

Merriott Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 162080 |
| Inspection date | 01/12/2010 |
| Inspector | Jacquie Allen |
| Setting address | Church Street, Merriott, Somerset, TA16 5PT |
| Telephone number | 01460 77922 |
| Email | |
| 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).

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Description of the setting

Merriott Pre- school is situated in premises on the playing fields of Merriott First School. The pre-school is open each morning from 9.00am - 11.30am and afternoons between 12.30pm - 3.00pm. The pre-school also hold a lunch club each day from 11.30am -12.30pm. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. The group have sole use of the premises which include a small kitchen area and toilets. There is a large grassed/astro turf playing area with raised beds for gardening activities, complete with a large bike track and a patio area with sand pit. There are eight members of staff who work with the children on a regular basis, as well as a relief member of staff. All are qualified and experienced or are working towards qualifications in child care. The supervisor has a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in early years care and education. There are no children attending with special educational needs or English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The system for evaluating the provision fails to identify several welfare requirements which are not met. This impacts on children's health and safety and the pre-school's ability to make continuous improvement is weak as a result. Although partnerships with the school and other providers and agencies are strong, gaps in documentation impact on information obtained from parents, so that children's individual needs are not met.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

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| • ensure that adults looking after children are suitable to do so | 15/12/2010 |
| • take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum, with particular regard to staff handbags | 15/12/2010 |
| • ensure that prior written permission for each and every medicine is obtained from parents before any medication is given | 15/12/2010 |
| • ensure that information about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child is obtained from parents in advance of a child being admitted to the provision | 15/12/2010 |

- ensure that a written record of complaints and their outcomes is kept

15/12/2010

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further promote children's good health by reviewing systems to minimize the risk of cross infection, particularly at snack time and to help children learn about good personal hygiene practices.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have completed the appropriate safeguarding training and have a clear understanding of what to do if they have concerns about children in their care. Staff are aware of the correct procedure to follow if allegations are made against them. Recruitment procedures are not effective at ensuring staff's suitability, which places children at risk. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement. New staff work with children before references have been sought and Criminal Record Bureau checks in place, with no system to show that this has been applied for. Risk assessments are in place for the premises and individual outings, which sometimes lack detail. However, although the building risk assessment refers to staff handbags being in a locker, staff do not follow this procedure because the bags are actually readily accessible on the floor of the toilet for the disabled. This places children at risk and is a breach of a specific legal requirement because staff are not taking all reasonable steps to ensure hazards to children are kept to a minimum. Staff do not effectively monitor the system to record children's medication needs, which means that children have been given medication without written parental consent. This is a breach of a welfare requirement and puts children at risk. Other welfare requirements which are not met relate to obtaining information from parents on who has parental rights and legal access and keeping an appropriate written record of a complaint and the outcome. Despite this, the building is secure, daily registers of children, staff and visitors are accurately completed and staff hold valid first aid certificates to ensure children's minor accidents are appropriately treated.

The pre-school has had staff changes in recent times which has made them focus more on ensuring children are happy and settled, rather than fully evaluating the provision to check welfare requirements are met. However, they have a positive approach to meeting these. Staff provide a welcoming environment for children with good access to a wide range of interesting toys, from tables or low-level storage units. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure children can play outside, enjoy snack or engage in activities with the appropriate support of trained staff. However, staff have not taken steps to ensure that all rooms are safe for them to access, such as, the disabled toilet. Posters, puzzles, books and activities all ensure that diversity is positively reflected. Girls and boys have equal access to resources and activities of their choosing and often play together. Staff value children as individuals and know their key children well through working with parents. The pre-school holds an open day so that new children and parents have an opportunity to visit the group before they start, which then helps them to settle

quickly. Staff also plan more formal times for parents to talk to their child's key person as well as through daily verbal communication, which aids the two-way flow of communication. However, issues with obtaining necessary information and consents impacts of the effectiveness of the partnership in ensuring children's needs are met. The group has strong links with the school which results in lots of ongoing visits between the pre-school and reception children; such visits aid the transition to school well.

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

Children's learning and development is compromised by breaches in welfare requirements which impacts on their health and safety. Children are familiar with daily routines and settle happily, displaying high levels of concentration and confidence when engaged in activities of their choosing. They enjoy pretend play as they make fire hoses from magnetic resources and join with their peers in 'putting out fires'. They make buns and smiley faces when using the play dough, confidently selecting from a range of tools. Staff create a lift the flap advent window to encourage children's observation and recognition skills as they search for number one. Children enjoy story time and join in enthusiastically when singing songs and rhymes, holding up their fingers as they count down from five. Staff interact effectively through their use of open ended questioning and intonation which encourages children to listen and respond, which are essential skills for the future. They gain lots of information from parents initially so they are aware of children's starting points and build on this through regular observations of children's achievements. Each child's achievements are recognised through their learning journey books, which plot progress. Although staff regularly identify children's next steps in learning, these are not always clear to ensure they are effectively planned and evaluated.

Children learn about being safe through practising emergency evacuations and by information shared by visitors, such as, the police and fire officers. They are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating and are provided with healthy fruit and vegetables at snack time. They help prepare the snack and pour themselves a drink of water or milk from jugs provided. However, the chopped fruit and vegetables are presented in bowls and children use their hands to take what they want, sometimes changing their minds and putting them back, which puts children at risk of cross infection. Tissues are accessible, although staff do not consistently encourage their use, which leaves many children with runny noses. Children generally behave well, although some squabbles and poor sharing are not always observed by staff, so children do not receive consistent messages about expected behaviour.

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

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 4 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 4 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 4 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 4 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 4 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 3 |
| The extent to which children feel safe | 4 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles | 4 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 3 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 3 |

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