

Mere Green 0-5

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

16/03/2010

Inspector

Karen Cooper

Setting address

Mere Green Community Centre, Mere Green Road, Sutton
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Telephone number

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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.

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

Mere Green Pre-School has been operating for 35 years and was reregistered in the existing building in 2003. It operates from a large hall on the ground floor of the Mere Green Community Centre and library in Sutton Coldfield. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area available for play. The setting serves the local and surrounding areas.

The setting is open from 9.30am until 12.00pm during school term-time only. An additional two afternoon sessions are provided on a Wednesday and Friday between 12.30pm and 02.45pm. The setting is registered to care for 25 children in the early years age group. There are currently 42 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting receives funding for early education.

There are nine members of staff employed to work with the children on a part-time and full-time basis. All of the staff hold an early years qualification, with several staff holding a teaching qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, settled and confident. Outcomes for all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attending this welcoming, stimulating setting are outstanding. Staff recognise the uniqueness of every child attending and their individuality is highly respected. Excellent partnerships between parents, providers and other agencies ensure children's needs are well-met. Improving quality is at the core of this setting's aims of ensuring better education and care for all children attending. Documentation is well-organised and regularly reviewed. All staff, parents and children are included in the self-evaluation process and staff demonstrate an extremely positive attitude towards continuous improvement. Consequently, the capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensuring the complaints procedure includes Ofsted's correct contact details.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a high regard to safeguarding and protecting children. They have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding issues and receive regular training to ensure their knowledge is up to date. Children are further safeguarded by robust recruitment and vetting procedures. The setting has excellent systems for ensuring the safety of children and the premises at all times. Clear risk assessments cover all aspects of the setting and outings, and staff are knowledgeable about relevant legislation, ensuring positive steps are taken to minimise risks to children. There are extremely effective staffing levels resulting in an outstanding standard of care and excellent levels of support to enable children to participate in all activities. Children are grouped effectively, using a key worker system; this helps promote consistency and enables staff to build effective relationships. As a consequence, the staff know individual children extremely well which helps to ensure children feel secure and confident to be left with trusted adults.

The manager leads by example and is enthusiastic and passionate about her role in raising outcomes for children. Staff work very effectively as a motivated team who are committed to offering excellent quality childcare and the best possible start to children and their families. Staff are excellent role models and set high standards which are embedded across all areas of practice. The processes for managing staff's professional development are well-established to support their future development. All staff are well-experienced working with young children and hold an appropriate childcare qualification, with some staff holding a teaching certificate. Staff are fully committed to improvement and they consistently reflect and evaluate the quality of care and education provided, taking prompt action to successfully address recommendations from the previous inspection. Staff are not complacent but aspire continually to do better. Children benefit and thrive in the setting because the environment, both indoors and out, is conducive to learning and is organised creatively so children can choose to extend their play and develop their independence. A stimulating, child orientated, well equipped environment successfully reflects children's backgrounds and the wider community. All children are valued and engage in a wide range of activities and experiences, which help them to learn about and understand the society in which they live.

The setting has established highly positive relationships with parents and carers. Staff actively encourage parents and carers to visit the setting at any time. They promote parental participation on a rota system and provide parents with clear and meaningful tasks to undertake. Parents are provided with a comprehensive range of clear and concise information about the setting, including a wide range of policies and procedures, regular newsletters and a welcome pack. However, the complaints procedure does not include the regulators correct contact details. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child, particularly when they first start to attend and regular consultation meetings provide opportunities for fuller discussion about their child's progress. Questionnaires are often used to gain feedback and any suggestion from parents are acted on if necessary. It is evident from discussions with parents that they appreciate and are

extremely supportive of the setting. 'Staff are fabulous, caring and approachable', exclaimed one parent. Overall, the parental voice is overwhelmingly positive. Many echo the sentiments of each other who said 'They would recommend the setting from the highest roof top', 'The setting is inviting for children with lot of activities on offer' and 'The children have made so much progress since being at the setting'. This pleasure in the setting is reflected in the waiting list for places.

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

Children immensely enjoy attending this very welcoming setting. This is reflected in the children's enjoyment of learning and their keen involvement in a wide range of age-appropriate toys, resources and activities. As a result, children make significant gains in all aspects of their learning and development in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Staff have a very good understanding of the learning and development requirements and how young children learn and progress. They take positive steps to find out what interests each child and how much they know and can do. Assessment through observations is rigorous and seen as integral to supporting children's progress. The information gained from observations is used to effectively monitor children's progress and help to plan the next step in children's learning. Staff plan a very wide variety of interesting and challenging activities supported by quality resources.

Children are eager to join in with the activities and enjoy taking responsibility for choosing what they want to do. There is a very good balance of adult-led and child-led activities that result in children being active learners, creative and able to think critically. Staff interaction is excellent and children work exceptionally well independently, and with their peers. Children respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. They show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. Children are very keen to share their knowledge of numbers when counting in descending order as they imaginatively prepare their spaceship for blast off. They enthusiastically talk about the taste, texture and smell of jelly and recognise the differences when water is added to the jelly cube. Great fun is had when the children compare the jelly to Alien gunge. Place mats are used as a good opportunity for children to recognise their own name and there are excellent opportunities for them to practise their mark-making skills, including drawing, colouring, chalking, painting and information technology equipment. Children enjoy singing songs and listen intently to familiar stories. They have access to an inviting book area and frequently visit the library to help develop their love of books. The opportunities for children to take part in outdoor activities and use equipment to develop their physical abilities are excellent. Children learn about the importance of fresh air and physical exercise because excellent attention is given to children's physical development. They access the well-equipped outdoor area in all weathers and also benefit from a range of activities outside the setting. They go for walks to the shops, park and around the local community. Staff plan these activities well and use them effectively as opportunities to help children's learning, for example, collecting leaves for rubbing and discovering about the world around them. Their knowledge of the world around them is further extended as they discuss what a planetarium is and enjoy planting bulbs and vegetables and watching them grow.

Children's creativity is fully supported with a superb variety of resources for collage, art and craft, music and movement, role play and dressing-up.

Children have formed very strong relationships with staff and each other and are happy and settled. They willingly share and take turns and there are lots of opportunities for children to play alongside each other. High quality staff interaction and exemplary organisation of routines help all children to gain a strong sense of security. Staff are highly skilled and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. Consequently, children demonstrate exceptionally positive behaviour and high levels of self-control. Children are helped to consider and value diversity and cultural differences through a very good range of toys, resources and planned topics. The setting promotes inclusion for all children through keeping thorough records of each child's individual needs and all aspects of their progress. Staff have attended relevant training and work closely with parents other relevant professionals to ensure that each child's need are fully met.

The learning environment is bright, welcoming and child friendly, affording children plenty of space to play, eat and rest in comfort. Children have free-flow access to toilet facilities which fosters their ability to manage their personal care needs and help develop their independent skills. Excellent attention is given to preventing the spread of infection and children demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines. All children develop a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe through their understanding of daily routines. They learn about fire safety and know the procedure for evacuation in an emergency which the staff regularly practise with them. Staff explain potential hazards to children, for example, not to throw sand and not to run indoors. Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating; they are provided with a variety of fresh and dried fruit at snack time and can access drinking water throughout the day. Mealtimes are relaxed social occasions when children sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each others company. Staff are fully aware of each child's individual dietary needs and ensure these are met.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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	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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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