

Muriel Green Nursery and Pre-School

Church Crescent, ST. ALBANS, Hertfordshire, AL3 5JB

Inspection date	29/07/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Observation and assessment information are not used effectively to monitor children's individual progress and guide teaching to support children's development. In addition, there is no identified Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to support children with additional needs.
- The 'progress check at age two' is not carried out, and as a result, parents do not receive a written summary of their child's progress and any areas requiring additional advice are not identified.
- The key person system is not secure so that parents are fully informed about their children's progress and can be involved in their children's learning and development.
- Staff do not always follow hygienic procedures when handling food and opportunities to increase children's development of problem solving and independence are not promoted during meal times.
- Self-evaluation is not effective in ensuring all legal requirements are met and the views of staff, parents and children are not included.

It has the following strengths

- Children enjoy daily access to the outdoor learning environment. This supports their good health and well-being.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the children's activities and the interactions with staff in the children's base rooms and the outdoor area.
- The inspector spoke to the children and engaged in their physical and imaginative play.
- The inspector spoke to staff and the local authority professional at appropriate times. She looked at a range of children's records and a selection of policies. She discussed how staff are using these in their everyday practice.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of all base rooms with the deputy.
- The inspector met parents and discussed their views on the service provided.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full Report

Information about the setting

Muriel Green Nursery and Pre-School was registered in 2001 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is located in the St Albans Children's Centre which is in the city of St Albans in Hertfordshire. It is managed by a governing body. The pre-school provides day care for children from three months to four years. There is an adjoining nursery where children from four to five years attends. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday for 49 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.45am to 6.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 134 children attending who are in the early years age group.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve staff's knowledge of how children learn and develop with a focus on the prime areas of learning so that a quality learning experience for children is consistently provided
- review children's progress between the ages of two and three years and provide parents with a short summary of their child's development in the prime areas and involve other professionals, such as a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator as necessary
- ensure that information gained through observation is used to track children's progress in order to ensure that any learning and development needs are addressed with partnership with parents/carers and any relevant professionals
- identify a named SENCO to support children with additional learning needs
- ensure consideration is given to individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child is to support their development and progress; and plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents so that they are well informed about children's learning at nursery and can support children's learning at home
- ensure all staff are aware of food hygiene and are good role models in promoting hygiene to children
- ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop opportunities to further promote children's independence and early numeracy skills by encouraging the children to be involved in the preparation and serving of food and drinks during meal times
- foster a culture of continuous improvement by improving the use of self-evaluation to ensure that all legal requirements are met and to include the views of staff,

parents and children.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

This inspection has been carried out as a result of serious concerns raised during an inspection at the adjoining nursery. Some of the concerns raised related to planning and assessment and how these contribute to children's progression in their learning and development. Therefore, gaps in children's development are not identified and children do not make sufficient progress in their learning.

The needs of some groups of children are not met because staff's knowledge about how children learn effectively are not secure. Some staff do not engage with children so that every opportunity is used to extend their language, knowledge and understanding. This is more evident in the toddler and older children's base rooms. For example, some staff are often more focused on chores rather than supporting children's learning. This is evident during the large group story sessions when one staff member reads from a book and other staff spend time preparing an adult-led activity or tidying tables. Overall, staff's lack of intervention limits children's progress towards the early learning goals. This does not equip them with the skills they need when they are ready to transfer to school or their next stage of learning.

Children look at books independently and turn the pages carefully. They share these with their friends and together discuss the pictures. These experiences help the children to realise that the print has meaning. Some older children can write their own names and readily assist younger children to master this skill. Staff carry out regular observations of children and some key persons know their children well. However, the 'progress check at age two' is not carried out; this is a breach of a learning and development requirement. Observations made by practitioners are not used effectively to plan for children's individual learning needs. Tracking of children's progress is currently the responsibility of teachers from the nursery. As a result, those working directly with the children do not have a clear indication of what children already know and can do. Consequently, any potential gaps in children's learning are not fully known and planned activities are not fully linked to the observations carried out. This has an impact on children's future learning and the identification of any specialist support they may need to aid their learning and development. The provision does not have a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who can offer specialist advice to support any children who may need this.

There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Not all practitioners provide sufficient resources or ask open-ended questions to help children think and join in activities of their choice. For example, children show great excitement when discussing what they will wear to a wedding with the deputy who is a good role model. They decide to make a hat for the wedding and eagerly help themselves to paper and pens to start this activity. Staff fail to notice this excitement and the stem of their motivation for this learning. They re-direct the children to an adult-led activity resulting in children not been challenged or engaged in

purposeful play of their choice. Resources of coloured pencils are on the table along with one felt tip pen. Children are expected to take turns using the pen. As a result, children become bored; some leave the table and wander around aimlessly.

Older toddlers enjoy listening to favourite stories and joining in with popular nursery rhymes and songs. They have access to a varied range of resources at low level. Staff working with babies and younger toddlers are very aware of their individual needs. They are in the process of reorganising their base room so that emerging skills, such as climbing and crawling are further supported. Staff in this room respond warmly to the children as they babble and play. They sit with them during children's play and respond positively at all times praising emerging language skills. Babies and young children enjoy discovering cause and effect toys. For example, they delight in pushing buttons and bounce to the music created by the toys. Staff encourage this and help children master these skills. The newly introduced communications books ensure parents are better informed about their child's care needs during the day. However, parents are not fully involved in children's learning as details of their progression and learning journals are only shared during transition meeting times. Therefore, children's continuity of learning is not adequately promoted.

Children have daily access to the outdoor area as well as regular outings within the local environment. For example, they visit the nearby park, the Cathedral and feed the ducks. In the enclosed outdoor area children enjoy activities to aid their physical development. They freely help themselves to resources on offer, such as, bikes, tennis rackets and bats. They confidently use the climbing equipment and learn to take supervised risks in their play. Some younger children enjoy a game of skittles and are helped to count the amount of skittles knocked over. This helps them make connections in their learning. Older children are helped to develop their co-ordination skills by joining in with a tennis game. Children using bikes are helped to use the 'riding area' safely so that they learn to negotiate space when using wheeled toys.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The key person system is not well embedded as not all staff are aware of who has overall responsibility for individual children and some are not clear about their individual responsibilities. The list of the dietary needs of children is out of date and some children are not included on the list. This was rectified during the inspection. The kitchen staff have an updated list so that they provide meals that meet the children's dietary needs. The plans for improvement of the provision include a review of how meal times are managed. This includes the development of visual aids to ensure no children are offered food that they are not allowed to have.

Meals are freshly cooked on the premises. Most children follow routine instructions to find a place for dinner; they sit patiently as staff serve the meal and pour their drinks. Older children have their meals in the dining room and staff sit with them, encouraging good

social skills and discussions. Meal times in the baby room are calm and organised with some good interaction taking place. However, not all staff make effective use of snack and meal times to enhance children's awareness of health and hygiene, independence and personal social and emotional development. For example, some groups of children, particularly in the toddler room, do not have adults sitting with them so that can engage them in meaningful conversations. This is because adults focus much of their time on the supervision of the meal time routines. Many of the staff have food hygiene training. However they do not always follow good hygiene procedures when serving food. For example, they do not always use plates to serve children's deserts which results in some children's cakes been placed on dirty tables. Overall, children are not involved in the preparation and serving of meals and drinks so that their independent skills are further developed.

Despite this, staff show care and consideration towards the changing needs of younger children. They offer comfort and reassurance as and when needed. Any medications administered are recorded by two staff members and parents sign the entry. Children settle well because staff obtain information about routines and preferences so that they can ensure that there is continuity of care. In addition home visits are carried out so that further information about the child's routine can be obtained. Children transferring between rooms are given consistent care and support to help them settle with confidence. Key persons visit the room with the child and pass on information to those taking over the role. Children have opportunities to visit their new room in increasing lengths of time until they feel secure. Transition meetings are held with parents so that they are involved in the process. Older children's proposed teachers visit the provision to ensure the transition to school runs as smooth as possible.

Children generally sleep after lunch with younger children been able to sleep according to their needs. They are checked regularly to ensure they remain comfortable and settled and fresh bedding is used for each child. Children are helped to develop efficient personal hygiene routines; older children independently attend to their personal hygiene needs and are reminded to wash their hands before eating. Staff follow hygiene procedures when changing nappies. All staff have recently attended behaviour management training so that they give consistent messages to children. Children generally behave well and show that they are kind and considerate to each other. For example, older children tell each other, 'Your turn now,' during their play.

The review of risk assessments is an ongoing process. Emergency evacuation procedures are currently been reviewed so that children know what to do in an emergency. For example, there are plans in place to carry these evacuation procedures out at various times of the children's day. Since the nursery inspection the deputy now records information gained during the evacuation procedure so that any amendments to improve the procedure can be made. On a day-to-day basis children learn about safety through reminders from practitioners about the need for using indoor feet. They also have visits from police officers who deliver messages about keeping safe in a fun manner. All children enjoy regular opportunities for outdoor play benefitting from fresh air. Babies enjoy play on the decking; older children freely explore the outdoor area. This contributes to them developing their physical skills. For example, they enjoy using the different climbing levels, water and sand play. Since the nursery inspection a section of the outdoor area has been

closed so that safety maintenance can be carried out. This means that sensible measures are now taken to ensure children are safe.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

This inspection took place due to concerns raised at the inspection of the linked nursery school, which also impacted in children in this pre-school. Leadership and management of the pre-school are not robust and a significant number of the welfare, learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are not met.

The quality of the provision has declined since the last inspection partially due to the loss of experienced staff. Not enough has been done to monitor the provision or the educational programmes and to evaluate the effectiveness of staffs' practice so that effective supervision is valuable and training needs are identified. Arrangements for the supervision of staff and for regular effective appraisals have been identified as an area to develop. Team meetings and training days have been recently introduced so that ideas can be shared and the whole team are clear about the provisions policies and procedures. Self-evaluation, other than the recently introduced action plan, is not routinely carried out to identify strengths and areas to develop to support children's care, learning and development effectively.

Since the nursery inspection, safeguarding in the pre-school has been raised as a priority for immediate improvement. This was due to the crossover of concerns that were raised in the nursery which related to safeguarding, how recruitment checks are maintained and the monitoring of staff performance. Since this inspection a professional from the local authority have taken on the role of the manger. She is supporting the deputy and her staff so that the provision makes immediate improvements. A detailed action plan has been devised which includes closer monitoring and appraisals of all staff. It also includes the need to link more with the nursery teachers so that planning of activities in the pre-school is more effective for children's learning. The deputy and her staff show that are keen to improve practice so that children are well supported in their learning and development. For example, they respond quickly and positively to actions and suggestions already raised. Interviews for room leaders amongst existing practitioners are due to take place soon so that a clearer and stronger management structure is in place to protect children's welfare and learning.

Safeguarding had been made a priority. For example, safeguarding training for all practitioners has taken place. The acting manager and the deputy are continually monitoring their knowledge and understanding through team meetings, spontaneous scenarios and direct questioning. Safeguarding procedures are clearly displayed and provide a good reference tool for staff and parents. Staff spoken to on the day of inspection demonstrate that they have increased their knowledge about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They demonstrate good knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of harm and what to do if they have any concerns. This

helps to protect children's welfare and safety. Any concerns expressed by parents or staff are taken seriously and are professionally managed. They are fully investigated so that children's welfare is protected.

There are appropriate recruitment procedures in place to ensure all those working with children are safe to do so. Records of staff appointments show their qualifications including first aid and appropriate details of their enhanced criminal records checks and barred list checks. A clear induction system is in place so that any new staff become familiar with the policies and procedures. Regular bank staff are used as and when necessary so that continuity of care is offered. Overall, staff are very flexible in the hours that they work so that correct ratios are always maintained. They are adequately deployed. Through discussion practitioners show that they have a secure knowledge of how many staff should be present with the number of children for different age groups. They are very vigilant about this and ensure children are supervised within correct ratios, both indoors and outdoors. Staff carry out daily risk assessments to ensure all areas and resources used by children are safe. Since the nursery inspection the surrounding fence outdoors has been modified so that children's privacy when outdoors is protected. Other aspects related to children's safety have been addressed, such as covers for fans and the replacement of a rusty metal grill outdoors.

During the inspection, staff were observed supervising the children appropriately. Plans are in place to review the deployment of staff so that experienced staff can be good role models for other staff. Parents speak well of the provision and several thank you cards are displayed in the corridor. However, those spoken to on the day of the inspection had not seen their children's progress documents so that they can be fully involved in their children's learning. Written records of any accidents or incidents are maintained and shared with parents. Links have been developed with local schools and the adjoining children's centre to provide some support for any children with additional needs.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY225164
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	929034
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	134
Name of provider	The Governing Body of Muriel Green Nursery and Pre-School
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01727 891111

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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