



Milton Keynes Preparatory School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284818
Inspection date	23 February 2006
Inspector	Patricia Joan Latham

Setting Address	Milton Keynes Preparatory School, Tattenhoe Lane, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK3 7EG
Telephone number	01908 642111
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Registered person	Pauley Group Ltd.
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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.

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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The nursery unit at Milton Keynes Preparatory School has been operating since 1975, and has been registered with Ofsted since 2004. It is part of a chain of independent schools owned and managed by the Pauley Group Ltd. It is sited in a purpose built building in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. It comprises of a separate nursery unit for children under 2 years of age, and 3 other rooms for the use of 2 to 3 year olds, within the school building which caters for children 2 years to 11 years. The unit,

which is on the ground floor, consists of six areas plus toilet/changing rooms and has its own fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open from 07:30 to 18:30 Monday to Friday for 46 weeks of the year.

There are currently 147 children on roll between the ages of 0 to 5 years. Of these 64 receive funding for nursery education.

There are 13 staff caring for the children, 9 of them have a recognised childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children remain healthy through the staff's adherence to good health and hygiene practise. They keep all areas, which children use, clean and encourage children to pay attention to personal hygiene, such as wiping noses and regular washing of hands. The exclusion of children with infectious illness, and provision of separate bedding for each child, helps minimise the risk of cross infection. There are suitably trained staff available to deal with medical emergencies and to administer any medication a child might need. Staff record all accidents, however it is not clear from records that parents are always informed.

Children receive nutritious food to maintain their health. The provision offers a varied menu, which includes healthy snacks, a cooked, well-balanced meal at midday, and regular drinks. Staff are made aware of any allergies a child may have and all dietary needs are catered for.

Children have many opportunities for outdoor exercise which helps maintain their wellbeing. They also take part in planned activities to develop physical skills. All ages have access to outside play areas; babies have appropriate space to crawl and resources to encourage walking; older children have both indoor and outdoor equipment to help them develop climbing, balancing skills and to gain an understanding of space around them. Children also take part in activities to aid their co-ordination, such as musical movement and the use of larger sports equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Displays of children's work make the provision bright and attractive, and safety arrangements for younger children, such as safety gates and high handles on doors, ensure areas are secure. Visitors log in using varying recording systems, which do not make it easy to identify exactly who is on the premises. Staff supervise children closely and explain the importance of following safe practice, for example explaining to children how to use sports equipment properly. They follow clear child protection procedures to safeguard

children's welfare and all staff are suitably checked to work with children.

There is an excellent range of good quality resources available for all children. This includes ample equipment for babies and appropriate toys to aid their development. Older children have free access to resources that supports their play and learning. Staff provide a variety of toys throughout the day to maintain children's interest. There are toys, which aid imaginative and creative play, plus resources with which children can build and construct and practise their physical skills.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy and secure within the provision. Staff working with younger children use their knowledge of Birth to three matters to plan activities which enable children to become competent learners and skilful communicators. Staff link activities into interesting themes, which make learning fun. Children explore the colour red whilst playing with red objects in red water and making shapes out of red play dough. Other children hunt for animals buried in sand, do collages of jungle animals, and make a bear cave, whilst following the theme of animals. Children form a close relationship with staff who encourage them to become confident and independent. Children choose their own resources and eagerly take part in group activities. Staff interact well with the children, joining in with their play and encouraging them to socialise, for example, whilst having lunch. They cuddle children when they are tired or upset, and, although they encourage children to follow daily routines, such as sleeping after lunch, they will provide for those children who do not wish to do so.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress in all areas of learning and enjoy the stimulating program of activities that staff offer. Staff adapt activities to meet children's individual learning needs, offering group work, as well as one to one support, to promote learning. They are skilful in finding ways of engaging children in activities and use time and resources wisely to make learning fun. Children are encouraged to practise reading, writing and number skills each day and are all making very good progress in letter formation and recognising simple words. Children play number games, recreate repeating patterns with beads and measure the ingredients when doing cookery. Children observe and examine the world around them. They go bug hunting and pond dipping whilst at the school farm, identify differing leaves and find out the names of the birds who visit the bird feeders they have made.

Children find out about the lives of others, taking part in a range of cultural festivals and making visits out into the community. Whilst visiting a restaurant they help make their own pizzas to eat for lunch and whilst finding out about American Indians they make a tepee, feather headdresses and shields. Children use their imagination to design and create models, to draw and paint, and when taking part in role-play. They have the opportunity to use an extensive range of malleable materials including clay, sand and wet compost.

All children are competent at using computers and are skilful at controlling the mouse. They are also confident in other physical skills, taking part in planned activities which enable them to practise jumping, climbing, balancing and aiming skills.

Children are confident, concentrate well and take a pride in their work. They enjoy extending their knowledge and often ask staff for more challenging work. They play well together, help each other with activities and behave extremely well.

Staff know children's capabilities, they offer very good support to children who have English as an additional language, and monitor all children's progress carefully. Staff use progress records to plan activities, ensuring all children are working to their full potential.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are developing high self-esteem and a respect for others. The ethnic diversity of children who attend enriches the setting and helps raise all children's understanding of differing cultures and lifestyles. Staff build on this to promote an equal opportunities environment which includes all children in activities and values everyone's contribution. Children are eager to undertake responsibilities, helping staff prepare for snack, or lead other children out to play. Overall, this fosters children's spiritual, moral, cultural and social development well.

Staff have experience of caring for children with special needs and adapt the environment, and activities, accordingly.

Children's behaviour is good and they play and work together harmoniously. Children take part in activities, which develop skills in sharing and negotiating, and staff encourage children to be polite at all times.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. They receive regular feedback from staff each day and are given information via room notice boards, and regular newsletters, regarding activities taking place. Staff complete a daily diary for babies under one and other children have a message book, by which staff and parents can pass on individual information. All parents are able to see their child's progress records at any time, and parents of older children have the opportunity to discuss their child's educational progress on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to share in their child's learning, for example, by supporting children's reading skills at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall the organisation of the provision is good. Staff are suitably trained and follow clear policies and procedures to keep children safe, healthy and happy. They plan the activity program in advance and attend regular meetings to discuss and evaluate it in order to make improvements. Most documentation is completed accurately,

although registers do not clearly identify which members of staff are present, in each room, throughout the day to maintain required ratios. All paperwork is stored securely to protect children's confidential information, and is retained for the prescribed length of time.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. Staff are highly organised and deploy themselves well to support children's learning. They plan interesting and stimulating activities, which ensures children make rapid progress in all areas of learning. The observation and evaluation of children's attainment is recorded clearly to show ongoing progress. Staff use this effectively to plan for children's individual learning needs.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following visits made after registration, the provider has made improvements to the system used for recording children's attendance to ensure accurate records are maintained. Room staff complete registers by 9.00 and any children arriving, or leaving, after this are recorded by staff in the office. Staff working in each room are entered on the tea register. However this does not include names of all those working with children that day, which is a potential risk to children's safety.

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.

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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 accident recordings indicate that information has been shared with parents
- establish a procedure to identify which staff members are working in each room throughout the day.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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