

# The Mill Children's Centre Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY399192

**Inspection date**

16/02/2010

**Inspector**

Beverly Anne Brimble

**Setting address**

St. Vigor & St. John C of E Primary School, Wells Road,  
Chilcompton, RADSTOCK, BA3 4EX

**Telephone number**

01761 233847

**Email**

mhamm@somerset.gov.uk

**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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## 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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

The Mill Children's Centre Nursery has been registered since 2009. It is run by Somerset County Council and is based in the grounds of St Vigor and St John C of E Primary School in Chilcompton, Somerset. It is a purpose built Children's Centre which offers other family support services on the premises. The nursery uses two rooms, a baby room for children aged four months to two years and a main nursery room for two to five-year-olds. There are also associated kitchen and toilet facilities, all areas are on the ground floor and children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open from 8am until 5pm for 48 weeks of the year, closing for two weeks over Christmas, one week at Easter and one week in August. Children attending the nursery are mainly from the local area and surrounding villages.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age range, with a maximum of six children under two years may attend at any one time. There are currently 75 children on roll. The nursery is registered to receive government funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs nine members of staff to care for the children. The nursery manager holds a level 5 qualification and the lead practitioner has a B Ed in general primary education, all other members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled in this exceptionally child-centred environment. This is a fully inclusive setting where all children are acknowledged and supported to enable them to achieve to the best of their abilities. Excellent focus on learning in the outdoor environment and organisation of resources enable children's success and enjoyment. Children are consistently engaged and their individual needs are met to a considerably high standard, which is due to the staff's enthusiasm and commitment to provide an exceptional learning environment. The partnerships with parents and carers are purposeful and very effective in providing continuity of care for children. Staff are extremely well supported, motivated and inspired by the experienced and skilled management team, who have a clear commitment to them and the nursery as a whole. The capacity to improve the provision reflects in the outstanding organisation of the setting, thorough procedures for recruitment, personal development of the staff and critical self-evaluation.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- continuing to develop methods of working in partnership with other settings to further support children's development and progress.

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

Safeguarding children is given excellent consideration. A comprehensive policy is in place and staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection, knowing who to report concerns to so that children are always protected. Robust recruitment, induction and appraisal procedures ensure that all adults working with the children are both suitable and well prepared for their role. All areas used by the children are comprehensively risk assessed by the staff to maximise the children's safety and allow them to freely explore their environment without risk. The security of the premises is excellent and procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult. All necessary documentation is in place, kept to a high standard and fully understood and implemented by staff to further promote children's safety and welfare. Children undoubtedly enjoy a stimulating and very child-centred environment. The excellent use of resources, including highly effective deployment of the staff leads to an environment that is conducive to learning and safe.

The nursery has outstanding partnerships with parents. Parents relish that every member of staff knows their child exceptionally well and feel that the setting is tailored to meet the specific needs of their individual children. Staff's awareness of issues of equality and diversity underpin everyday practice, they form close relationships with the children and their families which enables them to know each child extremely well. The well established key person system and effective team work of staff ensures that all children have their individual needs met very successfully and play and learn in a fully inclusive environment. Parents receive clear information about the setting and contact books for younger children, regular newsletters, notice boards, and daily verbal communication between the staff and parents ensure that they are kept fully informed. Systems to assess children's progress are very effective and the emphasis on sharing these regularly with parents positively impacts on children's care, welfare, development and learning. Links with other settings that children attend, delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), are in the process of being sought to help contribute further to the continuity of children's care and learning.

The managers and staff work exceptionally well as a team and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities within the setting. The processes for managing the performance of staff and their professional development are used exceptionally well and staff are well supported to attend ongoing training to increase their knowledge and skills. The managers are proactive in ensuring that all the staff are involved in the completion of their self-evaluation and future plans for the setting. Morale is very high and belief in the setting's success runs through all levels of staff. As a result, the whole staff team demonstrate a commitment and dedication

to furthering their knowledge and understanding of childcare practices to maintain an exceptionally high level of childcare.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children thrive in the stimulating relaxed environment that has been created for them by the dedicated and enthusiastic staff team. The children are extremely confident, interested and motivated by the activities that are on offer. Staff are skilled at engaging children in discussion to aid their learning and development through asking questions to challenge their thinking. Trusting relationships between staff and children are evident, because staff take time to listen to children's conversations and ideas with interest and sensitivity. The highly effective use of free-flow ensures children enjoy a very good balance of indoor and outside play. The outside area is very well resourced with a digging area, water run, science area, beach hut, sand pit, role play provision, a range of ride-on toys, bikes and balls, and mark making and construction resources under a covered area. The outside area can be used throughout the year as children have all-in-one protective suits and Wellington boots, and protective matting is used so crawling babies are still able to access the outside environment. Children thoroughly enjoy using this area and this is a very valuable resource which helps them to make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Children are confident communicators they initiate conversations with each other and adults. They talk about the things they like to do and ask staff to join in their play, for example, one child asks 'would you like to be a chef with me?'. They excitedly recall activities stating 'we used milk and flour and eggs and mixed it altogether to make pancakes, I put sugar on mine before I ate it', showing their extremely good language skills. Babies demonstrate their early communication skills as they start to vocalise and point to things to indicate their needs and wishes. Children demonstrate excellent literacy skills as they sit attentively enjoying stories, joining in by repeating familiar phrases and listening to new vocabulary that is introduced. Children are introduced to problem solving and mathematical language through routine and planned activities, such as, talking about size, shape and colour as they prepare fruit for snack time. They use a computer with competence, negotiating programmes which help to consolidate learning. Overall, children are developing excellent skills to support their future learning.

Staff have a very good knowledge of the EYFS learning and development requirements and provide stimulating, age appropriate and exciting everyday activities that motivate and inspire the children. Staff get to know the children during home visits and the settling period, gathering relevant information from parents at entry and record children's interests and what they are capable of doing. Children's achievements and observations of them at play are recorded in their learning journeys. These records are used to identify next steps in their learning for individual children and are also used effectively to inform future planning. This results in all children making excellent progress according to their starting points and capabilities during their time at the nursery.

Children are aware of healthy lifestyles. They play outside each day enjoying the

benefits of fresh air and physical activity to develop and promote their large motor skills and co-ordination. Children know to wash their hands at appropriate times and are independent in their self-care skills, such as, blowing their own nose and disposing of the tissue themselves. Drinking water is available at all times and children enjoy preparing and eating a range of fresh fruits at snack time, with hot meals provided at lunch time. The children show they feel safe as they move around confidently and are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings knowing that the staff will respond positively to them. Children are very well-behaved and know what is expected of them because boundaries are consistently and kindly applied by staff. They delight in the praise and encouragement they receive from staff which builds their self-esteem and confidence further.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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