

Matlock Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Diane Ashplant
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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

Matlock Pre-school Playgroup is run by a committee and is one of two provisions owned by the same organisation. It opened in 1960 and operates from a single storey building in Matlock, Derbyshire. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.50am to 11.50am, term time only. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 20 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. There are three members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settled in this welcoming environment and benefit greatly from being part of a small group where their individual needs are sensitively met and where they receive good attention from the staff who support their care, learning and development well. The manager has worked effectively to address the areas of improvement from the last inspection and has systems in place to review practice on an on-going basis. There is a good commitment to maintaining continuous improvement through training and accessing outside support. Partnerships with parents work well and there are links with others in place to further support outcomes for children. All required documentation to support the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place and generally well maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review how planning of some activities and resources are organised to best support children's needs
- update documentation to support the safe and efficient management of the setting; this particularly applies to information about staffing roles.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities for protecting children from possible harm or neglect and how to pass on concerns appropriately. Staff have attended formal training and their

knowledge and practice is revisited annually through in-house 'toolbox' training sessions. There is an appropriate policy in place which is shared effectively with parents. Staff rigorously carry out other procedures to support children's welfare such as safe collection and regular fire drills. Staff are very aware of hazards and have particularly focused on reminding children of the procedures in place to keep them safe. There is a daily risk assessment record in place and staff have attended to the areas of potential risk well. For example, the high stairs down to the outdoor area have been edged with bright yellow paint to heighten the awareness of both children and staff. Selection and recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of the staff who care for the children and this is further supported by a written yearly confirmation of on-going suitability and annual appraisal systems.

There have been changes to the staff at the setting and the remaining staff team is small and work effectively together sharing information through on-going discussion and weekly planning meetings. Management has striven hard to meet the areas highlighted at the last inspection and have improved the systems used for reflecting on practice. Action plans are in place and parents' views are captured through regular discussion and questionnaires. All documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and is, in the main, appropriately organised. However, some of the documentation has not been reviewed to ensure that it details the most up-to-date staffing and provides parents with the correct information.

The play environment is welcoming and provides children with a wide range of play choices and activities. Staff liaise with parents to get to know children's individual needs and fill in their 'I can do booklet'. Staff have undergone recent training in order to enhance their awareness of how to encourage the development of children with more specific needs. They work closely with parents and liaise with outside agencies, such as speech therapists, to identify the best ways to support children. They also use their own observations and planning to reinforce this through the daily programme. Staff are responsive to children's individual needs and family events and, for example, collect together appropriate play resources or read a favourite book to help them feel reassured. Most children transfer to the sister setting and go on visits to help them prepare for this transition.

Partnership with parents works well and information is shared effectively through friendly discussion, information displays and the termly 'Bugle' newsletter. Children proudly take home their individually named green bags each day to carry notices for parents or work they have done. Parents take home their children's learning journeys each month and are encouraged to add their comments. Bi-annual parent meetings provide another opportunity to talk with the key worker about their children's overall development. Staff have also put into place new initiatives such as requesting photographs from parents of family and friends which are used to offer comfort to an upset child or by children to browse through as they wish.

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

Children are welcomed into the setting where their overall development is well supported. Play in the spacious and adventurous outdoor area is a favourite daily event. Children experiment with a range of equipment and resources to support their physical skills or take their turn at shovelling the snow. Children are learning to develop a wonder of nature as they dig and grow items in the planters outside. Staff engage with the children to support their learning and make it fun by providing enthusiastic encouragement and laughter. The weekly session is planned to provide different opportunities for children and there is a balance of adult-led sessions and free play with a focus on indoor and outdoor learning. Time is allotted to circle time, 'show and tell' and story time, although on occasions some planning of sessions and resources is not fully effective. As the Children are welcomed into the setting where their overall development is well supported. Play in the spacious and adventurous outdoor area is a favourite daily event. Children experiment with a range of equipment to support their physical skills or take their turn at shovelling the snow. Children are learning to develop a wonder of nature as they dig and grow items in the planters outside. Staff engage with the children to support their learning and make it fun by providing enthusiastic encouragement and laughter. There is a balance of adult-led sessions and free play with a focus on indoor and outdoor learning. Time is allotted to circle time, 'show and tell' and story time, although on occasions some planning of sessions and resources is not fully effective. Children develop their confidence to self-select toys of their choice and initiate their own play. Lots of low, accessible storage with picture labels further supports children's independent choices. The learning environment both inside and out has been designed to inspire and interest children with all areas of learning well resourced.

Children's health is well promoted through daily routines such as hand washing which they are encouraged to do for themselves if possible. They enjoy a range of snacks including cheese straws which they have helped to make and have access to fruit at all times. Fresh water is always available and hot chocolate is a favourite for some on a cold day to help them warm up after playing outside. Children are developing a very good awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, when they play out in the snow staff remind them how they need to be aware of the slippery surface or when they use the stairs the need to hold the rails. Posters around the setting serve as further reminders of routine practices to support their health and safety. Children's behaviour is generally good as staff give lots of encouragement. They also provide opportunities for them to develop their confidence through independent tasks like clearing up after snack time and pouring their own drinks. Clear reminders from staff reinforce the importance of the 'golden rules'. Children use a range of different resources and look at photographs to help develop their understanding of the wider world. They engage in interesting craft activities to celebrate different festivals, for example, by creating a display for Chinese New Year. Children get to know their community as they visit the park and library or attend the local church to meet the vicar or see the nativity.

Children have many opportunities to engage in creative play in the sand and playdough. They explore their imagination as they try out different musical instruments and dance to the music with brightly coloured ribbons. In the role play area they mimic adult roles or try on different dressing up costumes. Numbers and problem solving are part of the everyday routine as they count how many children go in and out or how many are sitting down for snack. Children are developing a real love of books as they listen attentively to stories. Early language skills are encouraged as they develop their confidence and start to contribute at circle time or enthusiastically explain which item they have brought from home at 'show and tell'. Children are encouraged to recognise their own name as they self-register and make marks as they experiment with different materials such as chalk and crayons. They get together to enjoy a game of 'silly soup', with each child deciding which item to put into the pot, or they try and recognise pictures on card games as they reflect on discussions about healthy bodies.

Staff make and record their observations, both spontaneous and more focused, to identify how children are progressing and in what areas they may need some support. They routinely discuss the children and what they have seen and share their observations of children and decide how their next steps can be incorporated into the planning. These and examples of children's work are collected together in their profiles which are shared routinely with parents to enable them to celebrate their children's progress.

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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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