

Mere Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 11/02/2010
Inspector Gail Robertson

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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).

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.

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Description of the setting

Mere Pre-School Nursery moved to its present site in Mere School, Mere, Wiltshire in September 2005. It was previously known as Mere Playgroup and operated from the youth centre. The nursery operates from a classroom in the school and children have access to an outside play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open Monday - Thursday 9am until 3pm, Friday 9am until 12pm during school term times. The nursery is run by a voluntary parent management committee. There are currently 29 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these 23 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, including the town and rural area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs four staff, of whom three hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a great family nursery. Children are safe, happy and industrious. Staff work hard, show great care for children and plan a fun programme to meet their interests and most of their needs. Parents quite rightly reported that they knew their children thrived here and they made good progress in their learning and social skills. The committee and staff are determined that the nursery will get even better in what they offer their stakeholders. The manager and the deputy have built a happy welcoming place where everyone is equally respected.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- carry out a risk assessment for the hard area used for outdoor play when the grassed area is wet
- build on the self-evaluation process to assist the monitoring and development of the setting
- to enrich children's learning, ensure that all activities contain opportunities for challenging more able children in order to accelerate their development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well because they are protected by thorough policies and procedures, which the staff fully uphold and put into practice. For example, the provider ensures children are safe when they go for a walk to the host school to watch the Christmas activities. Children are often involved in the daily safety checks and learn how to be safe in their environment. When outside, the staff are

most vigilant, but on the day of the inspection due to wet slippery grass being unsuitable for wheeled toys, an alternative area was set up. This area, adjacent to the school car park, was coned off and a member of staff was stationed here, but no risk assessment made.

The manager and deputy continually evaluate and review what they offer the children to make sure improvements made benefit all children. They know the strengths and the areas to develop and have just made a start on the Ofsted evaluation form to support them. They are keen to get on with the job and have identified management time to do so. The management committee actively support staff's continuous development and the manager has a log of the training taken and all certificates gained are proudly displayed in the activity room. After the last inspection, the staff and committee immediately addressed the recommendations and they are now part of the nursery's practice, for example the reorganisation of group times.

Staff fully embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage documentation and requirements. One of the successes of this has been 'the learning journeys' kept on each child. The manager commented on the value of the learning diaries and praised the staff for their hard work. Parents love these diaries and often contribute to them. As one said 'It is wonderful to see my child's progress and achievements, his work and photographs'.

The staff are an effective and efficient team, guiding children and planning their next learning steps. There are occasions when the more able and mature children are not challenged enough such as during the 'show and tell' sessions and carpet discussion time. All children's interests are met in this high quality provision. The manager asks children what they would like the role play area to become after half term. Much to the delight of many a decision is made to have a garage. Everyone contributes to the list of resources needed for 'Mere Garage'. This is a most inclusive setting where children and adults are fully respected at all times.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents appreciate the welcoming and approachable staff, the information they receive and the care and devotion given to their children. There are excellent links with the host primary school and children have little worry at transfer time. The pre-school prepares children well to become members of the community as they are involved in many activities that the village organises.

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

All children are provided with an excellent range of activities to help them learn and develop. They thoroughly enjoy these activities. One child said, 'I like playing, painting, drawing, sand, singing and everything'. They quickly become absorbed in their learning, progress rapidly, concentrate for long periods of time and are prepared to share what they have learnt with their friends. In a music session they sang, learnt to play percussion instruments correctly, listened to the tune and managed to sing the correct words and with gusto. They had fun learning and

performing together. Story time is special. When a story was told about 'Mrs Honey's Hat' great tension was built up before the teacher read the story, with Mrs Honey the puppet. Children developed anticipation and deep concentration to help them follow the story.

Children rise to the praise given them by the staff for their good behaviour and good attention to the tasks. They know the Golden Rules and respond to staff's expectations of them. They are independent and confident. The planned daily programme is flexible so that staff can respond to children's ideas and interests, but it is always firmly based on what children can do and the next learning steps.

The outside area is not large, but maximum use is made of it and children love learning here. They do not have free flow access but go outside for a blocked period of time, always under the watchful eye of the caring staff. Children manoeuvre the wheeled toys with great agility and speed. They know that they must be careful of others, to be considerate and share the resources. They do not notice the bitterly cold wind as they have put on outside clothes and shoes and use a great amount of physical energy. They confidently run, jump and pedal the toys. Children help to create a safe and welcoming place. They are clear about how to take care of themselves and each other.

Snack time is used not only as a time to learn about healthy eating and hygiene, but also a time to try different foods such as noodles for Chinese New Year, to learn to count and recognise words and sounds, and to just talk to their friends and the staff. Lunchtime is a social occasion with staff enjoying their nourishment at the same time. There is an exchange of what their boxes contain and what they really like, there is no mention of sweets and chocolates.

Children are happy and contented here. They have a great start to their school life and their learning journey. They have an enjoyable active time and learn to be part of a working community in which everyone counts and matters.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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