

Maple Grove Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 12/01/2012
Inspector Jane Mount

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Maple Grove Pre-School was registered in July 2011 and is run by a voluntary committee. It operates from Maple Grove Primary School in Grove Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 12pm until 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 17 children attending who are within the early years age range. The setting is also able to offer care to children aged over five years to eight years. It is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Maple Grove Pre-School employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, with the fifth member of staff in the process of completing an early years qualification at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A child-centred and inclusive environment is provided to all and positive partnerships with parents and carers ensure children's individual needs are met. A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures, to ensure children are safe and their welfare is protected. Staff support children well in their learning and development and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has a positive attitude to improvement and is aware of their key strengths and the areas they wish to develop further. Systems to effectively monitor the quality of the service provided and to ensure continuous improvement, such as, self-evaluation, are in the early stages of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to more closely monitor and extend effective practice to ensure continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are secure and children's welfare is protected. Clear management responsibilities in relation to child protection have been established, including having named, designated persons, responsible for ensuring the correct safeguarding procedures are followed if there was a concern. There is a safeguarding policy in place and all staff undertake safeguarding training and fully understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children.. Suitable vetting procedures ensure children's welfare is protected. Children's safety is paramount with risk assessments in place to ensure the environment is safe. Staff supervise children closely and the security of the premises ensures no unauthorised person can gain access to the premises and that children cannot leave unsupervised. Consequently, children remain safe at all times. All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and shared appropriately.

The setting is committed to fully implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff team are led by a manager who has a clear vision for the setting and together, they work hard to provide a good quality service. Overall, they are aware of their key strengths and have implemented an on-going action plan which identifies some areas they wish to develop further. Other systems are also in place to monitor and assess the quality of the provision, such as, using weekly staff meetings to evaluate practice. Some systems are in place to seek feedback from parents with plans to implement parent questionnaires in the near future. The setting is in the process of implementing a more systematic approach to self-evaluation and aims to actively use this in the future as a way of ensuring continuous improvement. The pre-school is also in the process of completing a local authority quality assurance scheme.

Good use of space, resources and effective staff deployment, ensures an environment that is safe and fully inclusive. As a result, children are happy and confident in their play and quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. All children and their families are valued and included. Staff are approachable and friendly and positive relationships with parents and carers ensure children's needs are met. Many methods are used to ensure information is effectively shared with parents, such as, informative notice-boards and regular newsletters. A key person system and daily verbal communication also ensures children receive continuity in their care and learning. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress and achievements, and children's learning journeys are regularly shared. Parents' feedback about the pre-school is very positive. The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and is proactive in working with parents and other agencies to support and meet the needs of individual children. Highly effective links have been forged with the school, thereby, supporting children's transition to school and ensuring continuity and the full integration of care and learning.

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

Children's learning and development is promoted and they are making good progress towards the early learning goals. A key person system is used and staff monitor children's learning closely by regularly observing and assessing them to identify their achievements and progress over time. Children's development records show how they are progressing and this information is then used to inform future planning. Children enjoy their surroundings and show a keen interest in what they do with staff supporting them in their play. Child-initiated and adult-led activities are well-balanced to encourage children to be active learners. The environment is organised to cover the six areas of learning and to promote children's independence skills. Children are encouraged to make their own decisions in their play and freely access the environment. They are encouraged to put on their own coats and to change their shoes when going outside to play and they enjoy helping to clean the table after lunch club. They help to put away the resources they have played with and are beginning to learn how to put on an apron to take part in an art activity or go to the toilet on their own.

Staff work hard to provide a child-centred environment and children arrive happy and quickly settle and engage in activities. They have regular opportunities to explore varied art media, such as, painting, playdough and cutting and sticking. They enjoy the sensory experience when playing with foam and talk excitedly about the consistency of the foam between their fingers and on their hands. They use their imaginations to express themselves and enjoy dressing up, playing in the home corner, playing with the cars and garage or building with construction bricks. Children respond with enjoyment when listening to stories, songs and rhymes and independently sit and look at books with friends. Children participate in a range of activities which involve numbers and shapes, such as, counting the large building blocks when making a tower. They learn about volume by filling containers when playing with water or sand. Children have opportunities to learn about the wider world and about other cultures and have many opportunities to talk about their families and home life. Children develop a strong interest in nature and the environment through activities, including, nature walks around the school field to investigate the wildlife. They participate in topics on the weather and enjoy blowing bubbles outside on a windy day.

Staff promote children's good health and well-being and take effective steps to prevent the spread of infection. Children have regular opportunities to learn about staying healthy, including personal care routines, and they enjoy activities, such as, singing a song about hand washing when they visit the bathroom. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before they eat and after visiting the toilet and when asked, older children are able to say the reasons for doing so. Healthy eating is encouraged and children are learning about the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and have enjoyed growing potatoes in the pre-school garden. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they use a varied range of indoor and outdoor equipment on a daily basis. They demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure.

Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe as they explain and practise simple procedures, such as, not running when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children behave well, with behaviour managed in a positive manner and clear boundaries set by staff. Children are learning how to play together and are encouraged to show care and concern and to behave considerately towards others. Praise and encouragement from staff ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem and children show real enthusiasm for what they are doing.

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	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	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