

Marlbrook Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY400942
Inspection date	25/03/2010
Inspector	Rachel Wyatt

Setting address	St. Lukes Church Hall, Braces Lane, Marlbrook, BROMSGROVE, Worcestershire, B60 1ED
Telephone number	07951 869175
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Marlbrook Pre-School is privately owned and was reregistered in 2009. It operates from the main hall in St. Luke's Church Centre, Marlbrook, Bromsgrove. The pre-school serves the local area and there is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term-time. Sessions are from 09.30am until 12.30pm on Monday and Friday and from 09.30am to 02.30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 40 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one member of staff who has Early Years Professional Status and the owner is working towards an Early Years Foundation Degree. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and provides funded early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The pre-school effectively recognises the individuality of each child so they are confident, resourceful and feel included and valued. Good partnerships with parents and the staff's positive relationships with children, ensure each child's needs are understood and successfully met. Children make good progress, they are well cared for, and their health and safety are fostered. The provider demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to maintain continuous improvement. For example, staff training and development, in the main, promotes the adults' confidence and ability to implement and monitor changes to assessment and planning. However, the provider lacks a consistent method for evaluating the pre-school's overall effectiveness so that priorities for improvement, including those relating to aspects of safeguarding, are not always promptly addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update the safeguarding children policy so that procedures relating to dealing with allegations against a member of staff fully reflect Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance
- improve consistency in staff's use of observations and assessments to identify children's individual learning priorities

- improve the organisation of the setting to include effective procedures to evaluate the provision and identify areas for improvement
- improve the organisation and management of children's indoor physical and free-play and the presentation of dressing up clothes and props for their imaginative play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are adequately safeguarded. The provider and staff, including the member of staff with designated responsibilities for safeguarding, have a satisfactory knowledge of how to protect children from harm. They have current local safeguarding procedures to refer to and some staff have attended relevant training. However, although the pre-school's child protection and other related safeguarding procedures have been reviewed and updated, the procedures for managing allegations against a member of staff are potentially misleading because they do not fully reflect current local guidance. In other respects children's welfare is effectively protected as required information is obtained about each child and their family so the manager and staff know who has parental responsibility for them and who may have legal contact with them. In addition, appropriate recruitment, induction and staff development procedures ensure that all those working with children are suitable and have the relevant knowledge and skills.

Since the pre-school has reregistered, the provider and staff have focussed on reviewing procedures to reflect changes in the organisation of the setting and to make stronger links between assessment and planning. As a result, the owner and staff confidently promote children's learning and development and ensure they are well cared for. There are systems for monitoring some aspects of the pre-school's provision, such as safety, children's progress and the effectiveness of activities, but there is limited evaluation of other aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This inhibits the provider from having an accurate appraisal of the setting's strengths and areas for development to use as a basis for driving improvement, including addressing any weaknesses, such as inaccuracies in key procedures. However, in the day-to-day running of the group the owner and staff support children well. Staff carry out their key person roles with increasing confidence and know children well. Children feel valued and included. Their ideas, preferences and interests are discussed and followed up as staff select toys and adapt activities to take account of their individual abilities, choices and learning styles. The care and learning environment is generally well-organised with rewarding group discussions, well-equipped focus activities and sociable snack and meal times. However, children's choices, spatial awareness and care for toys and equipment is not always fully promoted because some indoor, physical and free-play activities become untidy, and resources, such as dressing-up clothes, dolls and soft toys, are not invitingly stored or presented.

Children experience continuity of care and education because the provider and staff develop positive partnerships with parents and carers. They are well-informed about the range of experiences offered to their children and how the pre-school is registered and operates. They are encouraged to read policies and procedures,

including the complaints policy. Parents are warmly welcomed in the setting. They are encouraged to help settle their children and to contribute in various ways to their child's care and learning. For example, clear agreements between the setting and parents ensures children's specific care or learning needs are successfully met. The information parents provide when their child starts helps staff to get to know children, settle them and to plan appropriate activities. Thereafter, parents and staff regularly exchange information about children's learning and development. Newsletters and displays keep parents up-to-date about topics, special events and operational matters. They follow up their children's learning at home, for instance, via the book loan scheme, and help their children to find items to bring into pre-school, for example, to depict the letter of the week. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have effective support because the pre-school's special educational needs coordinator confidently carries out her duties, working effectively with parents and other agencies and services involved with children. The pre-school has some links with providers of other settings some children attend, including contact with local schools children move on to.

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

Children enjoy learning and make good progress. The provider and staff are welcoming and encouraging so children are keen to join in, know what is expected of them and usually remain involved and interested. Children are provided with rewarding topics, activities and resources, with an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which foster their active learning in all areas. Adults have a good understanding of children's differing abilities and interests as a result of their observations and interactions with them. There are some inconsistencies in identifying children's learning priorities, but the deputy manager is confident to assist colleagues in fully implementing new systems for tracking children's progress and linking the outcomes of observations to short term plans which incorporate children's next steps. Planning and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. The pre-school sensitively involves parents, working with them and other agencies to ensure each child has achievable targets and appropriate support and resources to promote their progress at their pace.

Children develop good skills for the future. They make choices about what they want to play with and their independence is fostered during snack and meal times, and personal care and hygiene routines. Children get on well, playing harmoniously and showing respect for each other's differing abilities and backgrounds. Their appreciation of the life and customs of others is fostered during well-organised French lessons and enjoyable activities focussing on different festivals, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children are helped to become articulate speakers and good listeners, with signing and visual prompts used to help those who lack confidence or clarity in speaking or who speak English as an additional language. Focussing on a letter of the week helps children to competently recognise and sound letters. They think critically, using and recognising numbers for counting and problem solving. Increasingly they accurately compare and match items according to type, colour, shape and size. Children are interested in how things work, change and react, for example, during construction play with cogs and wheels, or as they

mix the ingredients to make chocolate 'nests'. They are imaginative and creative, exploring dough to make pretend food, acting out roles at the 'work bench', and expressing their ideas through their paintings, drawings, collages and models.

Children's welfare is successfully promoted. Their care, health, dietary and cultural needs are understood and effectively met. Children have prompt and appropriate treatment from first aid trained staff if they have an accident, become unwell or need medication. Appropriate records are kept of these and shared with parents, who are also well-informed of any cases of infectious diseases. Children develop a sound awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They adopt good hygiene practices, for instance knowing why it is important to wash their hands and wear an apron during cooking activities. They make healthy choices about what to eat and drink, helping themselves to drinks of water after exercise. They are able to be physically active and enjoy regular outdoor play. They confidently balance, climb and move in different ways, although their spatial awareness is not always encouraged during indoor physical play. It is clear children feel emotionally safe and secure in the pre-school, having positive relationships with the staff who value, praise and encourage them. Children are, in the main, successfully taught how to keep themselves safe, for instance, talking about safety matters and the correct use of equipment, such as climbing frames and scissors. As part of topics they enjoy visits from the police and fire fighters and they take part in practise evacuation drills. Children are looked after in suitable and secure indoor and outside places, with risk assessments used to monitor and maintain safety.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

