

Moulton Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251574
Inspection date	05 December 2007
Inspector	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts
Setting Address	Moulton Village Hall, Bridge Street, Moulton, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8SP
Telephone number	07905 786303
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Registered person	The Trustees of Moulton Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Moulton Pre-school opened in 1973. It operates from one room in the village hall, situated in Moulton, near Newmarket, Suffolk. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.30 until 12.00 and operates a lunch club on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12.00 until 13.00 for 37 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 14 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these eight children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs three staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and none are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because of the good hygiene practices that staff implement. Disposable gloves and aprons are used when dealing with bodily fluids and surfaces where food is prepared and eaten are cleaned thoroughly. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene through the daily routines such as the regular washing of hands. Staff provide visual aids in the bathroom area to show children how to wash and dry their hands, reminding them that they need to wash them to get rid of the germs. Visits from the dental nurse help children to understand why they need to look after their teeth. Children are encouraged to dry their hands on paper towels and they remind one another to only use two to save waste and to dispose of them in the bin provided. Children cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing which helps to reduce the spread of infection. Children's medical needs can be met appropriately because all staff are trained in first aid and parents give written permission for the seeking of any medical advice or treatment should an emergency arise.

Children's healthy growth and development is promoted through the very nutritious snacks that they are offered, which comply with any special dietary requirements. They come to the snack bar in small numbers and help themselves to a variety of fresh fruit and savoury biscuits, pouring their own drinks which helps to promote their independence. Snack time is a social occasion where they join with a member of staff, talking about what they are eating which helps to extend their learning and understanding of what is a healthy diet which is essential for their well-being. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session to ensure that children do not go thirsty.

Children's physical skills are promoted exceptionally well through access to the outside play area in all types of weather which helps to contribute to a healthy lifestyle. When playing on the village field they are able to run around with confidence and speed, negotiating pathways without bumping into one another. They throw and catch balls with some accuracy and are able to aim them through hoops that are held by staff. They show great enjoyment when letting go of scarves in the wind, chasing after them, retrieving them and returning the scarves to a member of staff to start again. Large apparatus is also provided in the hall where they learn to balance on beams and use the climbing frame. In the small outside area children have the opportunity to experiment with different resources, finding out why the cars go down the water pipe more quickly if they are set on their wheels rather than on their roof. Children use small tools in the play dough and some children are beginning to snip along lines with scissors, however, they are not always given the opportunity to practise these skills because they are presented with cut-out shapes to stick on cards.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enter premises where staff have worked extremely hard before the session begins to create an interesting and attractive learning environment that promotes their development. Furniture is used to divide the room into different areas of learning providing accessible and stimulating, appropriate activities. Children are able to use furniture competently because it is child size and safe. The very good range of well-maintained equipment and toys helps to meet the varying needs of children which is important to their development and learning. Children are able to access the toilet area which promotes their independence further and a comfortable

book area where large floor cushions are provided allows them to rest should they wish to do so.

Children play safely because they are well supervised by staff who have taken reasonable steps to ensure that most hazards on the premises both inside and outside are minimised. For example, risk assessments are taken daily, electrical sockets are protected and a safety gate is in place at the kitchen door so that children cannot gain entrance. The registered person protects the radiators with thick blankets in order that children do not burn themselves and cold water is used in the wash hand basin because the heater is not thermostatically controlled. Although these areas do pose some risk to children staff are vigilant and continue to monitor the situation. Children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised because external doors are fitted with bolts that are inaccessible to children. Fire exits are kept clear, but one is difficult to open and could present a problem in an emergency. Children learn about personal safety by taking part in the emergency evacuation procedure of the building.

Children can be protected should abuse or neglect be suspected because staff are aware of their responsibility to report concerns. All staff within the setting have undertaken training in safeguarding children and have procedures to follow should concerns arise. Procedures and contact numbers are displayed on the notice board for easy reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the setting where they arrive happily and separate from parents with ease. They hang up their coats in the entrance lobby and come into the main play room where they are greeted enthusiastically by staff and one of their peers who is the named 'helper' for the day. Children join together on the mat for a very short circle time where they confidently share snippets of news with one another, supported by staff. Very young children who are not ready to join in this social occasion arrive at the setting a little later when the rest of the children are involved in making decisions about their play and learning as they choose freely from the activities provided. This enables all children to grow in confidence meeting their needs in a sensitive way. Children's development is promoted effectively because they take part in a wide range of activities that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children are secure in their relationships with staff who support all children extremely well in their play and learning. Staff work at children's level listening and talking with children, setting appropriate challenges for the younger children through the good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide purposeful and practical activities for children, who learn effectively through play. Staff work well together to provide appropriate resources and activities to help children progress towards the early learning goals. Planning covers all areas of learning, often following a theme such as Autumn or a festival and therefore does not always take into account the interests and needs of the children. This is because assessments of children's progress do not fully identify the knowledge and understanding of what children have achieved and how. Staff know the children very well because they take the time to find out about children's attainment when first attending the setting through the 'All about Me' booklets and discussion with parents. This information and the observations made during sessions is used to help move children on to the next stage in their learning.

Children are happy within the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. Some children are extremely confident and play well together, either on their own or with others, sharing and taking turns. They respond positively to staff, know the routines of the session very well and are able to follow simple rules such as when asked to tidy up or wash their hands. Most children are beginning to show a willingness to take care of themselves by putting on coats and boots for outdoor play. They choose independently from the resources presented and are able to sustain interest in self-chosen or adult-led activities. Children listen attentively at story-time and often initiate conversations with adults. They put meanings to marks and spontaneous moments are used for practising writing skills. For example, when the flour has been spilt on the table children are able to write their own names, with recognisable letters, using their fingers.

Children enjoy number rhymes where they use props to help them to do simple calculation. For example, on the maths table staff provide small frogs sitting on a log ready to jump into the pool when singing 'Five Speckled Frogs'. The use of number in everyday situations such as counting how many children are attending enables children to count confidently to seven and beyond. During this time they also practise 'writing' the number seven in the air, which helps them to recognise number symbols. Children begin to learn about nature through planting seeds in the garden and watching them grow. Visitor's to the setting enable children to develop an awareness of their own community and the people within it, for example a visit from the local fire service. The use of simple programmable toys helps children begin to understand about information technology and how things work. They have many opportunities to create their own designs through a variety of construction materials. Children are able to express themselves freely when drawing or painting. They are able to talk about their own pictures and draw very detailed pictures of people who often represent their own families or the member of staff who is their key worker. They join in with singing and dancing and take part in the rehearsals for the Christmas play. They particularly like dressing up for role play and use their imagination creatively when playing with the farm yard, using props such as the bottom of the black board to make a sty for the pigs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about equality through their play where they have access to a full range of appropriate resources, activities and facilities. Children are valued by staff who appreciate their contribution. The 'helper' for the day is treated as an equal, helping staff at registration, snack time and inviting children to help to tidy up because there are 'only two minutes left to play'. Through planned topics, for example, the celebrating of different festivals, children learn to appreciate and respect others' similarities and differences. Children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcome at the setting and can be cared for appropriately as staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of every child in their care. This is because they work closely with parents, liaising well with them to ensure that all children's records contain information which enables appropriate care to be given. In consultation with parents, if children present an additional need, outside agencies are consulted so that the environment can be organised and activities planned to ensure that children can take part at a level appropriate to their needs.

Children behave extremely well because they know what is expected of them. Staff adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of children's behaviour in a way that promotes their welfare and development. Simple rules are agreed with children in accordance to their level of understanding, for example, children are reminded to use walking feet, and

quiet voices. Staff are very good role models who put into practice the very positive behaviour management policy. Good behaviour is encouraged through praise and the involvement of children within the setting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with very good quality information about the setting which includes the educational programme. Good use is made of a welcome pack for parents which is extremely informative, easy to read and tells them everything that they need to know about what to expect from the setting and how their child will be cared for. Children's learning is enhanced because parents take an active part in the running of the setting. Parents form the management committee and they are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning through becoming a part of the parent rota and attending open days. Parent's views are sought through the completion of questionnaires and notice boards keep them informed of the curriculum, forthcoming events and important information. Parents state how pleased they are with the setting, that their children are very happy and want to know why they cannot attend everyday. Parents feel that they are kept up to date with what is happening on a day to day basis and state how approachable the staff are.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare and learning is promoted because the organisation of the setting is effective and staff have the appropriate skills, experience and qualifications. The setting has a five year training plan to ensure that staff are kept up to date with any changes in child care and also to ensure that certificates such as first aid remain current. There are sound induction procedures in place and a robust vetting system to ensure that adults providing the day care or looking after children are suitable to do so. The organisation of space and resources ensures that children's needs are met effectively.

All relevant, exceptionally well-organised documentation is in place and children's attendance is marked as they arrive and leave the premises, so that they can be accounted for at all times. The setting has a working set of policies and procedures, which underpins the successful management of the setting and has a positive impact on the care children receive.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Staff work exceptionally well as a team, they are deployed well, knowing their roles and responsibilities. The very good self evaluation of the setting identifying the strengths and weaknesses in all areas leads to improvements in the organisation of the provision and the outcomes for children. Staff are committed to the setting and promote an inclusive environment, in which every child matters. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure the child protection policy includes procedures to contact Ofsted in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to provide opportunities to challenge the more able child in their recording of observations and investigations; develop the short term planning so that it is informed by the children's ongoing assessment records and includes a wider range of learning intentions to show how the basic provision will be used

to enable children to progress towards the early learning goals and introduce a rigorous system to monitor the educational programme.

The provider has made satisfactory improvements. Children's safety has been improved because the child protection policy now includes procedures to contact Ofsted in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

Children's learning has been enhanced because children are given opportunities to mark make in different areas of play. The short term planning has been improved and is continuing to be expanded through support from external advisors. The educational programme is now monitored well through self evaluation which results in an improvement in the way children learn and make progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to assess the risk to children with regard to the heating system and fire exit in the back storeroom.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the recording of children's progress so that their needs and interests can be included in the planning of activities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk