

Madresfield Early Years Centre

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	885/6034
Unique Reference Number	131676
URN for registered childcare	205288
Inspection number	334288
Inspection dates	20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005). The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of registered provision¹ was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Madresfield Early Years Centre, near Malvern in Worcestershire, was founded in 1994 for children of pre-school age. In 1999 it extended the age group to include an independent day school for boys and girls up to the age of seven years. Provision currently comprises baby care from six weeks old, crèche, pre-school and nursery for young children, school for pupils aged five to seven and a range of after-school and holiday activities for children up to the age of eighteen from other settings. The school occupies an attractive, well-converted range of buildings adjacent to Hayswood Farm, the home of the proprietor.

The school aims to *'promote an enthusiasm for learning, linked with harmonious cooperation with their peers'*.

Some of the 228 boys and girls on roll come from families close to the setting and others travel a significant distance to attend each day. The main school was last inspected in November 2006 and an integrated inspection of provision for children under five was conducted by Ofsted in October 2006.

Evaluation of the school

Madresfield Early Years Centre provides an outstanding quality of education, including for the many children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. As a result, pupils flourish because of the exceptional range of activities that develop their various talents extremely well. Relationships within the school are of high quality and

¹ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

pupils' behaviour is outstanding, as is the quality of teaching and care provided by the school. It has maintained and built still further on the high quality provision noted by both the previous inspections. All of the regulations are met in full.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding throughout for all ages and stages. It is broad and covers all of the required areas of learning with a good emphasis on core subjects and key skills. This is supplemented exceedingly well with an outstanding range of other activities that provide pupils with excellent experiences they will never forget. These include the care of ponies, activities in the woodland school, French, cookery, sports and dance, all of which pupils enjoy hugely. Healthy eating and lifestyles are given strong emphasis. National Curriculum guidelines are used effectively to plan for incremental gains in knowledge and skills and consequently pupils are prepared very effectively for the next stage in their learning and eventually the world of work.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding for all ages. Sessions are planned extremely well, taking good account of each pupil's prior attainments and interests. As a result, boys and girls of all levels of ability enjoy the activities hugely and are keen and attentive. Relationships are excellent. Staff know each pupil extremely well. Good and meaningful praise raises their self-esteem, and aspirations and challenges are set at an appropriately high level. Boys and girls all respond well to the praise and encouragement they are given. Staff have a good knowledge of the areas of learning they teach and the needs of each age group. Small class sizes enable them to offer individual support when pupils are unsure or need extra help to catch up. Activities are extremely suitable and, combined with the excellent accommodation indoors and out, encourage each boy or girl to start to take responsibility for their work and actions. They have the opportunity to become completely engrossed in activities for extended periods because of the high ratio of adults to children in well-designed spaces. For example, one two-year old spent a considerable time climbing a gentle slope to repeatedly roll down a large plastic reel and observe thoughtfully what happened each time he released it. Such opportunities for self-directed learning and reflection have a positive impact on the progress made.

Resources are of excellent quality and range and are used extremely well. Work is marked regularly and accurately. All staff and the headteacher assess pupils' work regularly. They keep parents extremely well informed through target notebooks and discuss findings with the boys and girls so that they too can see how well they are doing. In this way, the school ensures that each pupil is making at least good progress. However, opportunities for older boys and girls to learn to take responsibility for remembering their personal targets for themselves when they undertake written or number work are sometimes missed.

The excellent quality of the curriculum and of teaching are key factors in the outstanding progress pupils make overall. Boys and girls of all levels of ability make similar levels of progress and clearly flourish. There is an atmosphere of calm diligence as teaching sessions progress. Boys and girls enjoy lessons and concentrate

hard. Teachers also regularly introduce a strong element of fun in many activities and songs and rhymes are frequently heard around the centre and the farm. As a result, the standards pupils attain overall are above those expected for their ages.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at all ages and stages is outstanding. This has a very beneficial impact on their personal and social development, as was the case at the last inspection. Boys and girls really enjoy all of the activities provided for them and talk about their school with great pride and enthusiasm. There are regular assemblies and a range of prayer times, such as before lunch and at the end of school, including some in the local church. These provide pupils with very effective opportunities for their spiritual development. They are enhanced by outstanding daily opportunities for experiences which prompt awe and wonder. These occur throughout the day as they work in the woodland school, dig and plant in the garden, experiment and play in the sand pit, on the hard-standing area or on the sloped lawns, or simply just groom Bubbles the pony, or watch the rabbit on the lawn.

There are excellent, well-managed links with both the local and wider community. These include links with nearby primary schools and also with a school in Africa and another in Nepal. The school enjoys excellent relationships with other local institutions and with relevant local organisations, such as local colleges, which benefit pupils' personal development. There are also regular visitors, including the local vicar. Boys and girls are enabled to develop a very good understanding of their own culture and that of others through activities such as the Easter Bonnet service and Chinese New Year celebrations. For their age, they develop extremely good levels of understanding of the views of others. They learn about British public institutions and local and national history and also about other cultures.

Moral and social development are both outstanding. Boys and girls help and respect each other. They enjoy school. They look forward to coming each day and their attendance is good. They are very polite. There are excellent regular opportunities for them to discuss issues which are important to them. Some of these are through circle time discussions in class or when agreeing simple rules for day-to-day activities. They wholeheartedly help with charitable collections, such as on Red Nose Day. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils relate extremely well to each other and to adults. They are considerate of each other, of the many pets and animals on the farm and of equipment. Any potential disagreement is swiftly defused and positive relationships reinforced by well-trained and sharp-eyed staff. The boys and girls who attend are willing from a very early age to take responsibility for their actions and for each other. They get on together exceptionally well. In this way they are very well prepared for the next stages in their education and life in the wider world.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school has made outstanding arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils. Supervision is outstanding. As a result, the school is a safe place for them to work and learn. Care is taken to implement the excellent policies for child protection and all relevant training has been undertaken and is reviewed regularly. There are extremely effective systems for the prevention of inappropriate behaviour or bullying and ensuring that visits to all parts of the farm outside the centre are safe. The teaching of healthy eating and hygiene is undertaken effectively and pupils have a good knowledge of how to make wise choices in their diet as a result. Supervision within the buildings, gardens, woodlands and the playground is of an extremely high standard. There is a well-constructed plan to ensure that wheelchair access should that be required. As a result, boys and girls are happy and confident and know that they can ask teachers and other helpers if they need help. All requirements are met fully, including those for checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and the appropriate recording of these.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve exceptionally well in this outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage provision. They make rapid progress in all areas of learning from the moment they start. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is expertly led and managed. The centre leader has established excellent teamwork. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and are deployed very efficiently and effectively. The staff lead by example and demonstrate high quality teaching, which results in excellent learning. Other adults, including those in training, follow this example and all show considerable skill in turning all activities into meaningful and enjoyable learning opportunities, successfully combining different areas of learning. Their expectations are high and tasks challenging so that children engage readily in highly effective learning. There is an excellent balance between learning indoors and outside and between teacher-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Accommodation and resources are excellent. The highly effective use of these provides an exciting learning environment with interesting and engaging role-play areas, supporting the curriculum very effectively. Outdoor resources are a particular strength.

The promotion of children's welfare is outstanding. They have an excellent awareness of what constitutes a good diet and the importance of keeping fit and healthy through the many opportunities to engage in physical activity both outdoors and inside. They have a good sense of personal safety and look out for one another in a mature and caring way. Adults have a very clear picture of how well each individual child is doing. Assessment is thorough and rigorous. It is built into planning and there are planned observations on all children learning at play and in more formal learning situations. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very strong. They are confident and very happy, showing excellent levels of enjoyment. They are stimulated and interested children, who show high levels of independence and confidence.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following point for development:

- encourage the older pupils at Key Stage 1 to take more responsibility for remembering their own personal learning targets and applying them in their written and number work.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education	✓			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	✓			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	✓			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	✓			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	✓			
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?	✓			
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	✓			
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?	✓			

School details

Name of school	Madresfield Early Years Centre		
DCSF number	885/6034		
Unique reference number	131676		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	205288		
Type of school	Early Years Centre		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1994		
Age range of pupils	0–7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 11	Total: 18
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 39	Girls: 70	Total: 109
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 54	Girls: 47	Total: 101
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,577		
Annual fees (childcare)	£5,538 (full-time) to £7,215 (full-time 8.00 to 6.00)		
	Minimum sessions (for part-time in crèche)		
	£643		
Address of school	Hayswood Farm Madresfield Malvern Worcestershire WR13 5AA		
Telephone number	01684 574378		
Fax number	01684 567772		
Email address	info@meyc.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Alice Bennett		
Proprietor	Mrs Alice Bennett		
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes		
Dates of inspection	20 March 2009		