

Mulberry Bush Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	125007
Inspection date	21/06/2011
Inspector	Gail Robertson
Setting address	Byron Primary School, St. Davids, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2XE
Telephone number	020 8660 4180
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*.

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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

The Mulberry Bush Pre-School is a registered charity which opened in 2000 and is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Registers. It operates from two buildings situated in the grounds of Byron Primary School, Old Coulsdon, Croydon, Surrey. The charity has a second provision located in South Croydon, Surrey. Children are grouped by age and both buildings have an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open term time from 8am until 6pm. Within these times the pre-school incorporates a range of different services, including a breakfast club, sessional care between 9am and 12pm, and then 1pm until 3pm, an optional lunch club between 12-1pm, and after school care from 3-6pm. The pre-school may care for no more than 56 children from 2 years to under 8 years at any one time. The pre-school also run a holiday club which operates during most school holidays. The club may care for no more than 32 children from 2 years to under 8 years at any one time. Mulberry Bush Pre-school serves families in the local area of Coulsdon and Kenley. There are currently 99 pre-school children on roll, of these 64 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with special education needs, and children who speak English as an additional language. There are 17 staff employed, of whom 12 hold Level 3 NVQ, two Level 2 NVQ and 3 are unqualified working towards a qualification in childcare. Staff are based with a designated age group and work flexibly to cover the full range of the provision. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority Early Years and Childcare Partnership. It has strong links with other early years providers in particular the host school and the Children's Centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The quality of the provision is good. The Mulberry Bush Pre-School has a number of outstanding areas. It is an inclusive setting where children are well cared for in a busy, happy environment. Children are safe but they are not involved in the daily checks. The setting works particularly well with parents and carers, and external agencies to support the children's needs to make good progress. The manager and staff evaluate the provision regularly to understand its strengths which leads to improvements, such as the outside area. The setting's capacity for further improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- involve the children in the daily risk assessments so they learn how to keep themselves safe.

- develop the outside area to stimulate children's curiosity in numbers and mark making and support their learning in literacy and numeracy in the world around them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Good priority is given to safeguarding children. Records, policies and procedures required to ensure that children are safe are regularly updated, and followed by all staff. Everyone is clear about how the setting operates in regard to safeguarding issue as copies of the policies and procedures are kept in the entrance area for parents and carers, and visitors. Robust appointment and suitability procedures are followed. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. In all these ways, children are being well protected. Daily checks are made of the premises to keep children safe but children are not involved and opportunities are missed to help them to learn how to keep themselves safe. There is a wealth of high-quality resources for the children to use inside and out. The resources are easily available to the children as they self select play items throughout the two buildings. Resources are well maintained and organised extremely effectively to encourage children's independence and to promote their learning and well being.

Staff have thought carefully about the layout of the furniture and created stimulating areas throughout the buildings to accommodate activities in all areas of learning. Displays of children's work show how much the staff respect and value children's efforts. There are labels and notices for children to look at that enhance the displays and encourages children to be aware of words in the world around them. This is not fully reflected outside as the labels have become weathered and need replacing. This has been identified by staff but as has not been actioned.

Staff work really well together to plan interesting activities that match children's needs and interests. Children come from diverse backgrounds. Staff make a point of knowing all the families well through the key worker system. Consequently, every child makes good progress. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress partly because the staff work extremely effectively with outside professionals. Progress is carefully tracked and those not making the expected progress are given extra support. Staff spend a long time assessing and writing learning diaries to share with the parents and carers.

The playgroup is well led and managed. Rigorous self evaluation systems are well established and the manager considers everyone's views in this process. She effectively communicates what needs to be addressed to bring about improvements to support children in their learning. There are outstanding links with all parents and carers, who spoke highly of the setting. Parents and carers are very well informed about their child's progress and what goes on at the setting so children can carry on learning at home. There are outstanding partnerships with other providers of early years in particular, the host school and children's centre. Staff share their expertise to support children's development and needs so that they make good progress. All these links ensure children have a smooth transfer to

school and a good start in their educational journey.

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

The setting is most welcoming and there is a family feeling as soon as you walk into the buildings. There are good opportunities for both indoor and outdoor learning with a wide range of child appealing resources to choose. There are super opportunities for digging and planting, sand and water play, mark making and painting, reading and role play and many more creative and stimulating activities. In the 'Tiggers' room, the younger children explore the world of mini beasts, while in the 'Owls' garden a group of older children carefully thread painted pasta to make a sequence with the colours for a necklace. Staff carefully observe, make an assessment and record what they have seen. They listen to children and support their thinking by asking open questions. In this way, they then plan children's next stage of development. 'Learning Diaries' includes photographic evidence, evaluative observations, children's work and a section for the parents and carers to make contributions showing children's achievements at home. There is a good system for analysing the progress made.

Both buildings and gardens are attractive, child friendly, and buzzing with activity and creativity. Children have a great sense of belonging, they are eager, confident and prepared to have a go at new tasks. For example, when 'Tigger' children plant the hanging baskets, they carefully fill the baskets with peat taking care not to spill too much. They decide carefully the colour combination they want and examine the plant roots. They are inquisitive and one asks why the roots are white not pink like the flower. Staff helped them to make a reasoned answer. The notices to support learning in the outside need replacing. They have become weathered and children take little notice of them. Some have blown away.

Children in the 'Before and After' preschool sessions continue their social and personal development and there are plenty of opportunities for 'talking'. Children dress up and have great fun in role play. They love stories and the 'Tiggers' have the opportunity to take home one of the settings books and change it the following day. They sit close to staff and pore over the pictures and help staff read the more familiar stories. The local librarian is a regular, popular visitor.

Close relationships with the staff mean that children are kept safe and secure. At present, they do not help staff to make the daily checks to understand what they have to do to be safe. They learn about road safety from the community police officer and the dangers of fire from the fireman. They adopt correct hygiene practices and know that they must wash their hands after digging in the garden or before eating. They chose to eat healthy snacks and to have a good breakfast to start the day in the club. Outside, children enjoy physical challenges and rigorous exercise and know that this is good for their hearts and bodies. Children are content and comfortable because their health and physical needs are fully met.

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	1
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	1
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