

Mortimer Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507885
Inspection date	17/03/2011
Inspector	Susan May
Setting address	St. Johns Village Hall, 22 West End Road, Mortimer Common, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 3TF
Telephone number	0118 9331668
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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

Mortimer Pre-School is a committee run provision that opened in 1992. It operates from St. Johns Hall in the centre of Mortimer. The group has use of the main hall, a side room, kitchen and a secure outside area. The pre-school serves the local area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and may provide care for a maximum of 24 children from two years to under eight years. There are currently 41 children on roll of whom 14 are in receipt of early education funding. The pre-school is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school opens four days a week on a Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. They are open during school term times only. Sessions on Monday and Thursday run from 9.05am until 3.00pm and on Tuesday and Friday from 9.00am until 12.00 noon. Children may attend for a variety of sessions.

Seven staff work with the children of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A strong commitment to improvement and a clear awareness from management and staff of their roles and responsibilities ensures children's welfare and learning is effectively promoted. Children have access to a range of toys and resources indoors and outdoors that support most learning opportunities well. An inclusive setting is provided overall, where all children are warmly welcomed. Staff value each child as an individual and share information about the children and the setting with parents. Links with other carers and early years practitioners are sought in order to meet children's needs. Secure, trusting relationships are established to help children develop confidence and a strong sense of belonging within the setting. Children are developing an awareness of expected behaviour. The commitment in improving the outcomes for children is evident in the monitoring and evaluation systems therefore their capacity to improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop strategies to support children's understanding of acceptable behaviour and respect for resources and provide a consistent approach in

- managing behaviour
- promote positive images of other cultures by providing resources and activities to challenge children's thinking and help them begin to understand about similarities and differences of their own and others' lives

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Designated areas within the large hall are thoughtfully set out to successfully provide a child friendly and welcoming environment, where a wide range of age-appropriate resources is available from which children can self select. The outdoor area has been effectively utilised and the extension of the areas of learning outdoors ensures children are provided with a range of opportunities to progress their learning. All children and families are valued and respected and the uniqueness of each child is recognised. Staff effectively deploy themselves to be on hand to support children, and are aware of each child's needs to help them achieve and make good progress in their development. Toys and resources are in good condition and appropriate storage ensures they can easily be accessed by the children. However, while some toys, resources and activities promote positive images these are limited and do not challenge children's thinking to help them begin to understand about similarities and differences of their own and others' lives. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children with policies and procedures clearly understood. All staff have the appropriate clearances, visitors procedures are in place and any person not suitably vetted is never left unsupervised with the children. Good Induction procedures ensure staff are fully aware of their role and responsibilities and parent helpers receive clear information about their function in the pre-school. All required policies and procedures are in place, are reviewed regularly and shared with parents. Policies and procedures provide a clear framework for documenting accidents and administering medication and all required children's documentation and parental consent are in place and stored confidentially.

Written risk assessments are in place for the premises, garden and outings and staff carry out daily checks at each session to ensure that all possible hazards are identified and risks minimized. Systems to begin to share relevant information with other early years settings have been introduced and links with local schools children may attend, help provide a smooth transition for the children as they move through the educational system. Links with other childcare practitioners and health professionals help ensure that all children receive opportunities to reach their full potential in each area of learning according to their needs. Staff have begun to reflect on their practices with input sought from committee members and feedback from parents, demonstrating commitment to driving improvement through clearly outlining future progress and aims. For example, further staff training in order to raise standards to support children's welfare and learning, and the one to one meetings with staff to ensure that the needs of the provision and individual training needs are met. Staff have sought advice from the local authority early years adviser in order to improve their practices and demonstrate a strong commitment as they work well together to ensure sustained improvement. Parents express confidence in staff and highly praise the care and learning experiences the

children receive, stating that they feel well informed of pre-school practice and events as they have access to a notice board, emails and receive information about the setting from a variety of other sources, such as a 'parents page' newsletter and daily verbal exchanges.

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

Children are eager to learn as they move around confidently and inquisitively. They are provided with good opportunities to help them make progress across all areas of learning and development both indoors and outdoors. Staff know the children well and plan for each child's individual needs using the children's interests and ideas as starting points. This along with the good systems for observation and assessment and information supplied from parents and other persons involved with the children form the basis for identifying children's next steps. This enables staff to successfully move children's learning forward. Parents are actively involved in all aspects of their child's development. The children's learning journals are accessible to the parents, discussed regularly and contributions from parents encouraged. Parents are encouraged to speak to staff at anytime to discuss children's progress. Children's well-being is promoted by staff as children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe and begin to understand the possible consequences of their actions. For example, children know the reasons why they must be careful when a member of staff uses matches to light birthday candles.

Children develop close relationships with staff and each other, inviting adults into their games and playing alongside each other well. Children are lively and behave generally well with a 'pre-school manners' code of conduct discussed with children about behaving appropriately, listening to others and showing care and respect for toys and resources. However, on occasions when children do not adhere to them, staff do not support children's understanding of acceptable conduct appropriately nor do they always follow behavior management procedures consistently. Children's independence is encouraged as they self select what they wish to play with, serve their own drinks and are able to use the bathroom independently. Children have ample opportunities to mark make as they access pens, paper, paint and brushes indoors and a large chalk board outside. Children can choose from a wide range of books in the comfortable book area and begin to recognise simple words as they use phonics to sound out their names and words in focus groups. Staff are proactive in helping develop children's language skills as they constantly ask open-ended questions, to help thought processes and extend vocabulary. Opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding is promoted, with opportunities available to help them recognise number, explore shapes, size and volume and extend the vocabulary through the use of mathematical terms in everyday play. Children have access to small and large construction equipment, for example, a selection of planks and wooden blocks outdoors provide them with opportunities to build structures on which they can walk and balance. A further range of equipment allows them to climb, push wheeled toys and throw and catch balls to develop their physical skills. Children have ample opportunities to use a range of media with which to explore their

creativity and role-play helps them explore real and imaginary situations. Children explore sound as musical instruments are accessible and children clearly enjoy and know a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes.

Inclusion is threaded through the settings practices as they value children and their families, acknowledge and celebrate events that are relevant to the children and encourage all children to take part in all activities. Children find out about the natural world as they play out each day whatever the weather, wearing the waterproof ponchos the pre-school provides. Children have access to every day technology as they competently use the computer and begin to find out about the local community as they have links with other provisions in the area such as the local schools and a planned visit to the fire station. Staff are knowledgeable about the early learning goals and steps towards them, demonstrating through their planning that they have a clear understanding that children learn through play and providing a positive environment that helps children progress well.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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