

Eaglestone Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362873
Inspection date	30 April 2008
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
Setting Address	Harrier Court Activity Centre, Harrier Court, Eaglestone, MILTON KEYNES, MK6 5BZ
Telephone number	07804662292
E-mail	
Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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?

Eaglestone Pre-School first opened in 1976 and re-registered under the management of the Pre-School Learning Alliance in 2007. It operates from a community hall in a residential area close to central Milton Keynes.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 47 children aged from two to under five on the roll. Of these 38 children receive funding for nursery education. The group is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 with an optional lunch club offered from 12.00 to 12.30 and two afternoon sessions from 12.15 to 14.45. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five full time members of staff. The manager and three others hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently attending training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children remain in good health because the practitioners have extremely effective policies and procedures in place. A member of staff is the Health and Safety officer. She along with the manager attends additional training to ensure their practice is relevant and up to date. They regularly consult with the health agencies to ensure it remains so. The risks of infections are minimised because staff carry out meticulous checks during the sessions to make certain that all areas remain clean and in good order and follow a comprehensive sickness and exclusion policy. Parents give written advice about any allergies or matters regarding the child's health. Children are gaining a very good awareness of personal hygiene and rapidly become independent in their own care. They frequently wash their own hands or wipe them on wet wipes without adults reminding them. They regularly discuss how to clean hands effectively to eliminate germs.

Children gain further independence and learn about which foods are best for them as they take part in snack time. Parents provide all the food eaten in the group; snacks and lunch. Staff keep parents up to date with regular information about healthy options. Children decide when they would like to have their snack. They are delighted to make their own preparations, washing their hands, finding a plate and mug, and if they have fruit they enthusiastically cut it into bite size pieces. They also choose and pour their own drinks. They sit with other children and a member of staff and relax and chat comfortably. When they are finished they clear away their own items washing their plates and mugs. A member of staff ensures that none of the children have food that has ingredients that could cause harm to themselves or any other child.

Children enjoy excellent opportunities to take part in activities in the fresh air which promotes a healthy lifestyle. They have the freedom to choose whether to be inside or outside. Staff provide a full range of activities in both areas. Children have access to the large shed where equipment is stored neatly so that they can help themselves as they wish. They take out items such as the hoops, cones and bean bags and initiate their own games. Some children use the binoculars to study the world around them. They develop their physical skills using the varied range of wheeled toys and climbing apparatus along with a choice of activities, such as, water play and compost play. They make decisions about whether they need to wear a coat to keep warm and dry or if they need to cool down calmly. They thoroughly enjoy and make very good use of the stimulating play space outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's vigilance to keep them safe. Staff carry out daily checks to make sure all areas are safe and secure and more in depth risk assessments every few weeks. Staff maintain high security standards, the main doors can only be opened from the inside. There are very comprehensive procedures to ensure that only adults known to the staff collect children. The play space is set out with care so that children can move around freely whilst being supervised effectively. Children use a portable coat rack to store their outside clothes; the rack is inadequate for the number of coats etc. that need to be hung up. Consequently, some coats fall to the floor and becomes a hazard.

Staff use displays very effectively to make the environment vibrant and attractive, to provide stimulation and to inform both the parents and the children. An excellent range of activities and resources are stored around the room so that children can take them out as they wish, like the little boy who took out the cars. Staff divide the room into smaller areas that have specific activities, such as, the book corner that is a comfortable space for children to look at books both independently and sometimes with an adult. There is a very good range of books including reference books, some of which the staff have made to illustrate specific items that the children are interested in. The home corner is very well equipped so that children can role play in many different ways. Sometimes they combine two areas, such as, when they took many of the items from the sandwich bar to wash in the home corner sink. The centre of the room is specifically for craft and messy activities, the children move between them occasionally mixing one activity with another. Children are learning how to behave safely. They know that they should not run when inside the building, but walk calmly.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. There are clear policies and procedures to be followed. Staff are familiar with the need to record incidents or concerns and who would need to be consulted. All of the necessary guidance is in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children rapidly increase their confidence and independence as they make choices initiating their own games and activities. There is a happy buzz in the pre-school as children become involved in what they are doing. Staff build friendly relationships with the children, they welcome each child individually. Children approach the staff with ease and trust. They are beginning to make friends. The main emphasis when children first enter the group is on their social skills and communication. All activities are presented so that children can work at their own pace and remain interested. Some consolidate skills, others develop new ones. Staff have very realistic expectations of the children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested and eager to take part. Senior staff are very competent and junior staff are rapidly gaining skills and knowledge through training, experience and following good examples. The key worker role is being developed further as staff gain additional skills in observing the children, assessing what they have achieved and setting new goals for each child. They are gaining a very good knowledge of the individual children in their group so that they can help them make progress.

The curriculum planning has been changed from the beginning of this term. It is based on the individual learning objectives of each of the children. All areas of learning are included and activities can be adapted to suit the children's needs. This means that they are appropriately challenged. Staff carry out evaluations at the end of each day. The assessments made of the children are very clear and are well recorded but there is no way at present to record when learning objectives have been met.

The sessions are extremely well planned. Children have maximum time at activities so that they can concentrate and complete them to their own satisfaction. They move around as they please taking part in solo activities or working with other children. They join in large group activities with support from adults as necessary. One way that the staff support them at registration is by introducing sign language. Children at first answer very quietly to their name and learn the

actions to 'good morning'. They slowly gain confidence to speak in front of other children and adults especially when they are acknowledged individually with thanks and praise. They begin to learn self control through games which are interesting and exciting. Such as when an adult starts a game of races for cars that children are keen to take part in. They start by racing together all very enthusiastic and exciting. They then move into individual races where they have to take turns and wait, which they do with varied patience. They all help to tidy away toys and activities at the appropriate times. Children are learning the basic skills for writing and making marks. One way is through the 'Write Dance' scheme. They make large and small movements with hands and tools following rhythms and music. They thoroughly enjoy stories that include rhyming words and are very adept at anticipating what the next word will be. Many of the older children link letters and sounds very proficiently using actions and rhymes of Jolly Phonics.

The more able children count very confidently and are able to recognise numerals, sometimes putting two together such as a 2 and a 7 to make 27. They all participate eagerly in the action rhymes counting forwards and backwards. Children are gaining skills at completing puzzles and recognising shapes. They use mathematical language as they play in the sand and the water and when they plant their sunflower seeds. Children learn to investigate and explore the world around them. When baby ducklings were brought into the group they recorded what they had seen by drawing pictures, which were later displayed on the notice board promoting self-esteem and pride. They take part eagerly in walks in the local area where they might post letters, watch trees being felled or play in the new play area. Children develop their large and fine motor skills very well through a wide range of activities from marching to their music, jumping from one hoop to another to playing with small figures and construction. Children have many opportunities to explore different media, some are planned, some are child initiated such as the little girl who took the paint pot to the dough table and painted the dough bright yellow, she went on to squash it in her hands and experiment with other shapes and colours. Children use their imagination in many ways especially in the very well resourced home corner and when playing with the puppets and talking about emotions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents dynamically to ensure they meet individual children's requirements and to ensure they are all fully involved in the life of the setting. Staff promote the children's self-esteem in many innovative ways, for instance, the 'Positive Tree'. Observations are made of individual children when they have achieved something special which might be remembering to say please or helping with a task, these are displayed on the tree for all to see. Children celebrate other cultures especially those represented in the group so that they can share experiences and traditions. Parents are requested to help in this. Children have access to a very wide range of resources that promote diversity. Posters are displayed using many different languages and illustrating activities they have taken part in. Children are finding out about the local community through the group's links with other groups and the school. The group have very effective procedures in place to support children with English as an additional language. They also work exceptionally well to support children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The manager is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and has attended additional training. They make very good use of the support systems in the local authority and other professional groups. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave extremely well. They are helpful, polite and are learning to respect others. They have helped to develop the Golden Rules and are reminded of them daily at registration, children know them very well. Children work harmoniously with others, they are becoming aware that other people have different needs to theirs. Staff use very positive strategies to encourage children to please and feel good about themselves.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents' views are sought and are valued. They receive a great deal of information about the group and the activities that the children take part in. Parents are invited to Coffee mornings. All parents spoken to are aware of the key workers who are responsible for their children. They know how to raise concerns with the key workers. Parents are requested to help in the group and join in activities whenever possible. Children enjoy sharing reading books that they choose each week with their parents. Parents write comments in a home/school link book. Staff welcome the parents at any time to discuss their child. Staff are also available on planned occasions such as at the open play sessions and the more formal parents evenings. They receive a written report at the end of the term.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The group is extremely well organised which has a beneficial effect for all children. The operational plan that includes policies and procedures is comprehensive, the manager and staff review this annually. The children's registration forms are checked at the beginning of each term to ensure all details are correct. All other documentation is kept efficiently. Optimum adult:child ratios are maintained so that children receive effective support.

Leadership and management is good. The Pre-School Learning Alliance manages the group. A local representative carries out the local management duties on their behalf which includes ensuring there are rigorous employment and vetting procedures. She carries out the regular line management of the pre-school manager with annual appraisals. The manager carries out the line management for all other staff. The manager has very clear ideas of how the group should be run and is helping to provide others with the skills to help in this. She is a confident role model and leads by example. She explains why things need to be done in a certain way. She trains the staff and encourages all to access further training courses. She ensures her knowledge is up to date and reflects on her procedures continually. She leads a team of dedicated staff to provide a happy, lively environment for the children. All are dedicated to improvement. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- ensure children's coats can be stored safely

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):

- develop further the children's individual development files to show clearly when an area of learning has been achieved

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