

Montacute Pre-School

Baptist School Rooms, South Street, MONTACUTE, Somerset, TA15 6XD

Inspection date	13/12/2013
Previous inspection date	22/09/2009

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		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Staff teach children to play a proactive role in their learning and show curiosity, imagination and concentration.
- A passionate team of staff create a fully inclusive environment where children are respected and valued as individuals. All staff are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments, and provide a strong base for their developing independence and exploration.
- Excellent focus is given to learning both in the indoor and outdoor environments and the effective organisation of resources ensure children's success and enjoyment.
- Opportunities for high-quality professional supervision ensure that staff continue to inspire and challenge children to do their very best at any activity they undertake.
- Partnership working between parents, providers and other agencies is given the utmost priority, ensuring children are safeguarded and their needs met.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector made several short and long observations of activities in all areas of the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke with the manager and several members of staff, including the Chairperson.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journeys, a sample of planning documentation, a selection of children's records and the pre-schools policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of recruitment, suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector also took account of the views of several parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

IMarie Bain

Full report

Information about the setting

Montacute Pre-school opened in 1992 and operates from the Baptist Church Schoolrooms in the village of Montacute, Somerset. Children have access to an outdoor, grassed pitch play area. The pre-school is run by a parent committee. The pre-school is open on Monday and Wednesday from 9am to 3pm, and on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 11.45am. A lunch club operates on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 11.45am to 12.15pm. The pre-school are registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 27 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There are six staff employed, of whom five hold childcare qualifications to level 3. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receive support from the Local Authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance further the programme for children's literacy by embracing all opportunities to help children to see print used in different ways.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thrive in this very caring pre-school. They are extremely confident, safe, happy and secure. All children are valued, cherished and respected. Consequently, they make significant progress in all areas of learning. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have a true understanding of the key person system and this translates extremely well into their practice. Staff demonstrate this through their detailed knowledge of each child, which ensures the children's needs are met exceedingly well. Their approach to planning is innovative and based on careful and sensitive listening, observations and reflection, thus enabling them to give the utmost priority to child-initiated, spontaneous play. The reflective planning is meticulously evaluated by staff who ensure that children are offered a range of rich experiences in all areas of learning. Staff make frequent observations that are used very effectively to assess children's early progress and to identify their next steps. Each child has their own personal pathway folder that includes photographs, observations and items of their work. These are readily shared with parents.

Children's learning is effectively encouraged through a range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children have freedom to choose how they play during the free-flow

session. This type of play helps them to develop self-esteem and feel empowered and included. All children have excellent opportunities to be creative consequently creativity is in abundance and prevalent throughout every aspect of the children's learning and development. For example in the role play area, the messy play and the garden. Children learn about different textures through playing with shaving foam, rice and pasta. Staff use different tools to teach the children to explore and experience the properties of ice. They set up an ice planet with animals from the North pole for children to play with and talk to them about what happens when the ice melts, and what it feels like in their hands. Children show pleasure as they squash the play dough fragranced with scented oil, in their fingers and use the cutters to create their own characters. They learn to make various patterns using marbles and string in a tray of paint. Staff use the shaving foam and paint to encourage children to practise early writing skills in different substances. These play activities and experiences as well as being great fun promote children's sensory awareness.

Valuing diversity, the community and wider world is integrated into everyday practice. This is enhanced by toys, resources accessible to children in their natural play, and visitors to the pre-school. Children are involved in growing their own fruit and vegetables and as such learn about what they need to do to aid this process. They thoroughly enjoy watering, measuring and monitoring the growth of the plants. Children grew potatoes and carrots in a bag so that they could discuss, measure and compare the length and shape of the roots. Children regularly take part in cooking activities and very much enjoy making cheese scones, cereal bars and cakes. They are adept at grating cheese, pouring, weighing and mixing the ingredients with little adult intervention. This is not only an excellent acceleration of their mathematical development but also teaches them with transferable skills for the future. Children learnt about the life cycle of a chicken because the staff brought in some eggs to put in the incubator so the children could watch them hatch. Children held the chicks when they hatched so they could feel how soft they were. The chicks went to a parent small holding and they send regular photographs of them to pre-school. This enables the staff to teach children about growth and change using a familiar reference. Staff build strong relationships with the children which means that they feel confident in expressing their views and feelings, knowing that they will be listened to and valued as individuals. Children's early communication and language skills are a primary focus within the pre-school. Staff use open-ended questions, encourage and challenge the children to think about many concepts of learning. For example, asking them what they need to do next when they are building train tracks. Children thoroughly enjoy sitting with the staff on the cushions or in the garden to experience a different learning environment and listening to a story. Staff effectively encourages children to recall and discuss the events in the story. This is enhanced by using story sacks, and the lively animation of the staff reading to the children. In celebration of book week parents came into pre-school to read to the children and children made their own books. Overall, the environment, activities and experiences at the pre-school provide children with many varied learning experiences and a plethora of future skills.

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

Children excel in the excellent care of the sensitive adults who clearly enjoy their relationships with children and their families. This means children feel special and loved. The environment plays an important part in extending, encouraging and challenging children's learning and development and all areas of the pre-school are used to create a rich plethora of exciting, worthwhile and stimulating activities. Children play in a stimulating environment where they are very happy and there is a happy buzz of activity, songs and laughter throughout the pre-school. The key person system is highly effective, in helping to ensure children are happy and settled from the start. The excellent partnership with parents means that key persons know their children extremely well. They know about the child's brothers and sisters, many of whom have attended the pre-school previously, or if a new baby is due in the house to help them prepare for this.

Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to learn about healthy eating, and healthy lifestyles. For example, staff teach the children about healthy eating through discussion, activities and displays. Planned practical activities, such as food tasting as well as healthy snacks helps children learn about good nutrition. Staff teach children about an interesting range of unusual fruit during food tasting as mangos, Sharon fruit, strawberries, and star fruits. Children learnt how to make fruit kebabs, smoothies, and fruit salad using these fruits. With the remaining fruit children paint printed to see the different patterns and discuss the contrasting shapes and sizes. During activities staff consistently use every day tasks to develop and support children in their progress. For example, in preparation for snack, staff choose children to help them to slice and prepare the food. Children are able to bring a packed lunch if they stay for lunch club and staff support parents in providing healthy lunch boxes. Staff realise mealtimes should be a sociable and enjoyable time for children, for example, children are not rushed and are encouraged to eat at their own pace, and to engage to conversations with peers and adults during their meal. Drinks are readily available throughout the day.

Children forge great friendships with each other and the staff and their behaviour is excellent. They follow the exceptionally positive role modelling of the staff and learn the consequences of their actions. Staff know the children very well and are very particular about meeting their individual needs. Children are empowered to take responsibility for their own safety. They are efficient at clearing up after themselves, which is prompted by the excellent use of well-timed verbal notification from staff. Children learn from experience how to keep themselves safe. For example, they practice emergency evacuation regularly. Regular visitors to the pre-school such as the dentist, nurse and fire brigade also teach children how to live healthy and safe lives. Children enjoy very regular opportunities to be physically active indoors and outside. In the garden children learn to climb and balance on the equipment. They enjoy frequent nature, number and matching games 'wellie' walks around the village to learn about the community around them. While indoors they develop their physical skills crawling through tunnels, playing skittles and taking part in action circle songs such as the 'Hokey Cokey' and 'Here we go around the Mulberry bush'.

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

The pre-school demonstrates an excellent commitment to promoting children's safety. Comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among the staff ensure that children's welfare is prioritised. Staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibility in safeguarding children, they have all attended safeguarding training, and are fully aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures. They are very clear about the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Children's safety is paramount. Thorough risk assessments throughout the year, ensure all areas, equipment and resources are safe. Staff maintain vigilant supervision and high ratios at all times. Consequently, children are safe and feel secure within the pre-school. Robust recruitment procedures and the staff appraisal system ensure that staff remain suitable to work with the children, and a rolling program of training builds on their childcare knowledge. The identity of visitors to the setting is rigorously checked and their presence is recorded in the visitor's book. An extensive and detailed range of policies and procedures, understood and consistently implemented by staff, are used to inform practice and promote the welfare of the children who attend. Awareness of issues of equality and diversity underpin everyday practice to promote a fully inclusive practice.

The pre-school manager provides strong leadership to the staff team, who are well motivated and enthusiastic and work together closely. This underpins the excellent practice and high quality teaching methods. Staff are highly skilled in providing a rich environment full of opportunities and activities that children thoroughly enjoy and participate in, and which cater for each child's individual stage of development and needs. The pre-school is bright, colourful and very appealing to children. Homely spaces have been created to enable children to feel comfortable and secure. Exceptional photographs of children at play and their art work decorate the walls of the pre-school helping to create the homely environment. This provides parents and visitors with a fantastic insight into how children spend their time at the pre-school. All toys and resources provided are of very good quality. Children can independently select the resources they wish to play with as they are placed at their level. However, while the pre-school children see plenty of print and gain a good awareness that it carries meaning, the use of labelling is not used abundantly throughout all areas of the pre-school. This does not maximise the opportunities to teach children that print carries meaning.

Outstanding partnerships are established with parents/carers and other professionals, ensuring children's individual needs are consistently recognised and met. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress and are encouraged to play an active role in their children's learning and development. For example, they add their children's 'special moments' and achievements into their 'blue books'. They borrow books to help develop, build upon or enhance their children's learning at home. Parents are kept fully informed and included in the pre-school through the provision of detailed displayed, informative notice boards, and excellent, ongoing communication with staff. All parents spoken to at the inspection were extremely complimentary about the pre-school. Staff work closely with local schools that children will attend, to make sure they feel ready and confident to go to school. Information about children's learning is shared very effectively with others involved in their development, such as pre-schools and professional agencies. This ensures that there is a collaborative approach to children's learning. Consequently, children's needs are met exceptionally well. The capacity to maintain continuous

improvement is outstanding. The evaluation of the setting encompasses the views of staff, and all service users to ensure improvements are continually made to enhance children's care, development and learning.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	143123
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	843123
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	Montacute Pre-school Committee
Date of previous inspection	22/09/2009
Telephone number	01935 822022

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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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