



## **Marsworth Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 151294

**Inspection date** 27 January 2006

**Inspector** Ann Hilary Guy

**Setting Address** Marsworth Millennium Hall, 3 Vicarage Road, Marsworth, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 4LR

**Telephone number** 01296 660919 or mobile 07952 557041

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Marsworth Pre-School

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marsworth Pre-School is a committee run group. It registered in 1972 and operates from the Millennium Hall in Marsworth.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open four days a week, with sessions from 09.00 to 11.30, 11:30 to 12.30 and 12.30 to 15.00, school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. Children come from the local area. The group is able to support children who speak English as an additional language or have special needs.

The group employs four staff. Three of the staff, including the play leader, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards furthering her qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. All children wash their hands before eating, after taking part in a messy activity and after going to the toilet. Sound procedures are in place for nappy changing that protect the child's privacy and prevent any possibility of cross infection. Clear documentation and procedures support a child who has had an accident, requires medication or is unwell. No provision is made for children to sleep; however, cushions are available for any child requiring a rest during the session.

Children receive good quantities of food and drink at snack time; lots of freshly prepared fruit ensures children are always offered healthy options. Parents receive very clear guidelines to enable them provide a healthy lunch box for their child. Children enjoy the social aspect of all meals, supported by the staff, who sit with the children to have their lunch. Children have regular breaks throughout the day for food and drink, and additional drinks are available on request. The small outdoor area is very well used, with an assortment of balls, hoops, sand and wheeled toys. The variety of equipment meets the needs of all the children.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The warm, secure and child-focused environment ensures children remain safe and well cared for at all times. The premises are well organised to enable children to have plenty of space to get full benefit from the toys and equipment. Space in the large hall is very versatile, giving plenty of room for tabletop and floor activities together with physical and large group activities. A smaller room is used for group work and quiet activities. Children can play safely both inside and outside the building with daily risk assessment carried out and strategies in place, especially regarding the use of the toilet, to ensure the children's safety at all times. A wide variety of good quality, safe toys and equipment are available for the children. These are pre-selected by the staff, with no self-selection available, although provision is made for children to request specific toys.

Children's safety is paramount and staff take all possible steps to ensure risks are minimised. Regular fire practices are held, at different times to include all children. A

clear registration system shows who is present in the building at all times, including visitors. Staff protect children very well. They have a clear current knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures to follow regarding child protection.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children's needs are well met by the activities provided. Staff are working towards including the Birth to Three Framework for the youngest children, although it is currently not shown within the plans. Children feel confident and secure in the staff's care and quickly settle into the activities. They are beginning to develop independence, putting on their coats before going outside and dealing with their own needs when going to the toilet. Children enjoy playing together and are very interested in all the activities. Play opportunities include much experiential play, discovering the texture and properties of dough or corn flour, plus daily opportunities to develop their manipulative and imaginative skills, using construction and small-world toys, together with a wide variety of puzzles. These all help develop the children's skills, knowledge and understanding.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are actively involved in their learning, they are confident, sometimes playing alone, other times in small groups or with staff. A very high standard of support and guidance is given to the children, enabling them to develop their knowledge and understanding in all six areas of learning. Their progress is clearly documented against the stepping-stones. This is linked to records of regular observations and used when planning to ensure that next steps of learning for each child are included within the plans. Planning is clearly linked to the foundation stage and stepping-stones, with focus activities sometimes identifying children who would especially benefit from the activity. Both the focus activities and daily plans are constructively evaluated, enabling staff to consider their previous findings when planning similar activities in the future. All this ensures children receive a rich and varied curriculum, closely linked to the Foundation Stage, and meeting the needs of all children, regardless of ability.

Children learn through a wide variety of free-play activities, enabling them to explore all curriculum areas. They have good relationships with all staff and some are developing peer friendship groups. Children showed developing skills and concentration as they carefully iced biscuits, using a knife, then decorated them with sweets, discussing colour and texture with the member of staff. Others demonstrated their skills of observation as they tried to paint a tree, using sponge print leaves and a brown paint for the trunk and branches. This activity stimulated much descriptive language as children talked to the member of staff. However, time management, especially during the morning session, means children are limited in the amount of time they have to explore all the free-play opportunities.

Children are happy, confident and very settled. They all communicate well and are learning to mark make using a wide variety of different media. Many opportunities are given for them to count and relate numbers to numerals. They compare and problem

solve in every day situations and are developing a sound awareness of weight, volume and measure. Children learn about their local community and the wider world through their topics. They show curiosity when discovering about living things, plants, animals and bugs. Children have many opportunities both indoors and outdoors to enjoy large physical movements, using the parachute, balls and hoops. They also have plenty of opportunities to develop their spatial awareness through games and music and movement. Their imaginative skills are well developed through effective use made of small-world play and the extensive range of dressing up clothes and role-play activities. Children enjoy listening to stories, singing songs enthusiastically and partaking in other musical activities.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel a strong sense of belonging to this very child-centred and family orientated group. Staff work very closely and effectively with the parents to ensure the children's needs are fully met. Children have access to a superb range of toys and equipment, including some beautiful dressing up costumes that reflect different cultures. They discover about other countries through the wide variety of stimulating topics. Children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions throughout the day, supported by staff that know them extremely well and respect their individuality. Children with special needs are fully included and extremely well supported, enabling full access to all activities. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure all children's needs are effectively met. Children demonstrate an extremely good understanding of responsible behaviour and the pre-school rules, knowing right from wrong. They behave very well and enjoy the variety of active and quieter times incorporated into the session. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. The voluntary committee of parents is extremely supportive and works closely with the staff to ensure children have a wide variety of experiences and are extremely well cared for. Children greatly benefit from this positive relationship and the extremely good communication links ensure consistent and supportive care is given at all times. Parents welcome the opportunities to discuss their child's progress at open evenings and other events throughout the year, with some expressing their thanks and suggestions to the staff in a parent comment book. Newsletters and notices, together with the opportunity to chat to staff at the beginning and end of each session and to help on a regular basis, ensure parents are fully involved.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff have a very high regard for children's welfare, creating a very positive, extended family atmosphere. The staff team work well together and through their regular evaluations look at ways to improve their practice. Leadership and Management are good. The voluntary committee of parents, together with the senior staff, ensure

consistency throughout. Policies, procedures and all required paperwork underpin the care and are regularly updated and reviewed. However, staff records do not show all the required details. Staff are supported and encouraged to further their training and knowledge in order to offer the children the best possible care and a wide variety of learning opportunities.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the group have made a written statement available to parents telling them how to complain to Ofsted. This is in both the policy booklet and the parents information file. A poster is also displayed showing the relevant telephone number. They have also obtained written permission from all the parents to enable them to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for their child. This is securely stored with the child's confidential paperwork and ensures children will receive the best possible care in an emergency.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure a record is maintained that shows staff's suitability for their role, including evidence of clearances and references.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- consider time management, particularly during the morning session, to ensure it enables all children the opportunity to fully develop their play in both an age and developmentally appropriate way.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)