

Meppershall Pre-School

Village Hall, High Street, Meppershall, Bedfordshire, SG17 5LX

Inspection date	08/01/2014
Previous inspection date	22/04/2009

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		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Teaching techniques are strong because all practitioners have a thorough understanding of how children learn. They make good use of assessments of children in order to plan relevant activities that support them in making purposeful progress in their learning.
- Practitioners work well with parents and so have a good understanding of each child. As a result, children settle well, are secure and have positive relationships with their key person and other practitioners.
- Children become engrossed in activities as these are well planned and are informed by their current interests. Consequently, children are motivated and keen to participate, and so develop a positive approach to play and learning.
- Practitioners and the management committee work well together and continuously review the setting's practice. This ensures that children's care is consistent and their safety, welfare and development are well considered.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor area is not always used to the optimum as children do not consistently access an extended range of resources that enable them to develop their play further.
- Daily routines, such as snack time, are not always used to promote children's independence to the optimum.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main room and the outside area.
The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and the chair person
- and treasurer of the management committee, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector talked with children present.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and through their written feedback to the setting.

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Full report

Information about the setting

Meppershall Pre-School was registered in 1992 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a community building in Meppershall, Bedfordshire, and is managed by a voluntary management committee. The setting serves the local and neighbouring area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one main room and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

There are currently seven staff working directly with the children. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and four hold level 3 or above.

The setting opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are daily from 9.15am until 12.15pm, with afternoon sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 26 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting receives 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:

- extend the access to resources in the outdoor area so that children are able to make further independent choices and extend their play
- build on the opportunities for children to develop their independence; this particularly relates to snack time.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners take time to ensure that they fully understand each child's needs and interests. This means that they consistently offer children relevant support and well-planned activities. Consequently, children are secure and have an enthusiastic and positive outlook on their play and learning. Therefore, they are well prepared for the move to school. Children make good progress at the setting because teaching techniques are strong. All practitioners have a confident understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use good procedures to gather a wide range of initial information from parents, enabling them to carry out a full assessment of children's starting points. This information is then used to inform the planning and to help monitor children's progress. The setting's good communication with parents means that they have

frequent opportunities to share updates about their children. For example, they complete home assessment sheets and meet termly with their child's key person to discuss children's progress and help plan their next steps. Parents are also supported well in extending their child's learning at home. For example, the setting lends 'chatterboxes'. These contain resources and practical ideas for activities that encourage language, communication and social skills.

Children are supported well in developing the skills required in order to learn effectively and to achieve. Practitioners' good interaction encourages children to solve problems and test their ideas as they play. For example, when children build towers, a practitioner wonders if they can build a tower as big as her. Children try this and stand back to look at the tower, noting that they need to make it bigger. They become engrossed as they work together to add further blocks, showing great delight when the tower finally reaches the required height. The thoughtful provision of indoor resources means that children are actively encouraged to develop their skills as they play. For example, practitioners tape a large piece of paper onto the floor alongside the mat with toy cars. Children thoroughly enjoy using this to draw their own roadways, frequently going back to adapt this and add further details, thereby developing their skills in mark making and early writing. Practitioners also pay attention to ensuring that resources are accessible and encourage children to use these flexibly. For example, children playing with play dough help themselves to further resources from the nearby trolley. When they discover cake tins, they 'make cakes' using play dough. They then fetch a toy microwave oven from the role play area and use this to 'cook the cakes'.

Practitioners observe children as they play, keeping detailed, accurate records of their progress and current interests. They actively use this information to inform the planning of children's next steps and to ensure that the daily planning reflects their interests. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well so that they make good progress in relation to their starting points. Practitioners work in partnership with families and any professionals involved with the children so that they fully understand their needs and use appropriate methods when supporting the children. For example, clear visual timetables are used to help children understand the daily routines and to encourage them to make choices about their play and participate actively in activities. Children are offered a wide variety of opportunities that promote their physical development. For example, they enjoy playing parachute games and making obstacle courses, which help to promote their balance and coordination and their awareness of the space around them. Thoughtful activities mean that children gain a realistic and meaningful understanding of diversity. For example, parents visit the setting to read stories in their home languages and children enjoy learning individual words and songs in other languages. The setting also makes use of simple sign language to aid early communication. Children's language and communication skills are further promoted as practitioners engage them in discussions and encourage them to share their views and talk about their play.

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

Good use is made of the key person system to support partnership working with parents. This helps to ensure that practitioners obtain a good understanding of each child and offer them consistent support. As a result, children are secure and develop good bonds with practitioners. For example, they laugh and chatter with practitioners and readily include them in their play. Children are encouraged to express their views and preferences. For example, practitioners involve children in deciding which resources to put out. This helps children to feel positive about their play and so prepares them well for the move to school and for their future learning. This is further supported as there are thoughtful daily procedures that help children to feel proud of their achievements and so promote their self-esteem. For example, Children enjoy receiving 'Wow!' certificates that recognise their individual achievements, such as counting, using the toilet independently or writing their name.

New children quickly settle because practitioners work with parents to find out about their preferences and abilities, ensuring that these are reflected within the daily planning and routines. Similarly, practitioners take care to make sure that children's movements between different activities are smooth. For example, they use clear visual prompts to inform children of group session times. Careful consideration has been given to ensuring that indoor areas are interesting and well equipped with a wide variety of easily accessible resources. Therefore, children have opportunities to choose their resources and explore further. However, resources in the outdoor area are not always as readily accessible and so do not make full use of opportunities for children to select their own toys and equipment to extend their play.

Practitioners are good role models, showing genuine care and respect for all and thereby creating a positive environment. Children respond to this and play well together, developing a good awareness of the needs and feelings of others. They gain a good understanding of how to manage their own behaviour as practitioners offer them clear explanations and practical support. For example, children learn to use timers to organise fair and equal turns on the computer. Children are generally supported in developing their self-care skills. For example, they put on their own coats before going outside and help themselves to drinks of water during the session. However, their independence is not consistently promoted to the optimum. For example, although children set out their own plate and cup at snack time, they are not involved in simple tasks, such as preparing the fruit. Children are offered good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, their understanding of the importance of exercise is promoted as they participate in running races, noting how this makes them feel warmer and breathe faster. Their awareness of healthy eating is extended as they discuss this and refer to child-friendly displays. Children are also supported well in gaining a thorough understanding of safety. For example, they discuss the safe use of simple tools, scissors and cutlery, and learn to use these safely and effectively during their daily play.

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

Children's welfare is promoted well because arrangements for safeguarding are thorough. Practitioners have attended training in this area and are aware of the process to follow

should they have any concerns about a child. Robust procedures ensure that all practitioners are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily safety checks ensure that hazards are minimised or removed so that children play safely in a well-organised environment. The manager, practitioners and the management committee work together to continuously evaluate their work. They seek feedback from parents and children, giving them a representative overview of their strengths and areas for improvement. The manager then uses this information to develop practical action plans that lead to improvements. For example, recent changes include improved planning procedures so that observations of children are now more clearly linked to the areas of learning. This means that practitioners are better able to plan a balanced variety of activities that promote each child's development.

The manager works well with the voluntary management committee and they set high standards for the childcare offered. They utilise good procedures to ensure that practitioners are well supported in their work. For example, practitioners are supported in attending training and gaining higher childcare qualifications. This has a positive impact on children. For example, as a result of specific training, practitioners have now introduced further opportunities for children to explore a range of textures and materials. This positive approach to training is extended to the management committee. For example, as a result of completing safeguarding training, the committee chairperson is now more able to offer support and monitoring in order to fully promote children's welfare. All practitioners work well together to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, they use their regular team meetings to review their work and check that they are consistently promoting children's health, welfare and development. The manager's practical ongoing monitoring supports her in identifying any areas where children require further support. Therefore, she is able to support practitioners in planning for each child and ensuring that all make good progress.

Practitioners are experienced in working with other professionals and have a good understanding of their roles. This supports them in seeking any further help required by children and their families. There are good procedures for sharing information with other providers caring for the children. For example, practitioners contact local nurseries in order to exchange assessment and planning information. This enables all to work consistently in promoting children's welfare and development. The setting's good partnership working with parents ensures that they are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities. For example, practitioners meet regularly with parents and make good use of newsletters and the setting's website. Parents report that they appreciate the 'What have I done today?' sheets that explain the activities children have participated in.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	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	219293
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	871253
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Meppershall Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	22/04/2009
Telephone number	01462 817359

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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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