

Mereworth Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Mereworth Pre-School has been established for over 25 years. It operates from a single storey village hall in the village of Mereworth, near West Malling. The premises are in a quiet residential area of Mereworth village. The group have sole use of the premises and serves the local area. It operates from two rooms within the hall, with access to storage areas, a kitchen and toilets. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The group opens five mornings and two afternoons a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:30am until 12:00pm and 12:30pm until 3:00pm. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 56 children aged between two and five years on roll. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs, disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are 12 staff who work with the children. Two of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 4, five staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. There are four staff working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The unique needs of every child is highly promoted and all staff unquestionably succeed in meeting children's learning and welfare needs. Staff's knowledge of how each child learns is competently reflected in the quality of provision provided and the effective implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ensures outcomes for children are extremely well promoted. The strong partnerships with parents and other services enables the specific needs of children to be met. The entire staff team demonstrate a commitment and enthusiasm towards the continuous development of the provision through efficient self-evaluation systems, ensuring weaknesses are identified and immediately acted upon. Therefore, children are making excellent progress in their learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend existing communication systems with parents who are working or busy to ensure they are fully aware of their child's progress

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Whilst at pre-school, children are exceptionally well protected due to the high priority given to safeguarding children. All staff have a thorough understanding of procedures regarding any concerns about the children in their care. Some staff have attended up-to-date extensive training. They effectively share new information with the staff team and inspire them to implement good practices, therefore ensuring children's safety is paramount. All staff working with the children have relevant checks carried out, such as with the Criminal Record Bureau and references when they join the setting. Therefore only suitable adults work with the children. Consistent risk assessments and checks are in place to ensure children play in a safe and secure environment. Children feel safe and secure due to welcoming and familiar staff members.

The managers are excellent motivators for all staff, who demonstrate their dedication through highly effective and comprehensive setting development systems. Recommendation from previous inspections are immediately acted upon and considered a positive aspect of sustaining ambitious targets. Therefore, the provision strives to provide continuously improving opportunities for children. Staff are encouraged to identify areas within their own practices and within the pre-school setting to develop, change or adapt. Regular parental questionnaires and support from outside agencies help monitor the effectiveness of the provision. Therefore enabling children to benefit fully from the provision offered.

Children have access to an extremely varied and extensive range of good quality and well maintained resources. Staff are flexible and use their initiative well to ensure that children are sensitively and suitably supervised through the session. They observe and react according to children's individual needs to offer resourceful support to other staff and children alike. For example, when a child asks for their key person to look at their painting in the other room, other staff are quick to respond and supervise the remaining children effectively. Resources and equipment are used imaginatively to commit to sustainability by adapting its use for other purposes, such as using the climbing frame covered by the parachute for role play.

The setting highly promotes inclusive practice for all children. Children are valued as individuals and this is substantially reflected through the children's respect for each other's differences. Staff have a clear understanding and knowledge of children's backgrounds and ensure their practice, resources and activities promote positive images of diversity. For example, the use of a language pen for children with English as an additional language, as well as responding to children using key words in their home language.

Partnerships with parents are good. An effective range of verbal, written and displayed information about children's welfare and learning is shared with parents and carers on an ongoing basis. Parents and children together are actively encouraged to share information from home that is effectively used to extend children's interests within the setting. Parents communicate their confidence in the

care that their children receive at the setting and are consistently involved in making joint decision in their children's ongoing development. Some children's daily experiences are successfully and reciprocally shared between the setting and parents through a contact book, particularly those with communication difficulties. However, this is not always extended to those parents who do not have daily contact with the setting, due to work commitments, relying on other carers to share relevant information. Staff show a professional dedication to liaising with other agencies and specialist to ensure the continuity of care and practices for individual children's specific needs. The setting has close and purposeful links with local schools to promote professional partnerships and children's confident transitions to full-time education.

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

Children participate in and enjoy an extensive range of exciting, challenging opportunities in the pre-school due to the very effective provision of activities and equipment made accessible by the staff. Children freely move around the setting, indoors and outdoors, making independent choices to engage in activities that reflect their interests and needs. Children are enthralled by new experiences, such as building a 3D dinosaur out of large boxes, and using their imagination and selected resources to express their creative flair. Children gain an excellent understanding of mathematical language through all activities, such as describing animals and dinosaurs as "really high" and "higher than me". They confidently count and demonstrate their extended abilities by calculating one more and one less through practical activities such as cutting shapes out of dough. Children show exceptional skills throughout physical activities, learning to safely climb over an A frame. This also demonstrates their determination to achieve, which is highly promoted through staff's excellent support and encouragement.

Opportunities to extend their vocabulary and communication skills are fully promoted throughout the setting, such as using Makaton to sign and sing songs. Many labels throughout the setting are written in dual languages, helping children to understand that print carries a meaning and can be written in different ways. Children learn to recognise familiar letters and words through labelling and the use of name cards, such as on children's coat pegs and for self registration. Younger children have additional support through pictorial aids. Children demonstrate very high levels of concentration at activities, with very young children remaining totally absorbed for 10 minutes and more, for instance, threading buttons and reels. This is due to the excellent levels of interaction and effective questioning from staff. Children learn about technology through a varied and ever growing range of programmable toys and activities, such as remote control cars and the laptop. Children show an immense sense of pride, openly sharing their achievements with staff and their peers. Activities such as these help to extend children's skills and promote their abilities for future learning. However, the communication systems between some parents and the setting sometimes restricts the opportunity for a small amount of children to share their achievements with those parents who have limited daily contact with the setting.

Staff provide a secure, purposeful, practical and flexible planning system that highly promotes and reflects individual children's stages of learning and development. The exceptional organisation of the education programme reflects rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meets the needs of all children exceedingly well and allows them to flourish. This results in children developing to their highest potential. Thorough observations, including the use of photographs, are used to record children's progress, linking their achievement to areas of learning and their stages of development. This information is consistently used to effectively plan for children's daily next steps of development. Children take part in a wealth of balanced, child-initiated and adult-led play, which encourages children to think for themselves and make independent choices. Therefore, children influence their own learning and development.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to choose between play inside and outside, benefiting from fresh air. They take part in stimulating and fulfilling physical exercise, particularly through the use of large equipment such as bikes, scooters, climbing frames and A-frames. Children learn about healthy foods at snack time through discussion and making choices. They choose when to eat and drink through an effective snack bar system, that allows them to independently choose from a varied range of healthy snacks and drinks. Children can access and request fresh drinking water at any time throughout the session in both rooms. Staff are fully aware of children's dietary needs and encourage children to take part in social snack times, with specific regard to good manners, such as listening to each other and taking turns. Most staff hold a current first aid certificate and have permission for emergency medical treatment if necessary. Staff have received specific training with regard to children's individual medical needs; such as the use of an Epi-pen.

Children show a high sense of safety within the setting towards themselves and others. They are confident to ask for help when it is required, even through their friends. Even new children in the setting demonstrate a strong sense of belonging and settle quickly and confidently. This is due to the familiar and regular routine, as well as the welcoming and reassuring attitude of the staff. Very effective behaviour management systems that promote positive reinforcement are implemented to support all children, such as continuous praise, encouragement and acknowledgment of children's excellent behaviour, as well as acts of kindness to each other. They learn to respect their peers by taking turns and sharing, through creative timing systems initiated by both staff and children.

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	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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	2
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

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