are positive in their interactions and provide for their interests to help them settle. Observations are made by staff and linked to the Birth to Three Matters framework. However, plans are not yet linked to the framework to ensure activities meet the needs of individual children. Children enjoy a range of activities. They explore with their senses and mark make, such as with gloop, paints and chinks. Staff encourage children to notice the marks that they make. For example, as they dab paint across paper. Opportunities that promote children's imagination are good. A range of attractive resources are provided and staff support children in their pretend play, as they cook dinner, take orders and put out fires. Children explore sounds as they speak into the microphone and press buttons on the musical laptop. Singing is a regular feature of the session which children clearly enjoy contributing to their communication skills.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. They use children's self chosen play to extend their learning. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are encouraged to learn through play and this is successfully achieved through a good routine that includes a balance of child and adult initiated activities. Children are eager to learn and concentrate well. Many positive relationships have developed within the setting. Children play co-operatively with their friends, such as when they style each others hair at the salon. They enjoy many opportunities for mark making and write for a purpose in their role-play; such as, taking orders in the restaurant. More able children are forming recognisable letters and show pride in their achievements. Children are encouraged to sound out the first letter of their name at large group time, but this can be too long for the younger children. However, there are various opportunities for children to see their names throughout the session. Consequently, children are recognising their names and more able children can recognise names of their friends. There is a very attractive book area in the setting and children enjoy story time with an adult. However, children do not often visit the book area independently during free-play. Songs are used skilfully by staff to indicate changes in the routine; for example, tidy up time. Children respond, happily singing as they put things away in containers.

Children are developing increasing control in small muscle movements because of the opportunities provided by staff. They roll out dough, use chop sticks and small

paint brushes. Children explore creativity using a wide range of media such as paint, wet and dry pasta, soapy sand and gloop. Photographs show children involved in a range of activities that promote their knowledge and understanding of the world, such as planting bulbs and making food balls for birds. Counting is a regular feature of the session; children count how many children are present each day. Puppets are skilfully used by staff to introduce children to simple calculation and numerals. Visitors into the setting, such as the policeman and visits out into the community help children learn about the local and wider world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the setting. Staff interact positively with the children and are kind and caring in their interactions. Children understand the routine well and know what happens next. As a result, they are secure at the setting.

Children are well behaved and respond positively to staffs encouragement to share and take turns. They play together and are kind and caring towards each other; for example, they show concern when a child falls. Children's achievements are valued by staff who show excitement and encourage children to record their achievements by taking their own photographs. Children know the rules within the setting to stay safe; for example, they know that they must not run inside. They learn to take care of their environment, such as tidying away and wiping the table after lunch.

Staff have a clear understanding of how to support children who speak English as an additional language and children who have special needs. In addition the setting operates from a building that has appropriate facilities and is easily accessible to children and adults with a disability so that independence is not compromised.

Children's cultures are successfully acknowledged by the staff, who work closely with parents to find out children's personal needs. Cultures feature in the planning in the form of different festivals, such as Diwali and a range of books and resources help to promote children's understanding of different cultures. Children clearly enjoy attending and experience moments of awe and wonder, such as when they explore with torches and watch changes in texture to the gloop. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are greeted warmly by staff and positive relationships are evident. Parents report that they are happy with the care and education provided by the setting and are well informed of the settings policies, procedures and curriculum. Feedback each day is given on a white board in the entrance hall to inform parents of what the group have experienced. In addition, parents are invited to share their children's development records and a weekly contact book for each child is completed and sent home to inform parents of individual children's achievements.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to promote children's welfare and care is maintained. The environment is attractively prepared with a range of activities before children arrive. As a result, children arrive happily and settle quickly to play. All staff are qualified, deploy themselves effectively and there is a good ratio of adult: children. Consequently, children are well supported in their play. The routine of the session is well balanced to provide child-initiated and adult-directed activities.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. Plans are in place to cover all areas of learning and staff are making observations on children to identify their next steps in learning. Staff meet regularly to plan and reflect to improve the quality of their work. They currently take turns in planning, but recognise the benefits of planning together to ensure that observations on all the children are used continually to inform activity plans. Staff plan to develop formal systems for monitoring children's progress over time to identify the impact of the educational programme that they provide. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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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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):

- develop the child protection policy to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

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):

- develop a collaborative approach towards planning so that observations of children from each key group are used to continually inform the planning of activities [including Birth to three matters]
- develop formal systems to monitor the educational programme.

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