

Merryfield Preschool

St Mary & St Peter's First School, Ilton, ILMINSTER, Somerset, TA19 9EX



Inspection date

15 June 2015

Previous inspection date

12 November 2010

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------|
| | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | Good | 2 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | Good | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | Good | 2 |
| The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings | | | |

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff provide a well-organised, rich and varied learning environment, which is well-equipped with an abundant range of resources. This is particularly evident in the outside environment where children have numerous opportunities to be active, create, explore and investigate.
- Teaching is good, especially in promoting children's communication and language skills. Staff actively encourage children's involvement in most activities. They follow children's ideas and interests well, ensuring they fully support children's next steps through effective interactions and knowledge of individual needs.
- There is good partnership working with the schools children will attend. This means staff prepare children well for their eventual move by promoting consistency in letters and sounds knowledge and so that children feel safe in a familiar environment.
- Children are happy and confident in the small and friendly pre-school. They make warm, trusting relationships with staff who know their individual needs well.
- Staff are enthusiastic and motivated to attend regular training. This improves practice and children's learning, such as den building, where children effectively solve problems and develop their imaginations.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always predict children's enthusiasm for learning and prepare activities fully for their involvement, meaning children have to sometimes wait a long time for their turn.
- Staff do not consistently promote children's independence at snack time, such as encouraging them to prepare fruit or providing small jugs so they can pour their milk.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the organisation of focused activities to ensure children are always actively involved and do not need to wait too long for their turn
- help children develop their independent skills more consistently at snack time.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children playing inside and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at convenient times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with parents and considered their written views of the provision.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled documentation including self-evaluation, learning diaries, policies and procedures.

Inspector

Rachael Williams

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff plan an exciting range of learning experiences across the educational programme. They use effective assessment arrangements to identify children's next steps and actively involve parents in their children's learning. This ensures children make at least good progress from their starting points. Staff use skilful questioning to promote children's thinking skills. For example, during their imaginative play, children observed that the astronauts fell out of the rockets when they blasted off. Staff encouraged children to solve this problem. Children decided to use string to make seatbelts, therefore demonstrating their understanding of safety. There is a strong focus on outdoor play. Children learn about nature and the world around them as they investigate mini beasts and grow their own fruit and vegetables. On occasion, planned activities are not thoroughly organised to ensure children do not have long periods of inactivity, such as when creating footprints for a Father's Day card. Nonetheless, children enjoyed the activity as they mixed colours and described how the paint felt on their feet, such as 'cold' and 'tickly', demonstrating good communication and language skills.

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

Children thrive in a nurturing environment and behave well. Following training, staff reinforce behavioural expectations well, praising children for achieving their individual targets. Staff teach children about safe practices, such as how to hold scissors when they are walking with them. Children enjoy a healthy fruit snack. However, staff do not consistently promote children's independence at snack time. Staff remind children of practices to support their well-being, such as having drinks regularly and wearing sun cream when outdoors. Children climbed, balanced and swung outside, and commented on the effects exercise had on their body well.

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

Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff understand their responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns about a child. Recruitment, induction and appraisal arrangements are rigorous. Staff liaise effectively with other early years settings children attend to maintain a consistent approach to children's learning and development. Staff encourage parents to contribute feedback about the provision, for example, by using 'Two stars and a wish' forms. Parents comment positively on the small group, which means their children receive one-to-one care and attention. Staff are experienced in their roles and work well together as a team to monitor children's progress and gaps in learning effectively. All staff contribute to effective self-evaluation to drive improvement.

Setting details

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 142953 |
| Local authority | Somerset |
| Inspection number | 841564 |
| Type of provision | Sessional provision |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 2 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 20 |
| Number of children on roll | 16 |
| Name of provider | Merryfield Pre-School Committee |
| Date of previous inspection | 12 November 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01460 52574 or 07818 214 045 |

Merryfield Preschool registered in 1990. It is committee-run and operates from the grounds of St Mary and St Peter Primary School in Ilton, Somerset. The pre-school is open Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 12pm, with the option of staying for lunch club from 12pm to 1pm, during term time only. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for early education for children aged two, three and four years old. The committee employ a manager, who has a foundation degree and is currently working towards an early years qualification at Level 6. She is supported by two members of staff, both of whom have early years qualifications; one at Level 5 and the other at Level 3.

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