

Marden Pre - School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Claire Parnell

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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

Marden Pre-School opened in 1967 and is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. It operates from the main hall and smaller room in the Memorial Hall in the village of Marden. It takes children from the local rural area. The group has access to their own enclosed outdoor area.

The pre-school is open five days a week during school term times only. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon. The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children aged from two years to under five years at any one time on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 52 children on roll, of whom 40 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Nine members of staff work with the children. Six staff have an early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children play, learn and develop well in a child-friendly environment where their individual needs are highlighted and met. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage with some minor improvements to be made within planning and some aspects of learning. The committee and staff team have a clear vision for the future development of the setting to enhance positive outcomes for children. They are committed to identifying strong and positive practices as well as areas to be developed and continuously improved. Staff sometimes have a limited knowledge of their responsibility towards some documentation. The setting has a very strong partnership with both parents and other agencies such as schools and professionals. This highly promotes the continuity of care and development for the children in their care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update staff's knowledge and understanding of responsibilities towards the whereabouts of documentation such as complaint records
- extend the planning systems to include the learning intentions for outside play

- encourage mark making for a purpose in all activities, indoors and outdoors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well through the policies and procedures in place that help to keep children safe at all times. Staff have a clear knowledge of child protection procedures and have access to a wealth of written information about their responsibilities. They are aware of the procedures to follow which refer to any concerns. All required documentation is in place to promote children's well-being and good health at all times, although records of past complaints are not always immediately accessible due to staff's limited knowledge of their whereabouts. Written risk assessments are completed around the premises on a daily basis, including the outside area, which maximises children's safety. Stringent security arrangements are in place and staff are vigilant to ensure unknown people entering the building are challenged for the safety of the children. Robust recruitment procedures are implemented to ensure suitably checked, qualified and experienced staff work with the children, including regular volunteers and relief staff. Comprehensive supervisory procedures are followed by managers to ensure new staff receive thorough inductions and are closely supervised during their first encounters with the children.

A strong commitment to self-evaluation enables the managers and staff to identify and address areas for improvement and to ensure recognised strengths are continuously developed. The setting demonstrates a good driving ambition and dedication to the ongoing development of all aspects of children's welfare and development. Staff attend regular training sessions through the local authority. These new found knowledge and skills are cascaded to all staff members to ensure continuity for all children. There is plentiful evidence to see action plans take shape and effectively enhance the children's experiences at the setting, for example, the newly developed outside area. Staff ensure a varied range of resources are accessible to the children through pre-selected activities as well as storage units of additional equipment and resources for children to choose from to extend their play experiences, such as play figures, animals and tools. Staff use resources through research and training to introduce new strategies and techniques to enhance their practices, therefore providing better outcomes for children. The setting is developing their commitment to sustainability by introducing composting and recycling to the children throughout each session.

Children's individual needs are highly promoted due to the positive inclusion policies, procedures and practices in place. A dedicated, experienced and fully trained special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) takes responsibility for ensuring all staff are aware of children's additional needs and promotes their inclusion through individual education plans and regular consultations with parents and other professionals, therefore enabling continuity of care for children. Children have access to a good range of resources and activities that reflects diversity and equality positively throughout the session, such as play people, role play, celebrations of festivals and dual language books. The setting has established links to ensure children attending with English as an additional language have their

home languages celebrated and reflected through a good range of books. Parents with English as an additional language have access to a translation service for policies and procedures.

The setting has excellent partnerships with other professionals such as local schools, other early years settings and agencies. They are dedicated to building liaisons and value professional expertise and advice to support children in their setting. Key persons have liaison with the local school reception teacher to ensure children receive a smooth transition to primary school, ensuring all relevant information about how each child learns and their particular interests as well as their current stages of development is transferred too. Staff have made close links with local children's centres to ensure additional support services are available to parents and their families. The setting demonstrates a very strong commitment to engaging parents in the setting. Parents make very positive comments about the setting, staff's attitudes towards them and their children as well as the practices used to engage parents in the daily aspects of the setting. Information is displayed to encourage fathers to participate in their child's learning and experiences at the setting with a wealth of information available and accessible to all parents/carers within the foyer which promotes a holistic approach to children's care and development.

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

Children enjoy their time in this setting. They come into the room showing excitement towards the activities on offer and the majority separate from their carers with ease. They show interest in a varied range of activities that supports their progress towards the early learning goals. The staff offer good opportunities for children to progress by discussing the activities and ideas that children select for their play, ensuring they are sufficiently interesting and challenging for them. For example, children's interest in space sparked a topic for all the children to learn about. Key people know their children well and have the expertise to ensure all children are engaged in their play. Staff ask very good questions to help children think and respond, which they do positively and enthusiastically. Children are given time to explore their own play. For example, staff take a step back from a group of six boys at the small world play who initiate a new game with play people and the castle. Children listen intently to instructions from staff and respond well by carrying out the task satisfactorily demonstrating that they understand their roles and responsibilities as well as the spoken word. Children make marks freely, showing a developing skill of dexterity, although children's understanding of mark making for a purpose is limited due to the lack of resources available both indoors and outdoors to promote this aspect of learning. Children are intrigued and inquisitive about different people and situations, asking questions of why, who and when to respond to their curiosity of the world around them. They solve problems by comparing and measuring, for example, one child tries to find the biggest crayon in the box and stands the tallest up on its end and compares the others to it. Children freely explore their movements, extending their gross physical skills through the use of the indoor and outdoor climbing frames and use of two-

wheeled bikes with stabilisers. All these activities demonstrate children's ability to gain skills for the future.

Staff plan flexibly and with regard for children's individual targets and next steps of development for all areas of learning. Weekly plans are constructed using observations from the week before to ensure children are continuously developing in all areas of learning. All staff have an input into the planning to ensure all children's progress is provided for. However, the learning intentions for play in the outside area are limited, which results in an unbalanced learning programme for all environments. Very thorough observations are made of children's achievements and are closely linked to areas and aspects of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage, resulting in a clear tracking system of children's current development. Children's views and interests are taken into consideration when observing and evaluating their progress through the use of a questionnaire completed by the children and their key person. Children with additional needs such as those who are gifted and talented are recognised and provided for through the planning system. Development records and children's daily achievements are actively shared with parents on a daily basis to ensure progress is consistent with that at home.

Children develop an awareness of their own health and well-being by enjoying opportunities to discuss the foods they eat and the benefits of a balanced diet, particularly at the successful snack time. Children choose from a fantastic variety of healthy options, some making smiley faces out of the food they have chosen. Their dietary needs are recorded and are always accessible to the staff attending the snack bar. Staff are vigilant and remind children to wash their hands, although most understand the importance of good hygiene by automatically washing their hands before eating and after toileting, using soap dispensers and paper towels independently. Children help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of them in the appropriate bin. Children thoroughly enjoy the outside play area, all participating in physical exercises such as digging, cycling, climbing, throwing balls and watering the plants.

Children clearly feel safe and learn to respect and tolerate each other. For example, children know the routine of the session and listen for instructions as to what to do next. They have a good sense of belonging as they move around the room to gather in their appropriate groups at circle time. Children negotiate with each other most of the time. Children show that they know where activities belong and the importance of tidy up time to ensure that accidents do not occur by tripping over toys. When disputes occur, staff are quick to interact and discuss the children's actions. Children quickly respond positively with shakes of hands and hugs for each other, demonstrating their understanding of the impact of their actions. Staff act as good role models, supporting each other with their responsibilities, helping children to understand the need to support and help each other.

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	2
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
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